

STATES OF JERSEY



CABINET OFFICE EXPENDITURE SAVINGS

Lodged au Greffe on 5th February 2024
by Deputy M.B. Andrews of St Helier North
Earliest date for debate: 27th February 2024

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to request the Chief Minister to review the revenue expenditure of the Cabinet Office and ensure that expenditure savings are identified and included within the Government Plan 2025-2028.

DEPUTY M.B. ANDREWS OF ST. HELIER NORTH

REPORT

The Cabinet Office remains a bone of contention among islanders due to recent growth bid approvals. The States Assembly approved the Government Plan 2024-27 - demonstrating that 33 politicians supported budget increases of £12,000,000 for the Cabinet Office.

What I find most remarkable, is when I researched the Government Plan 2023-26, the approved budget allocation for services, now within the Cabinet Office, stood at £54,551,000 in 2022. Once again, in 2023, the States Assembly approved an increased budget for the Cabinet Office of £67,336,000. And recently, we have seen the States Assembly approve a Cabinet Office budget of £79,200,000 for 2024.

I believe such budget increases gives me good reason to be concerned. With the Chief Operating Office, Office of the Chief Executive and the Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance operating under the Cabinet Offices' head of expenditure, questions ought to be asked as to whether such budget increases provide good value for money. I hold the view that the Cabinet Office needs to be streamlined, and rather than seeing consecutive budget increases via growth bids, we should see expenditure reductions be prioritised.

What proves rather disconcerting to see is how the Chief Operating Office, Office of the Chief Executive and the Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance have seen headcount expand across the period of 2019-23. As the following table shows headcount growth has increased in two of the three areas of the Cabinet Office:

	2019	2020	2021	2023
Chief Operating Office	189	203	267	374
Office of the Chief Executive	68	102	81	72
Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance	83	96	113	194
Total	340	401	461	640

References: [wq.116-2023.pdf \(gov.je\)](#) and [wq.308-2023.pdf \(gov.je\)](#)

It ought to be questioned why the combined budget between the Chief Operating Office, Office of the Chief Executive and the Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance increased by £24,649,000 between 2022 and 2024. I deem such budget increases to be totally unacceptable in areas of non-frontline services across this two-year period.

The Chief Operating Office has seen headcount increase by 185 employees between 2019 and 2023, and additionally, Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance saw an increased headcount of 111 employees across the same period. I believe, this headcount growth to be imprudent and unnecessary, and hence, I am proposing the Chief Minister comes up with expenditure savings to the Cabinet Office, to be featured in the next Government Plan.

Financial and staffing implications

There could potentially be a manpower loss to the Cabinet Office pending the approval of this proposition to enable expenditure savings.

Child Rights Impact Assessment

A Child Rights Impact Assessment has been prepared in relation to this proposition and will be accessible for review on the States Assembly website.

Re-issue Note

This project has been re-issued due to an administrative error, amending the 'increased headcount of 300' to 'increased headcount of 111' and the addition of the word 'me' in the sentence 'I believe such budget increases gives me good reason to be concerned.'
