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Jersey | JE2 4WE

By email

28<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Dear Chair,

### **Jersey Consumer Council Constitution**

Thank you for your letter of 22<sup>nd</sup> March and your constructive feedback on the Jersey Consumer Council's (JCC) proposed amendments to their constitution. I have liaised with the JCC on the queries you have raised and provided further information below.

I am supportive of the extension of the maximum term from 6 to 9 years which I believe will allow for continuity and stability during a period of high inflation and cost of living challenges. The original six-year limit was established to allow for fresh ideas and visions, I believe a nine-year limit is still consistent with this goal and brings the JCC into line with most ALO and SOE board limits and I would not support a further extension beyond nine years.

The current Council members have been through a unique set of challenges during their six-year tenure including the COVID-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis, a three-year extension will allow the Council to progress a number of projects which had been delayed by the need to urgently respond to these challenges. Like all ALO's the JCC works with my Department on grant appraisals and Business Plans which I, and my officers, will continue to scrutinise to ensure the organisation remains ambitious and proactive in its work.

Advisors were initially appointed to ensure the JCC engaged with other key organisations, and particularly the Citizen's Advice Bureau, Chamber of Commerce and Law Society. Prior to 2018, these advisors simply attended Council meetings when possible. Since 2018, a more flexible and proactive approach to engagement has been pursued with the JCC working with the Citizens Advice Bureau, JCRA and Trading Standards on a daily basis and also in regular dialogue with the Chamber of Commerce (of which the JCC is also a member) and the other organisations listed in 20.2 of the Constitution.

This revised approach was agreed with the outgoing Council members and overseen by the States Appointments Commission. The new Council was designed to be more representative of consumers and provides direct support for the collection of data and work of the JCC.

Because officials from each organisation are engaged with in an ex-officio capacity the JCC does not consider it necessary for them to be appointed as named individuals and instead engages with the organisations as part of its BAU.

Most organisations listed in article 20.2 of the constitution are also members of either the Fraud Prevention Forum or the Consumer Protection Network (both of which include the JCC), providing additional forums to coordinate work and provide advice.

The JCC does not have a digital reporting tool for over-charging in store but works very closely with Trading Standards and the JCRA to report competition issues, monopolies, and anywhere consumers may be exploited. The JCC also operates a price-comparison tool which has recently been updated and which provides price information on a whole range of products to help consumers make informed choices.

I hope the above information provides clarity to the areas you have raised and would be pleased to arrange a briefing with the JCC, or a visit to their offices, should you wish to know more.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsten Morel', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Deputy Kirsten Morel**

Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture

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