

STATES OF JERSEY



PROPOSED GOVERNMENT PLAN 2024 - 2027 (P.72/2023) – TENTH AMENDMENT (P.72/2023 AMD.(10)) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 7th December 2023
by the Council of Ministers**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Members are urged to oppose this amendment.

Council remains committed to delivering value for money. In drafting the Government plan, the Council of Ministers carefully considered what level of savings was realistic and achievable. Whilst Ministers are committed to delivering at least £30 million per annum through efficiencies by 2027, Ministers do not believe delivery of £70 million is achievable without cuts to services.

The Government Plan indicates the government "will look to simplify operations, prioritise services according to Islanders' needs, improve efficiencies across government, and review the effectiveness of government administrative processes in order to achieve such efficiencies. This will allow funding to be reprioritised into areas needing further investment, or further reduce overall spend."

The value for money programme will consider all elements of spend to ensure that savings are applied the optimum manner. The amendment specifically targets payroll reductions, excluding spend on non-payroll costs, which reduces flexibility and potentially leads to worse outcomes for Islanders.

The amendment asks a scheme "to reduce payroll expenditure by £40 million in non-frontline roles". Frontline roles are commonly considered to be "employees directly involved in essential tasks such as customer service, production, and service delivery". This would need to be considered against roles in the Government to determine which are and are not frontline. However, £40 million reduction equates to a 16% reduction in the total budget for civil servants. However, many civil servants deliver frontline services, and so the impact on "non-frontline" roles would exceed this level. This is a very substantial reduction and would almost certainly necessitate compulsory redundancies and a reduction in services.

The impact of services would be significant – many of which are essential to supporting frontline services. At the level suggested these reductions are extremely unlikely to be deliverable through efficiencies, and therefore extend past the remit of the value for money programme into a review of services and service levels.

Conclusion

Whilst the Council of Ministers remains committed to reviewing spend and ensuring good value and effective public services, the inclusion of an arbitrary target on a specific area of spend is unlikely to deliver good outcomes for Islanders.