

# **STATES OF JERSEY**



## **COUNCIL OF MINISTERS: VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE (P.99/2008) – COMMENTS**

---

**Presented to the States on 30th June 2008  
by the Council of Ministers**

---

**STATES GREFFE**

## COMMENTS

The entire Council of Ministers regrets that some Members of the Assembly have felt the need to bring this Proposition. Some of the criticisms are highly personal but we have no wish to engage at that level in attempting to rebut them. The Council of Ministers believes that for a debate of this magnitude it is more important to focus on its record as a whole during the last two and a half years.

The introduction of Ministerial Government has presented a bold new opportunity for change but there have, inevitably, also been some challenges and frustrations during this time and yes, given the number of new policies that have been put forward, and the magnitude of issues that have been addressed, some inevitable mistakes as well.

Ministers readily accept that there is always room for improvement and that mistakes have to be minimised and learnt from but is resolutely proud of its record, in delivering the objectives and building the policies agreed by the States Assembly outlined in the Strategic Plan. This Council of Ministers is the Island's first and, contrary to the comments in the Proposition, it has laid down solid foundations for future Councils and future States to build upon and develop.

The Council is abundantly aware that none of this progress would have been possible without the hard work and commitment of the Assistant Ministers and the sound and well considered, sometimes extremely difficult, decision-making of the States Assembly. It is grateful to all the Members who have shown it support over the last two and a half years.

The record of the Council of Ministers in winning States support for its policies is clear. Of all the Propositions brought by Ministers to the States during 2006 and 2007, over 270 have been accepted and only two have been rejected. Thus it is clear that Ministers and the policies of the Council, have had a very high level of support from Members generally which we warmly acknowledge.

In his Report, Senator Syvret contends that his Proposition "is really about a sea-change in Jersey politics". It is important to be clear about this. A vote for this Proposition **will not** result in a sea-change in Island politics. It will replace the Council of Ministers with an interim Council for a five-month tenure – to be further replaced by a new Council following the Autumn elections. Rather than bringing about a 'sea-change' in Island politics, it would lead only to short-term political instability, and at a time of international economic uncertainty, to a loss of confidence in the Island.

A response to some of the Report and Proposition's more serious criticisms have been outlined below, but in considering the merits of this Vote of No Confidence the Council urges Members to judge its performance not on the basis of personal interest, but on the level of progress that has been made in the last two and a half years. The Council of Ministers should be judged on the progress it has made in implementing the Strategic Plan, on the strength of the economy, on its environment policies and on how it has addressed and is continuing to address the social issues facing the people of Jersey.

### **Joined up Government – implementing the Strategic Plan**

The Proposition's Report states that the Council of Ministers does not have a mandate for the policies it has pursued. This is completely incorrect.

The States approved the Strategic Plan (P.40/2006 as amended) on 27th June 2006 by 40 votes to 5. The former Health Minister's recent criticisms of the Council's corporate policies are particularly surprising since, as a Minister, he not only supported the Plan but actively participated in developing it. In the debate he stated, "I think we really have to get behind the plan now and work together in a positive and co-operative way and begin refining the set of work over the coming months and, hopefully, we will make the new system of government work better and perform better for the Island of Jersey. But we do have to, I think, be co-operative and realise that this is early days." (States Hansard 27 June 3.1.23). Approval by the States, including Senator Syvret, of the Strategic Plan is the mandate for the policies the Council has pursued.

The Council has made considerable progress in implementing the Strategic Plan. Evidence of the success of joined up, co-ordinated, governmental initiatives can be found in the first annual report on performance – this is an entirely new publication and provides the benchmark for performance across the States. It is a clear and honest picture of the progress the Council has made towards the commitments outlined in the Strategic Plan.<sup>[1]</sup>

The Strategic Plan made six commitments. They are –

- Maintain a strong, successful and environmentally sustainable economy.
- Create the environment in which everyone living in Jersey has the opportunity to enjoy a good quality of life.
- Promote a safe, just and equitable society.
- Maintain and enhance the natural and built environment.
- Create a strong, recognised identity for Jersey and promote a real sense of belonging.
- Ensure that States services are necessary, of high quality and efficiently run.

The Annual Performance Report details 102 indicators tracking the delivery of the Commitments. Of these, 72 (71%) are on track, 25 (24%) are slightly off track, and 5 (5%) are causing serious concern. In addition to this, the Council's progress in delivering the 237 individual initiatives also set out in the Strategic Plan – which is reported to the States every six months – shows that at the end of December, the executive had completed 55 (23%), was on track to achieve 128 (54%), and only 22 (9%) are causing serious concern. This is a record many organisations, let alone governments, would be more than happy to emulate, and a record Ministers are more than happy to be held accountable for.

It should be remembered that these objectives are those set by the States and which the Council of Ministers is charged to deliver on behalf of Members. Ministers believe that on any objective analysis their record cannot justify a Vote of No Confidence which would signify that they have failed to meet the wishes of the Assembly.

Amongst other things, the Performance Report shows that Jersey continued to enjoy significant and sustained economic growth last year, partnered by low unemployment and a slower growth in inflation. It also shows a further fall in recorded crime levels for the third year in a row, the continued rise in examination pass rates and a growing average life expectancy – which is higher than the U.K. average.

All across the States, multi-departmental initiatives are underway to ensure that the economy, the natural and built environment and the social fabric of the Island interact in such a way as to improve the quality of life for Islanders.

### **Economic and Fiscal Achievements**

The Report and Proposition accuses the Council of Ministers of presiding over a period “of economic and financial incompetence”. The Report, however, ignores the fact that during the last two and a half years, the Council has developed a range of fiscal and economic policies, including balanced budgets, the creation of a Stabilisation Fund and the establishment of a Fiscal Policy Panel, that have resulted in –

- a period of sustainable economic growth with near full employment;
- one of the highest national incomes per head of population in the world; (see Annex 1)

- the lowest rate of inflation in decades, with the rate of inflation currently below Guernsey and the U.K. (see Annex 2)

The Council, with the support of the States, has implemented the greatest fiscal reforms since Income Tax was first introduced in Jersey 80 years ago. The introduction of 0/10% has not only met both the requirements of the European Union (EU) to eradicate harmful taxation measures, but also enhanced our international competitiveness which should help safeguard the Island's prosperity for the foreseeable future.

In order to fund essential public services the States has supported the Council's proposals to replace the revenues lost from 0/10% with an overall progressive package of tax measures including the Income Tax Instalment System (ITIS), 20% means 20% and a Goods and Services Tax (GST). It has also supported Ministers in approving and successfully implementing a new integrated Income Support system including additional funding to help insulate the less well-off from GST. Furthermore, the Council has raised tax allowances to ameliorate the effects of GST on middle-earners, added significantly to Child Care allowances and introduced new measures to protect those who fall in the gap between Income Support and those who pay tax.

**The rate of increase in States spending has been reduced from over 10% a year to only 3.3% in 2007, the lowest increase for over 20 years.** This is a significant achievement which tends to be overlooked, but it is an objective that the Council of Ministers has pursued and successfully attained.

Yet despite this tight control of spending, significant additional policies have been developed and implemented; the Overseas Aid budget has been increased; hundreds of additional units of social rented housing have been funded through the Housing Development Fund; investment in the prison has doubled; and £2 million a year has been added to the skills and higher education budgets.

Much of this has been financed through improvements in States efficiency including the transformation of the finance, human resources and Information Communication Technology (ICT) functions, the creation of a single department to manage States property assets and a centralised, professional approach to the procurement of goods and services.

The Council has delivered a States capital programme of over £200 million, with every project being delivered within approved budgets – a complete contrast to the record of the States in the past.

The Council has improved the management of the States finances through longer term financial planning, better investment of States assets and the implementation of a new Finance Law based on best practice standards, including the appointment of a Comptroller and Auditor General, and making Chief Officers personally accountable for their use of resources. Strong headway is also being made with producing full Generally Agreed Accounting Principles (GAAP) accounts, which could make Jersey the first small jurisdiction in the world to use this structure.

After the return to real economic growth in 2005 following a period of sluggishness, economic activity accelerated and the Island's Gross Value Added grew by 7% in real terms in 2006. This growth, which occurred across all key sectors, was accompanied by low unemployment and low inflation. Every economic indicator seen since then suggests that the economy has maintained this momentum during 2007 and into 2008. Although the Island may still face some effects of the global 'credit-crunch' it is in a strong position to face this challenge.

In the first two years since the Council of Ministers was appointed reserves have grown by £54 million (c. 12%).

Jersey's economic stability remains dependent upon keeping inflation in check. Jersey's economic performance in the late 1990s illustrated that when the economy grows for a sustained period inflation can quickly get out of hand. Inflation is the arch enemy of all businesses in Jersey – it undermines efficiency and erodes the competitiveness of exporters in all sectors. The Fiscal Policy Panel (FPP), set up by the Council of Ministers, – the first comparable Government to do so – will provide independent advice on how inflation can be kept on target to allow a strong, successful economy to be maintained.

The appointment and work of the independent FPP, comprising three leading economists, will be a very

significant element in the ability of the current and future States to manage Jersey's economy to deliver the full range of Strategic Plan objectives.

### **Measures to Grow and Diversify the Island Economy**

The Proposition suggests that not enough is being done to help sectors of the economy other than the finance industry but fails to assess the wider-ranging initiatives that this Council of Ministers has put in place to ensure that these sectors are able to grow.

The retail sector represents an important component of our economy. The development of the sector has been governed by the Retail Strategy, published in 2006. This strategy has been used to inform advice on key developments such as Castle Quay and the Esplanade Quarter, whilst ensuring that the hub of retail will be maintained in the existing trading areas of St. Helier. In 2006 the retail sector grew by 2%.

The Council of Ministers continues to support Jersey's rural economy with particular emphasis on the dairy sector. Financial support for the rural economy has been targeted to move businesses up the value chain, increase their market share of sales in Jersey and expand their export markets. In 2007 the process of reforming Genuine Jersey began. This initiative has tremendous potential to develop growth both in Jersey and in export markets worldwide. The potential to add value to Jersey's produce is why increasing emphasis has been placed on the Rural Initiative Scheme and on continuing the process of reviewing the Island Plan to ensure that barriers to realising value from the rural economy are removed.

The agricultural economy grew by 2% in 2006 and land prices which had fallen sharply have recovered strongly.

Ministers are actively supporting the dairy recovery plan which is aimed at ensuring the long term health of the dairy industry and that brown cows remain in Jersey's green fields.

In 2007, the Council implemented the findings of a fundamental review of the visitor economy that identified the need for significant change from both government and the industry. A new marketing programme, including significant television advertising combined with increased emphasis on air and sea route development, produced a growth in overall visitor and staying leisure visitor numbers for many years. This growth has continued and, in the first five months of this year total arrivals have increased by 4.7%, with air arrivals up by 9%. Staying visitor numbers have increased by 3.3% and staying business visitors are up by 3% on the same period of last year.

There is strong evidence that the investment being made by tourism related businesses shows that the policies being followed are giving this sector confidence for the future of Jersey's visitor economy.

Economic success in the visitor economy is measured by the economic contribution made by visitors through profits generated by businesses in the sector. How much each visitor to the Island spends, and how much of that spend is converted into bottom line profit, tax revenue and re-investment potential, is the true measure of economic contribution. To maximise this there is a need to work with businesses to develop the right product at the right price and market in a more integrated way. This integration was the driver behind the complete redesign of Jersey.com which was undertaken in 2007 and launched in early 2008 with the full backing of the Council of Ministers.

The implementation of the Enterprise and Business Development Strategy is now complete and the Economic Development Departments' enterprise and business development operation "Jersey Enterprise" has been established with a dedicated business contact centre at Jubilee Wharf. Jersey Enterprise defines the role of government in improving skills, encouraging business and enterprise development by working with business through an account management structure, facilitating innovation, allowing competition and through its broad spectrum of products and services providing economic stability.

Jersey Enterprise is currently providing active support to 800 businesses and, in the first five months of this year, has supported 125 new business start-ups which have resulted in 150 new job opportunities.

In meeting the challenges of a growing economy, a more informed method of considering Regulation of Undertakings and Development Legislation (RUDL) has been instigated which includes the direct involvement of Economic Development, Housing and the Chief Minister's Department. This enables all factors to be considered during the process of approving significant RUDL licences. In 2007, by utilising the joint Ministerial team, the full potential of RUDL to act as a lever to grow the economy can be recognised. In future, all decisions will be looked at closely and an economic "test" to ensure that all decisions are consistent with Jersey's economic goals of increasing productivity and encouraging high value added activity will be introduced.

The Council of Ministers fully understands that all small Island communities need to manage the size of their respective populations as they seek to balance the health and vibrancy of expanding economies with the threats of over-development and to the quality of life. The data for the year 2007 suggests a "steady state" with the Jersey economy expanding, but with the significant majority of employment opportunities, 83% of private sector employment, being reserved for locally qualified people. The Population Office was created in 2006 as a means of managing access to housing and employment, and continues to make progress on bringing in the approved Migration Policy, which will produce a more efficient, effective, and fairer system of migration controls.

### **Progress in Protecting the Island's Environment**

The Report to the Proposition criticises Ministers for "environmental destruction". However, with the strong public interest and commitment to environmental issues, there has been an increasing commitment by Ministers to ensuring economic growth within a sustainable environment. The summary to Commitment Four of the Strategic Plan outlined in the Annual Performance Report details most of the environmental achievements during 2007. However, Commitment One undertook to 'Show the world that economic and environmental success can work together' and it is worth highlighting a number of the achievements that relate to this objective.

The introduction of Eco-Active Business has extended the Eco-Active campaign to the business community that can lead to full business accreditation. Proposals to incentivise the use of fewer resources and support measures that assist with this change, such as providing better public transport and more recycling facilities, are to be considered later in 2008. Although recycling has increased from 20% to 30% since 2005, waste has also increased as predicted, despite significant waste minimisation and recycling and Ministers acknowledge that more effort is required to redress this situation. The Countryside Renewal scheme is being used to reduce the impact of the farming industry on the environment, and the new Island Plan will review the process to meet housing need without major encroachment into the countryside.

Between 1990 and 2005, Jersey increased its total energy use by 26% and in the same period reduced its carbon emissions by 36% as a result of the switch from on-Island oil based electricity generation to low-carbon imported electricity. In 2006, Jersey requested the extension of the Kyoto Protocol to the Island. Since then considerable work has been undertaken in developing an Energy Policy for Jersey that includes commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This Energy Policy will shortly be presented to the States Assembly for consideration.

Last month the Chief Minister outlined ambitious new plans and objectives for the environment, which had been put together by a group of eminent environmentalists which he chairs. They will be used as the basis for a green Jersey which can set world class environment standards in energy conservation and transport policies while at the same time maintaining a successful economy.

The successful Imagine Jersey events stressed the absolute importance to Jersey people of protecting the countryside and that is one of the most important objectives for Ministers.

### **Developing a Social Policy and Health Care Framework**

Ministers have put considerable efforts into developing an integrated, joined-up approach to Social Policy and Health Care. The commitment "to create the environment in which everyone in Jersey has the opportunity to enjoy a good quality of life" was given added impetus in May 2007 when the Chief Minister launched; "Every person counts – a social policy framework for Jersey". This new framework seeks to build a society where

households are financially independent and where citizenship, neighbourliness and civil participation play an important part in Island life.

In 2007, the Social Security Department prepared for the introduction of the new Income Support Scheme, which came into being in January 2008. The Income Support Scheme, which replaced a multitude of fragmented systems, seeks to incentivise independent living, where possible, whilst at the same time protecting those who remain vulnerable and in need. For the first time in the Island's history we now have a central and integrated system of social benefits. This has not only improved the efficiency of the system as a whole, it has also improved the amount of support available to the most vulnerable people in the Island and provides a platform on which future progress can be made.

Due to the continued growth in the Health Insurance Fund, drugs are available from community pharmacies which were previously only available when prescribed by a hospital through the hospital pharmacy. This has not only made access easier for patients but also allows savings for the hospital. Furthermore, the increase in subsidy for G.P. prescriptions to enable the provision of free prescriptions has been a major step in helping people to access primary care.

A minimum wage has been established, basic employment rights have been protected by new legislation.

Current strategic priorities include a clear formula for future pension provision. The next phase of policy will address other potential income sources in old age, such as secondary pensions and incentives to continue to work beyond 'pensionable age'.

The Social Housing Property Plan was adopted by the States Assembly on 17th July 2007. It represented a significant milestone in achieving a number of the States strategic aims, not least the aim to increase the level of home ownership in the Island through the sale of some 800 States Rental Homes to States tenants over a period of 10 years, through an innovative shared equity scheme. That programme of sales is already underway and will continue apace in 2009.

A comprehensive strategy for healthcare, called New Directions, is in the final stages of preparation. This proposes an integrated and cross-departmental plan for safeguarding and enhancing the provision of healthcare in the Island. Proposals will be presented to the Assembly later in the year.

## **Educational Achievements**

For many years the Island has performed very well in terms of educational attainment compared to other jurisdictions such as the U.K., but has fallen short in developing work related skills for our young people.

The year 2007 saw the relevant States departments with a principal responsibility for employment and the development of the cross States skills agenda – namely Social Security, Education, Sport and Culture, and Economic Development – preparing the ground work for their combined strategy which has led to the creation of the Skills Executive. It is too early yet to measure the success of the Skills Executive and this will be a matter more appropriately commented upon in the year 2009. Ministers believe, however, that this is a vitally important initiative which will result in improved career opportunities for young local people and reduce the need for further immigration.

The year 2007 saw the attainment of examination results and higher education participation rates in Jersey improve even more from an already very high standard. The performance in these domains profoundly outperforms the U.K. – as it has done in previous years. The contribution of the school curriculum to the creation of a society in Jersey which respects law and order, has a profound sense of citizenship and social responsibility, and creates the skills necessary for a productive high value economy, cannot be overstated.

The implementation of an integrated strategy for early years education and care is a priority. The Council is fully aware of the inequity in the current arrangements and its impact on parents, private sector providers and schools but does not accept that the 'child-care sector' is in chaos as asserted in the Report and Proposition. The early

years proposals are currently being reviewed and progressed and will be the subject of a public consultation workshop on 3rd July, following which the Council intends to bring the matter back to the States for consideration in the early Autumn.

-

### **Improving the Island's Transport System**

Ministers recognise that one of the major threats to the quality of Island life is congestion and pollution – a threat which the Integrated Transport and Travel Plan (ITTP), to be debated in the States later in 2008, seeks to address. The task of weaning the citizen away from reliance on the car is an enormous challenge which many societies are seeking to tackle. There are no quick fixes here. Progress will be incremental – and will be achieved by the availability of sustainable and reliable alternatives which are acceptable to the car user.

The continued increase in number of bus passenger journeys in Jersey is very encouraging. The Jersey Annual Social Survey (JASS)<sup>[2]</sup> also indicates that there are less people travelling to work on their own in cars and more people travelling with others.

Last year a major new facility was provided for the Island when the Weighbridge was closed for redevelopment and bus operations transferred to the new Liberation Station, providing passengers with greatly enhanced facilities which have been very well received.

There has been an increase in bus usage. Passenger journeys have increased by 15% since 2005. There have also been improvements to the bus service provided, including cuts to evening fares and a reduction in the price of travel passes by an average of 25%.

### **Strategy for Waste**

The Council is acutely aware of the need to address the issue of dealing with the Island's waste. The Solid Waste Strategy has been successfully implemented, as approved by the States in 2005, and extensive work has been undertaken to enable proposals to be brought to the States this year for the replacement of the Bellozanne incinerator. A Liquid Waste Policy is also being developed to incorporate the latest population projections.

A recycling and composting target of 32% by 2009 was set in the Strategy for Waste. At the end of 2007 Jersey had achieved 30.4%, well on course to reach the 2009 target.

The target has subsequently been increased to 36%.

-

### **A Safer Island**

Since 2002, overall crime in Jersey has fallen by 14%. Ministers are pleased to note that the latest JASS survey shows improved public confidence in community safety. We have overseen significant improvements in the police public protection arrangements with total overhauls of procedures for addressing both domestic violence and child abuse. New partnership protocols with key agencies have been implemented and a new Police Force Law will be brought forward this year which includes provision for the establishment of a police authority.

The Island's first Criminal Justice Policy has now been developed. Part of this is the introduction of discretionary supervised release which will improve rehabilitation of prisoners, assist their re-integration back into society and help reduce re-offending.

Through the Building a Safer Society Strategy and the Safer St. Helier Project, the Council has developed a co-ordinated response to crime, public disorder and anti-social behaviour. Importantly, there have been measurable improvements in the level of perception of public safety at night, which has been achieved through partnership with members of the community.



This year, a number of significant pieces of legislation have been brought forward, or are imminent, notably the Sex Offenders Law, Disorderly Conduct and Harassment Law, Civil Asset Recovery Law, and amendments to the Firearms Law. A number of others are in the earlier stages of drafting, notably the Discrimination Law, Explosives Law and the Fire Service Law.

In July 2005, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons completed an inspection of La Moye and the published report made 149 recommendations for improvements in facilities, practise and procedures. Good progress has been made against 70% of the recommendations, the majority of these being fully met.

The Prison has recently completed a major staff recruitment drive with the approved FTE complement being increased from 130 in December 2005 to 172 for 2009.

## **Child Protection**

In his report Senator Syvret quite rightly notes that the issue of Child Protection should not be the focus of this vote. Members are, by now, well aware of the issues surrounding the Police investigation into historic child abuse and the Council of Ministers' response to this investigation. However, as specific comments have been made, we feel it necessary to once more clarify some of the issues. Senator Syvret's assertion that Ministers have 'failed to respond appropriately to concerns over systemic child protection failures' is inaccurate and grossly misleading.

Firstly, Members will remember that as a response to Senator Syvret's concerns over Child Protection in June 2007, the Council of Ministers agreed a three stage response –

- (1) to urgently assess whether any children were in immediate danger;
- (2) to commission an expert in child protection to conduct an independent review into child protection arrangements in the Island;
- (3) if issues remain unresolved, to bring a Proposition to the States to establish a Committee of Inquiry into child protection issues.

Throughout the turmoil of recent months, the Council of Ministers response has been wholly consistent with this approach. The first stage concluded that as far as is possible to know, no children are currently in danger – a view supported by the consultant community paediatrician. The second stage has been carried out by Andrew Williamson CBE, who will be issuing his report during the first week of July. The third stage has been agreed by the Assembly to commence at a time when it would no longer interfere with the on-going police investigation.

In addition to this three stage response, the Council of Ministers fully supports the appointment of June Thoburn, an expert with considerable experience and expertise, as head of Jersey's Child Protection Committee and has provided every assistance to the Howard League for Penal Reform during their review of the Island's penal system and youth custody arrangements.

Throughout the Police investigation, the Council of Ministers as a whole has done everything necessary to support the investigating team and we remain absolutely resolute in our determination to ensure that any failings of the past are put right.

Much has changed in recent years and progress on the recommendations outlined in the Bull Report has been strong. Jersey can be proud of the high standards of current child protection on the Island. The Council awaits the findings of Andrew Williamson's review with a view to implementing any recommendations that will help us to ensure that Jersey's child protection service sets the standard others will want to follow.

Members will be well aware that, Senator Syvret's dismissal from the post of Minister for Health and Social Services had absolutely nothing to do with current child protection arrangements or the historic abuse inquiry. In short, he was dismissed because his erratic and abusive behaviour led to a complete lack of confidence in his

competence as a Minister. It is significant that in his eight years with responsibility for Social Services and Child Protection he failed to visit social workers, children's homes or discuss any matters of concern with his managers.

### **Civil Servants Performance**

Each and every Minister is dismayed to witness the repeated, and unsubstantiated, attempts from some quarters to denigrate the Island's public workforce. The Report and Proposition claims as fact that, "the senior reaches of Jersey's civil service remain out-of-control, deficient, undisciplined, seemingly invulnerable and wholly unaccountable." This populist statement is simply not borne out by the evidence. On the contrary, robust mechanisms for ensuring the accountability of the senior civil service already exist.

The Report appears to overlook the fact that, under the States of Jersey Law, it is the Minister who is legally responsible and accountable for decisions. No Minister is therefore going to allow their officers to usurp their authority or to act in any way which conflicts with their legal responsibility.

This is a system of Ministerial Government in which significant checks and balances are in-built. The work of the Executive, whether it be that of Ministers or officers, is subject to many layers of accountability. Chief Officers of Departments are held to account for performance by the Council of Ministers, the States Employment Board and the Public Accounts Committee.

The creation of the post of Comptroller and Auditor General has provided a further layer of accountability for the States of Jersey. The current officeholder commented in his recent review of States spending that the States were not hopelessly inefficient, described the management layer as "thin" and commented that three departments in particular are under-resourced.

In addition, the annex to the Annual Performance Report indicates that the States of Jersey workforce is performing to a high standard across all departments. Whilst there are still improvements to be made, Jersey has a public sector workforce it can be genuinely proud of.

### **Developing the Waterfront**

Contrary to the Report and Proposition, there is no evidence for the contention that there has been an, "obsessive focus of the Waterfront". The Council is proud to have produced an architectural Masterplan, crafted by Sir Michael Hopkins, that will provide the Island with an exemplar scheme of the highest architectural and environmental standards incorporating three wonderful public squares, a new financial district and a residential quarter. But this development has always been intended to complement a much broader plan for St. Helier. The Waterfront, as part of the development and regeneration of the rest of the town, will bolster St Helier as the focus of sustained and sustainable economic growth. The Council has consistently promoted a balanced approach to development and regeneration that fully comprehends the likely displacement effects of an expanded and more economically vibrant town.

The Waterfront issue is not the focus of this comment. Comments on the Waterfront are included in the Council of Ministers' responses to the motions on the Rescindment of the Esplanade Quarter, the Vote of Censure in the Chief Minister and the Removal of WEB Directors.

### **Imagine Jersey**

The Vote of No Confidence Proposition claims that the Imagine Jersey 2035 consultation exercises ignores or fails to address the key challenges facing Jersey over the next few decades and that the exercise was designed as a means of 'manufacturing consent' for policies that the Council of Ministers feels a need to gain apparent public support for. This is absolutely not the case.

The effects of an ageing society, through increased longevity means that providing both for income in retirement

and care costs is becoming an increasing cost burden for the current and future working generations, ones that those generations simply cannot afford. The Imagine Jersey 2035 consultation exercises were developed and run by Involve, an independent specialist agency in increasing public participation. No policies have yet been formulated on the issue and no decisions have yet been made about the action to be taken in light of the responses to the consultation. It is extremely important to the Council of Ministers that any response will be informed and driven by the results from the consultation exercises.

Meeting the challenge of the ageing society is perhaps the greatest long term challenge that this generation will face and it is imperative to find a solution that will engage all elements of the States to make use of the Island's strong economy to safeguard and improve its society and environment.

In addition to managing the impact of an ageing society preparations are also being made to adapt the Island's services in order to meet the needs, hopes and aspirations of the ageing population.

A comprehensive, new and ambitious strategy for healthcare is being prepared in order to provide better care and a healthier population.

Proposals are currently being developed to build lifetime homes and sheltered accommodation to encourage people to move from larger properties, should they wish to do so, and so that vulnerable people may have places to call home for much, much longer.

The new Island plan, the EDAW strategy for the development and regeneration of St. Helier and the Skills Strategy are designed to reflect all of these needs and the Energy Policy and Waste Strategy are intended to integrate with these proposals in a way that helps to preserve the environment.

In fact, meeting this demographic challenge informs almost every major initiative being worked on across all States Departments and all of this takes place under the umbrella of the Social Policy Framework which is structured around promoting independence, supporting those at risk and protecting those in need to support the vision of independent households enjoying life in a thriving community.

The Council is acutely aware that this is only the beginning of a long road towards the Island's full preparations to meet this challenge and we are sure it will remain a principle challenge for future Councils and future States. However, this Council is proud to have taken the first steps on this difficult issue.

## **Summary**

The Report to the Vote of No Confidence Report and Proposition makes a number of sweeping statements that are unsupported by evidence. It fails to adequately review the record of the Council of Ministers over the last three years and seems to rely on attacks of a personal nature. The Council resolutely stands by what it has achieved and the progress it has made towards safeguarding the Island from present and future threats and improving the quality of life for Islanders of all ages.

Progress against the Strategic Plan has been strong and cross-departmental initiatives are now the norm rather than the exception in the development of major policy.

Far from being "directionless and disjointed" the Council of Ministers has demonstrated a sense of purpose and leadership in developing policy issues. Following the elections later in the year, the newly elected Council will inherit a foundation with which it can further develop and enhance these policies in 2009 and beyond.

We hope that the debate on this Proposition will focus, not on the politics of personality but on the important issues facing the Island and the progress of this Council in implementing major initiatives.

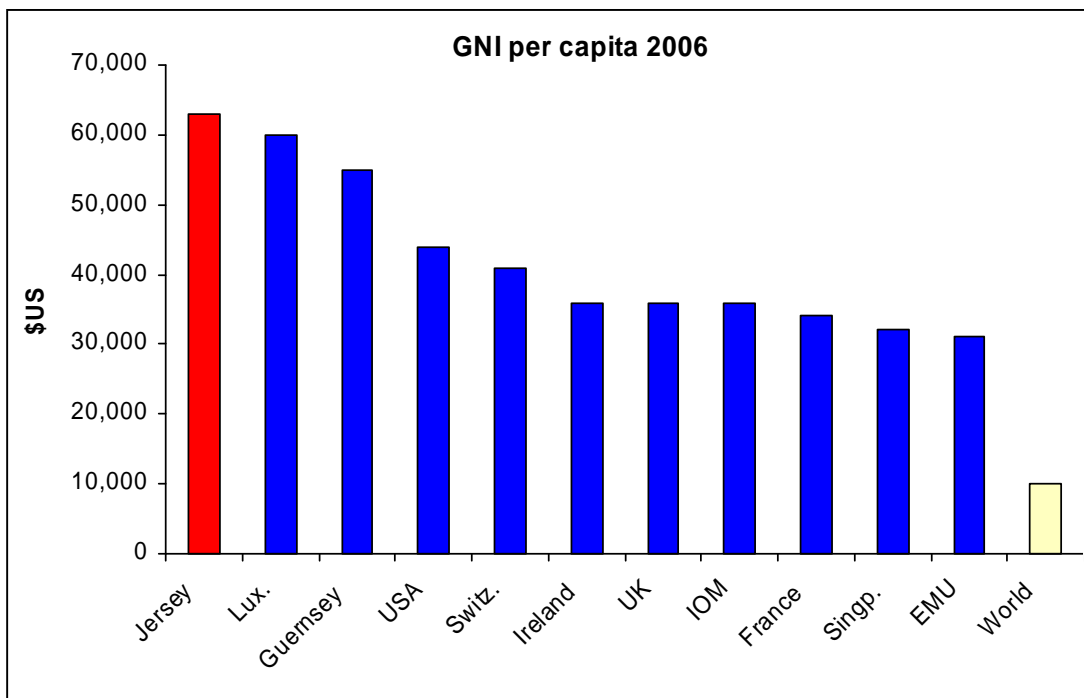
While the Council remains rightly proud of its record Ministers readily accept that mistakes have been made and nothing in these comments should be taken to suggest that they are complacent or self-satisfied. Every mistake is one too many, but as in all aspects of life the only way to avoid them completely is to avoid taking major

decisions and breaking new ground. The Council of Ministers will review what errors have been made and consider the lessons that have been learnt from them.

Ministers are also acutely aware that some of their policies are unpopular and that of late public perception is not as good as it would like. That is the nature of taking decisions which are not well received in the short-term, but which will we strongly believe go a long way to maintaining the success that is Jersey and the quality of life of our people.

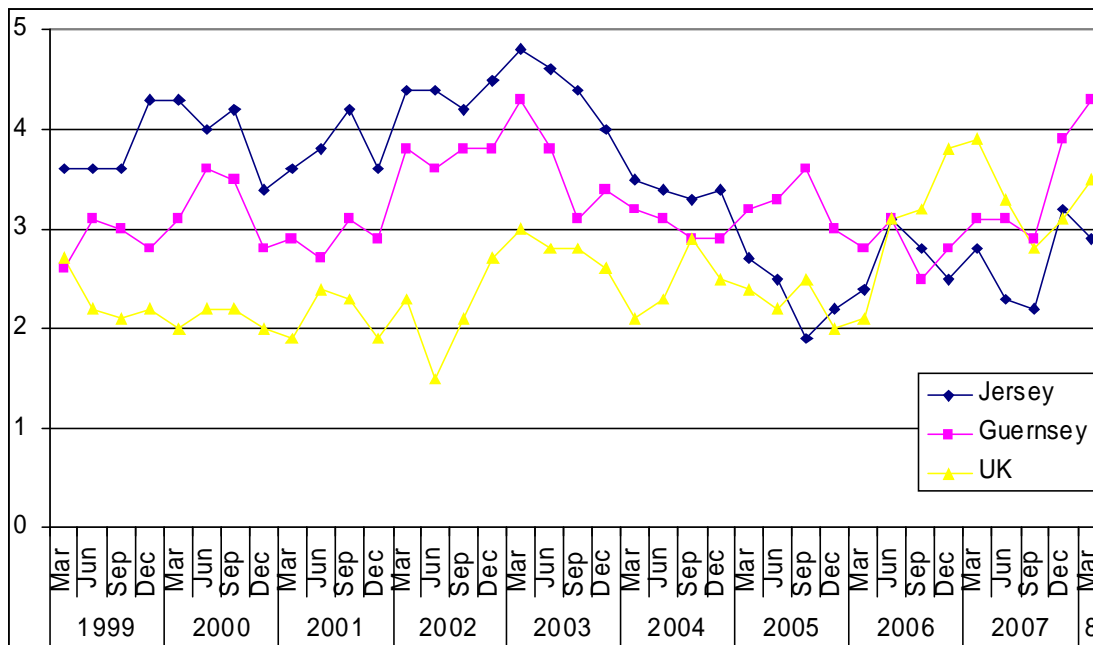
Fact is often different to perception and the record outlined above is one of solid achievement for which we seek the support of Members who we hope will emphatically reject this Proposition and allow the Council of Ministers to continue with its work throughout the remainder of its term of office.

**GNI per capita**



**Inflation**

Annual Percentage Change in RPI(X)



---

[1] States of Jersey Annual Performance Report, published on 17 June 2008

[2] 'Jersey Annual Social Survey' published by States of Jersey Statistics Unit on 6 February 2008