

# Government Plan 2022-2025: Scrutiny Review

Government Plan Review Panel

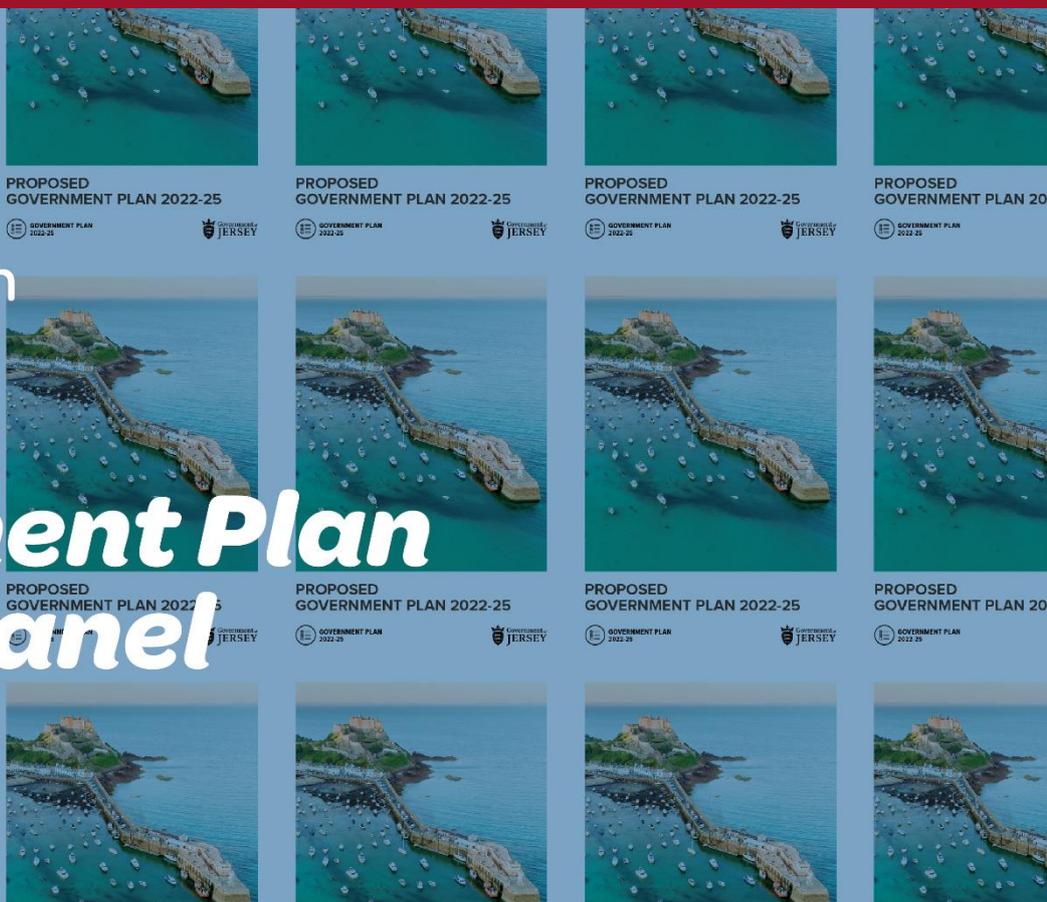
10 December 2021

S.R.21/2021



Government Plan  
2022-25 Review

## Government Plan Review Panel



States of Jersey  
States Assembly



États de Jersey  
Assemblée des États



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# 1 Chair's Foreword

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As the old adage goes; 'time will tell'. With elections next year, the present custodians of the public purse may not be in office as the effects of the Government Plan are felt by the public.

This Government Plan is the third and final to be produced by the current government. This report identifies the difficult tension that will be the legacy of the period 2018 – 2022.

It can be summed up in the words of the Treasury and Resources Minister who claims that the 'Government Plan leaves public finances in good order and plans for the ongoing long-term financial sustainability of the Island.' But in an earlier hearing the Minister also suggested that taxes may have to rise in the near future.

This contradiction does not provide the Scrutiny Panels or the public with confidence. Indeed, as this report states: 'across all Panels concerns have been raised about the continued uncertainty of funding and whether significant projects for the Island's future have been adequately prioritised. This concern was particularly apparent in the work conducted by the Children, Education and Home Affairs Panel report and is highlighted in the amendments to the Government Plan that the Panel has brought.'

There are 26 amendments to the Government plan, an indication of the widespread concern regarding the financial implications of the proposals amongst States Members and Scrutiny Panels.

Once again Scrutiny has been conducted in a shorter time period than necessary due to the late delivery by Government. Now that the elections have been moved back to June, it is likely that the time allowed for scrutiny will be shorter next year. These time pressures coupled with a reluctance from Government to share information in a timely fashion has made the work for officers and panels very difficult indeed.

I would like to sincerely thank everyone who has worked on these reports for their considerable efforts and dedication. The reports are thorough and will provide assistance to States Members as they prepare for the debate ahead. It is my hope that the next Government will take a different approach to scrutiny and work with the process in a respectful way to ensure that openness and accountability is achieved with regards to the important matter of public finances.

**Senator Kristina Moore**  
**Chair,**  
**Government Plan Review Panel**

## 2 Executive summary

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The purpose of this review is not to duplicate the work of the individual Scrutiny Panels, each of which has examined the projects and expenditure falling within their remits, but rather to provide a view on the over-arching themes raised by this year's Government Plan.

In particular, the Panel has focused on the accessibility of the document, the public understanding of the document and its contents and engagement with the public. In this regard, it is the Panel's belief that while the broad purpose of the Government Plan is understood by the public, people had significant difficulty in following the plan and evaluating the spending. The Panel has concluded that steps could have been taken, including the production of a summary document, which would have assisted in both public understanding and engagement.

The members of the Government Review Panel (and by extension the Scrutiny Liaison Committee) was also disappointed that, once again, a feature of its report is the delay in receiving information requested by the Scrutiny Panels. The Corporate Services, Environment, Housing and Infrastructure, Health and Social Security Panels and this Review Panel all experienced significant delays in receiving information which had a consequent impact on the timely production of amendments to the Government Plan and the panels' reports.

The Panel was also concerned by the experience of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Panel. In this case the Panel's request, which had sought specific detailed information about the formula used to allocate funding to schools, was refused by the Minister. In this instance, as in others where there has been an unwillingness to share information, the Panel has expressed concern about the lack of Ministerial transparency.

Although this panel has not sought to bring any amendments in its own right it has raised concerns which have been noted as a theme emerging from the reviews of the Scrutiny Panels. These themes include uncertainty around future funding, the continued impact of the pandemic and the transparency of reporting.

## 3 Introduction

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The proposed Government Plan 2022-2025 sets out the approach the Government of Jersey has taken in responding to COVID-19 whilst continuing to invest in the Common Strategic Policy priorities:

1. Put children first
2. Improve Islander's wellbeing and mental and physical health
3. Create a sustainable, vibrant economy
4. Reduce income inequality and improve the standard of living
5. Protect and value our environment.

The Plan outlines the investment proposed in each of these five strategic priority areas and also includes a number of proposed efficiencies within the Government.

Each of the reviews undertaken by the Standing Panels has looked at the projects in the Government Plan which fall within its remit, looking at the projects identified for additional revenue expenditure and capital expenditure last year, as well as new projects requiring additional revenue expenditure and capital expenditure in 2022.

The Government Plan Financial Annex has also been lodged which contains supporting information for the Government Plan 2022-2025.

Alongside these reviews, the Government Plan Review Panel has sought to take an overarching view of the Government Plan, how it has been communicated to the public and to States Members and whether it has been widely understood by the community.

This report also brings together a short summary of the overall findings of each of the Scrutiny Panel reports to provide an overarching view of the alignment of expenditure and investment with the Common Strategic Priorities.

The final purpose of this report is to provide a short commentary on the rebalancing measures outlined in the Government Plan and how and why the scrutiny of these measures has differed from the previous year.

## 4 Findings and Recommendations

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### Findings



#### **FINDING 1**

The general purpose of the Government Plan is understood by those who engage with the Government of Jersey.



#### **FINDING 2**

The length of the Government Plan 2022-2025 and the associated Annex makes it difficult for the public to engage with and there is no abridged version or summary.



#### **FINDING 3**

Printed copies of the Government Plan were not readily available and the locations in which they were available were not well promoted.



#### **FINDING 4**

The online version of the Government Plan does not contain adequate hyperlinks to assist in navigating the document and cross-referencing between different sections of the plan or the associated annex and accessibility options do not appear to have been promoted.



#### **FINDING 5**

'Citizen's space' and 'Have your say' platform remain under-utilised and under-promoted as platforms and were not used to engage or canvas opinion from Islanders on any aspects of the Government Plan 2022-2025.



**FINDING 6**

There were significant delays in supplying information requested by Scrutiny as part of their reviews of the Government Plan 2022-2025.



**FINDING 7**

Delays in providing information to Scrutiny Panels have a direct impact on the provision of robust scrutiny and on the production of amendments, reports and comments.



**FINDING 8**

The refusal of Ministers to provide information requested by Scrutiny calls the transparency of the Government Plan process and the willingness to engage with scrutiny into question



**FINDING 9**

Delays to reviews in some areas, such as the school sites review, has led to priority items slipping down the Council of Ministers' agenda.



**FINDING 10**

It is difficult to track projects which have been approved in previous plans but which have subsequently been removed or altered and funding reallocated. Further transparency would be achieved if such projects were clearly marked



**FINDING 11**

There are eight projects contained in the Government Plan 2022-2025 which are denoted as "Fund as Required" for which business cases have not been included in the Government Plan as the potential cost of each project remains uncertain.



**FINDING 12**

The efficiencies and rebalancing programme continues to use one off savings, both in preidentified items and as back-up measures. It is unclear what will be done to ensure £120 million of recurring efficiencies across 2020 to 2024 and what impact on public services these have had.

## Recommendations



**RECOMMENDATION 1**

The Council of Ministers should commit to producing a summary version of future Government Plans, which should be available as both a printed and online document once the Government Plan is lodged.



### **RECOMMENDATION 2**

The Council of Ministers should review its policy on the provision of printed versions of the Government Plan. Printed versions (or a printable version) of future and previous Government Plans should be made available at all Parish Halls, at the Jersey Library and at the States Assembly Information Centre.



### **RECOMMENDATION 3**

Future versions of the Government Plan must be formatted to include hyperlinks across the various sections of the plan and of the associated annex.



### **RECOMMENDATION 4**

Consideration should be given to increased promotion and use of existing platforms to canvas the views of engaged members of the public during development and post lodging of future Government Plans.



### **RECOMMENDATION 5**

Ministers and officers must ensure that the presentation period for policy provides sufficient time for meaningful and effective interaction with Scrutiny and must urgently review its processes for approval of responses in order to comply with the Code of Practice for Engagement between Scrutiny Panels and the Public Accounts Committee and the Executive.



### **RECOMMENDATION 6**

Projects which have been approved in previous plans but which have subsequently been removed or altered and funding reallocated should be clearly marked.



### **RECOMMENDATION 7**

Quarterly reporting including updated budgets should be introduced for the duration of each of the projects to ensure accountability.



### **RECOMMENDATION 8**

The Council of Ministers should, prior to May 2022, identify and communicate publicly a final figure of recurring efficiencies and impact of those, and one-off measures, on public services across its term of office.



The survey was open between 8<sup>th</sup> November to 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021. 188 responses were received, of these 39 were completed questionnaires and 149 were partial. Following data case cleaning (removal of cases in which no answers were given) 36 partial responses were included in the survey results. As such, in total there were **75 responses** to the survey. The majority of respondents who answered the question said that they knew what the Government Plan was.

The Chief Minister, Senator John Le Fondré, was asked about the accessibility of the document at a Public Hearing on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

**Senator K.L. Moore:**

*Sorry, I was asking how you expect to inform the public about the actual plan itself. How do you think the public will find it helpful?*

**The Chief Minister:**

*It lays out the plans and they will see, if they go through it, the links back to our original proposals in terms of the strategic vision when we originally established the Government Plan, and how that all ties through. It obviously is presented in a fairly simple way in certain areas for things like impôts/increases. So, I would have said it was laid out in a reasonably comprehensive, but I would have thought readable, way for this type of document for the public to understand. But on these levels a lot of them are done through the comms messaging as well and the direct engagement that we have done at various opportunities.*

The Government of Jersey's Director of Communications also gave evidence to the Hearing about the public engagement which had been undertaken since lodging the Government Plan 2022-2025. The Director of Communications said that (at the time of the hearing) two live-stream 'Ask the Minister' events had been held on social media together with a news release being sent to the Island's traditional media.

Alongside the media release announcing the publication of the proposed Government Plan 2022-2025, social media posts containing the same information were issued on 21<sup>st</sup> September. Subsequently, posts issued released details of the 'Ask the Minister' events and a video of the Chief Minister providing an overview of the plan. There does not appear to have been any further orchestrated public engagement or information posted since late September about the aims of the plan, the information it contains or how it will impact services and spending.

One of the findings made by this Panel in its review of the Government Plan 2021 - 2024 was that not enough of the communications budget was spent on 'commissioning surveys, collating high quality data or listening to Islanders' priorities'. In the joint Ministerial Response from the Chief Minister and the Treasury and Resources Minister it was stated that:

*The communications directorate supports on the advertising and marketing of surveys and consultations and spends a significant proportion of any advertising spend on channels that allows for two-way communications. Each of the department's head of communications uses a blended approach to make sure they receive, process and disseminate to Ministers the feedback they receive from these communication moments. This can include discussions with staff, comments on social media, letters to the JEP, round table discussions with senior and informed stakeholders (e.g., Chamber of Commerce), and quarterly meetings with editors. Recently, the directorate*

*has set up its own Facebook Group ‘Have Your Say’ and has been supporting SPPP with two new platforms for public engagement ‘Citizen Space’ and ‘Dialogue.’<sup>2</sup>*

During its hearing, the Panel also asked about the use of the Citizen’s Space and Have your Say platforms as these appear to be under-utilised and under-promoted. The Have Your Say Facebook platform has 367 members and was not used to canvas any opinions on the contents of the proposed Government Plan.

The Director of Communications responded that:

**Director of Communications:**

*We set up those platforms last year to support the departments in going out and having active citizen participation. Those platforms still exist but departments are taking on other measures of doing it. So the Chief Minister will be with the Youth Parliament on 24th November to make sure that we are getting engagement from those young people who are members of the Youth Assembly, but also individual departments will go out through their Director of Comms or through S.P.3 (Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance) to their individual stakeholder networks to see what progress is perceived that we have made since last year’s Government Plan and what we will be doing for this year’s Government Plan. The function of the Communications Department is to facilitate that dialogue, not to dictate what the dialogue is going to be.<sup>3</sup>*

At the same hearing, the Interim Chief Executive also gave some detail around prior public feedback (which is outlined later in this report in relation to alignment with Common Strategic Priorities) and engagement with the Government Plan.

**Interim Chief Executive:**

*I hope that the way that Islanders see the Government Plan is inevitably a highly technical document, which it needs to be to comply with the law. It is not an easy document for many people to engage with. I think that is a very fair point because of the constraints of a document of this kind and its predecessors that have been the same in that regard, but that for the most part what has been advanced here has been the subject of separate and detailed resident engagement.*

It is the view of the Panel that relatively simple additional steps could have been taken to facilitate public understanding and engagement with the Government Plan and the Common Strategic Priorities. These steps would also include ensuring accessibility for all members of the community and promoting that accessibility, such as the audio option available on Adobe readers.



**FINDING 1**

The general purpose of the Government Plan is understood by those who engage with the Government of Jersey.

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<sup>2</sup> [Scrutiny Review of the Government Plan: 2021 – 2024 \(S.R.16/2020\) – Joint Response of the Chief Minister and the Minister for Treasury and Resources](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Government Plan Review Panel – Public Hearing with the Chief Minister 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021 - Transcript](#)



#### **FINDING 2**

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## Liaison with Scrutiny

At the outset of the reviews undertaken by Scrutiny of the Government Plan 2021-2024, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was put in place as a framework for the liaison between Scrutiny and Government to assist in ensuring effective communication and timely responses to requests by Panels.<sup>4</sup>

The decision was made by the Chief Minister that a similar MOU was unnecessary for the reviews of the Government Plan 2022-2025. In correspondence with the Panel, the Chief Minister expressed the view that, as there was no shorter lodging period for the Government Plan 2022-2025 – in contrast to its predecessor – an MOU would not be required.<sup>5</sup>

Even without such an MOU it is the reasonable expectation of the Panels that their requests for information would be dealt with within the guidelines set out by the Code of Practice for Engagement between Scrutiny Panels and the Public Accounts Committee and the Executive.<sup>6</sup>

The Code of Practice states:

*Requests for information to a Department in relation to an established Review should be acknowledged promptly and the information provided within 5 working days, or, if clarification is needed, a date given by which the information will be provided, which shall not be greater than 10 working days. In the event that requested information does not exist, or does so but not in the form requested, Panels/PAC will be notified accordingly within 5 working days.*

As part of its review, this Panel sought to establish what direction, if any, had been given by the Chief Minister to facilitate fluid interactions with Scrutiny.

The Chief Minister responded as follows:

*In terms of the support and resource in place to ensure that Scrutiny's requests for information are dealt with in a timely manner and within the code of practice for engagement, the Ministerial Office is adequately resourced to process these requests, working with colleagues in the treasury and policy departments, including a central coordinating function around correspondence and information requests, and processing amendments. However, we rely on operational departments to produce information – and given the wide and extensive questions from panels, we cannot increase resource in every department. We have nevertheless prioritised requests for information, as you would expect.<sup>7</sup>*

Despite the assurance provided above by the Chief Minister, on a number of occasions the Standing Panels dealt with significant delays to the supply of information from Ministerial teams without sufficient notification. Some responses to questions were delayed by more than a month.

The difficulty in obtaining information and the impact on Scrutiny has also been a finding of the Review of both the Government Plan 2020-2023 and the Government Plan 2021-2024. In relation to the former, the Ministerial Response issued on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019 stated: 'We will be looking to improve the process for the next Government Plan.'<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> [R.29/2020](#) (Memorandum of Understanding)

<sup>5</sup> [Response from the Chief Minister to the Government Plan Review Panel](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Code of Practice for Engagement between Scrutiny Panels and the Public Accounts Committee and the Executive](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Response from the Chief Minister to the Government Plan Review Panel](#)

<sup>8</sup> [S.R.13/2019 Scrutiny Review of the Government Plan – Response of the Chief Minister](#)

Parliamentary Scrutiny acts as an important inspection system of the Government. It is the way that the States Assembly holds Ministers to account for their decisions and actions. This helps to improve government policies, legislation and public services. If changes are suggested, Scrutiny helps to make sure that the changes are fit for purpose and justified.<sup>9</sup>

Delays in providing information have a direct impact on the provision of robust scrutiny and on the production of amendments, reports and comments on the Government Plan 2022-2025.

Further, in the case of information requested by the Children, Education and Home Affairs Panel in relation to the Inclusion Review Report and proposed School Funding Formula, the request was initially refused by the Minister on account of him wishing to present the report to the Council of Ministers first. Whilst the Inclusion Report was shared with the Panel in confidence (although this was provided after the deadline for amendments), the School Funding Formula has yet to be shared with the Panel despite repeated requests. As distinct from the situation outlined in terms of delays, the refusal by a Minister to provide the information requested speaks to the transparency of the process and the Government's willingness to engage properly with the Scrutiny process. The Chair of the Panel took the step of making a statement in the States Assembly about the lack of forthcoming information and its impact on the scrutiny process.<sup>10</sup>



#### **FINDING 6**

There were significant delays in supplying information requested by Scrutiny as part of their reviews of the Government Plan 2022 -2025.



#### **FINDING 7**

Delays in providing information to Scrutiny Panels have a direct impact on the provision of robust scrutiny and on the production of amendments, reports and comments.



#### **FINDING 8**

The refusal of Ministers to provide information requested by Scrutiny calls the transparency of the Government Plan process and the willingness to engage with scrutiny into question



#### **RECOMMENDATION 6**

Ministers and officers must ensure that the presentation period for policy provides sufficient time for meaningful and effective interaction with Scrutiny and must urgently review its processes for approval of responses in order to comply with the Code of Practice for Engagement between Scrutiny Panels and the Public Accounts Committee and the Executive.

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<sup>9</sup> [The Role of Scrutiny – States Assembly website](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Statement to be made by the Chair of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel – Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021](#)

## 6 Alignment to Common Strategic Priorities

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One of the roles of the Scrutiny reviews is to consider whether the investment and expenditure outlined in the Government Plan is assisting in meeting the priorities set by the Council of Ministers when they took office. These priorities are listed in the Executive Summary of this report and of the individual panel reviews.

As an extension of the theme of public feedback earlier in this report, the Panel was keen to understand from Ministers how public feedback on the provision of services and the perception of the delivery of the priorities had been monitored to feed into the Plan and therefore whether, in the public mind, Common Strategic Priorities were being met

This was examined as part of the Panel's Public Hearing on 10<sup>th</sup> November with the Chief Minister and senior officers. Part of the evidence from which has already featured in this review in relation to public engagement.

### **Interim Chief Executive:**

*... I think the Government Plan is a crystallisation of all of the policies and programmes and intentions of the Government for the coming year together with how those will be financed. If this was the only point at which Islander opinion and feedback was gathered I think your point would be well made. It would be an incomplete and imperfect process. I am sure it can be improved because everything always can be. In practice, the vast majority, I believe, of what is in here has at earlier stages been the subject of more detailed input and engagement. The hospital project would be an obvious example of that. That is described and crystallised in the Government Plan as an intent but is subject to its own separate processes. I hope that the way that Islanders see the Government Plan is inevitably a highly technical document, which it needs to be to comply with the law. It is not an easy document for many people to engage with. I think that is a very fair point because of the constraints of a document of this kind and its predecessors that have been the same in that regard, but that for the most part what has been advanced here has been the subject of separate and detailed resident engagement.<sup>11</sup>*

However, despite the assurance expressed above by the Interim Chief Executive, it is the view of the Panel, as experienced during their work as Chairs of the individual Scrutiny Panels, that the process for collecting public input is not always systematic and would not have been carried out on projects which are pending review but have a high priority for some sections of the community.

### **Deputy R.J. Ward:**

*Some significant things that do not have outcomes yet, and we talked about education. The education sites review is not finished so the public would not have sight of that, and neither has the Scrutiny Panel. The education reform programme is not completed. We have not had the outcomes of the school spending formula, neither has the panel and the public certainly would not have. What I am trying to say is that if you are going to say that you have public input there are some things that you cannot possibly have because they have not been completed yet.<sup>12</sup>*

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<sup>11</sup> [Government Plan Review Panel Public Hearing with the Chief Minister – 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021 – transcript](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Government Plan Review Panel Public Hearing with the Chief Minister – 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021 – transcript](#)

The Panel's view, as expressed at the hearing, is that delays to reviews in a number of areas, the school sites review (including the Rouge Bouillon site) being an example, have meant that priorities have not been met and other items and expenditure have been able to take precedence as a result. The Panel's understanding is that the siting of town primary schools is still in the feasibility stage and no funding is allocated, despite the need, in either 2022 or 2023.<sup>13</sup>

It is recognised by the Panel that this term of office has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and that departments have struggled to deal with the necessary increase in workload and the diversion from what would have been primary tasks over the last 18 months.

However, the Panel remains of the view that in significant areas, a lack of political leadership and championing of priority projects has led to the delays outlined above.

In a Public Hearing held with this Panel on 10<sup>th</sup> November, the Chief Minister described the Government Plan as being a more 'flexible and responsive' document than its predecessor, the Medium-Term Financial Plan.<sup>14</sup>

In a response to the Panel's letter which sought an example for this assertion, the Treasury Minister responded that:

*The most obvious example of the flexibility is the ability of Government to react the Covid-19 pandemic. Under the MTFP, expenditure limits would have been set, and a process of amending the MTFP would have been required. Under the Government Plan, we were able to react to the requirements of the pandemic to support Islanders and the Economy in the Government Plan 2021 (continuing in this plan). This has meant that much needed funds for Covid have been made available to departments, via a separate head of expenditure, which would not have been possible in an MTFP.<sup>15</sup>*



#### **FINDING 9**

Delays to reviews in some areas, such as the school sites review, has led to priority items slipping down the Council of Ministers' agenda.

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<sup>13</sup> [Government Plan Review Panel Public Hearing with the Chief Minister – 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021 – transcript p13](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Government Plan Review Panel Public Hearing with the Chief Minister – 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021 – transcript](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Letter - Minister for Treasury And Resources To Government Plan Review Panel Re Government Plan - 30 November 2021, page 7](#)

## 7 Summary of Reviews

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### Panels' review outcomes

In line with the methodology used during previous reviews, all the Scrutiny Panels have agreed to use a common system to report on the status of each business case, as follows:



The Panel has reviewed the background information and is satisfied with the business case.



The Panel has reviewed the business case and either has concerns or considers that it needs more work, or further detail should be provided. It might also mean that the Panel considers it too early to make an informed decision. This may or may not lead to recommendations and/or amendments.



The Panel has reviewed the business case and is not satisfied or does not agree with the proposal. This may or may not lead to an amendment.

### Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

The Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel (CSSP) appointed an expert adviser to assist in its review and specific findings and recommendations are included in the report around the provision of key information and data. The first finding of the Corporate Services review is that the Government Plan does not adequately clarify the rationale and purpose of policy.

Overall, the CSSP was unsatisfied with the majority of programmes and the rationale for the 2022 funding bids, seven have been assigned a red 'RAG' rating. The projects relate to investment and expenditure on Information Technology, for which the Panel holds significant or severe concern about continued increases in and/or alterations of budgets.

These projects are:

- Modernisation and Digital – enhanced capabilities (GP20-OI3-09)
- Technology Transformation programme (GP20-OI3-14)
- MS (Microsoft) Foundation (major project)
- Integrated Tech Solution (ITS) (major project)
- ITS Release 3 & 4
- ITS Release 3 Additional
- Cyber (major project)

24 programmes have been assigned an amber rating and 25 have been assigned a green rating.

The Panel also raised concerns regarding outcome-based accountability, the need for transparent presentation of information and revenue allocation and raising measures.

### Economic and International Affairs Panel

Overall, the Economic and International Affairs (EIA) Panel was satisfied with the majority of programmes and the rationale for the 2022 funding bids, with none being assigned a red 'RAG'

rating. 3 programmes were assigned an amber rating and 17 have been assigned a green rating.

In concluding its report, the EIA Panel highlighted the time taken in relation to the submission of planning applications to approval stage for each of the Skateparks. The delays to this process caused the Panel to write to the Minister for Infrastructure on 11<sup>th</sup> May asking for an update and in addition, to raise the issue on numerous occasions at its Public Hearings with the Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture. While the EIA was pleased that the main skatepark at Les Quennevais Fields had received planning permission, it noted that the road to achieving this outcome had not been a smooth one and there were no clear answers about what caused the delays.

### **Children, Education & Home Affairs Panel**

Overall, the Children, Education and Home Affairs (CEHA) Panel was satisfied with the majority of programmes and the rationale for the 2022 funding bids. 38 programmes have been assigned an amber rating and 24 have been assigned a green rating with four allocated as red.

The programmes which received a red RAG rating were:

- Education Reform programme
- Improving Educational Outcomes: Early Years project. In addition, the CEHA Panel has brought forward amendments to the Government Plan which seek to allocate funding for the Early Years Policy Development Board (EYPDB) recommendations to be implemented during 2022, provide further funding for the targeted support for 2- to 3-year-olds from the Nursery Education Fund (NEF) and to reinstate the full grant amount for the Jersey Child Care Trust to allow for the accredited nanny scheme to continue in 2022.
- Education Demographic Pressures
- School Estates

### **Environment Housing and Infrastructure Panel**

One of the key findings of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure (EHI) Panel was a lack of transparency over how departmental budgets and resource are allocated to the Minister for Housing and Communities' remit.

Overall, the EHI Panel was satisfied with the majority of programmes and the rationale for the 2022 funding bids, with none being assigned a red 'RAG' rating. However, the Panel did highlight concerns over whether the funds allocated for certain projects were sufficient.

The Panel's report voiced concerns about the uncertainty that is still being caused by Brexit and around the funding for a number of significant projects, including:

- Tenants Rights
- Housing Policy Development Board and long-term plan
- Jersey National Park
- Climate Emergency Fund and Sustainable Transport.

### **Health and Social Security Panel**

Overall, the Health and Social Security (HSS) Panel is satisfied with the majority of programmes and the rationale for the 2022 funding bids, however, a red 'RAG' rating has been

assigned to the 'Jersey Care Model'. 14 programmes have been assigned an amber rating and 17 have been assigned a green rating.

The 'Jersey Care Model' has been provided with a red RAG rating by the Panel due to concerns about the progress of the establishment of the independent oversight board and the delays to the provision of information that is required to review the future of sustainable healthcare funding for Jersey.

In addition to this, the areas of concern include the allocation for Mental Health Services and the Health Insurance Fund (HIF). The Panel has indeed lodged two amendments seeking to increase the 2022 allocation for mental health and place safeguards on the transfer of funds from the HIF.

## Impact of Covid-19 pandemic

It is the view of the Council of Ministers, as expressed by the Treasury and Resource's Minister, Deputy Susie Pinel<sup>16</sup>, that the Government Plan 2022-2025 focuses on recovery and renewal for Islanders and for the Jersey economy as the immediate impact of the pandemic begins to reduce.

As outlined in an earlier section of this report, the Panel acknowledges the challenges that the pandemic has had on departmental workloads and the shift of focus that it has also caused in some areas.

As an overview of the work of Government and the continued provision of services, the Panel has sought to establish how the Government seeks to provide that recovery and what future action might be needed beyond the life of this Government Plan.

In her evidence to this Panel, the Treasury Minister has stated that:

*We have followed the advice of the Fiscal Policy Panel (FPP) and leave a position where budget return to balance by 2024 despite the pandemic, with a plan to meet the unforeseen costs of reacting to the Covid-19 global pandemic.*

It is the further understanding of the Panel, from evidence provided at a Corporate Services Panel Public Hearing with the Treasury Minister – and in line with the most recent findings of the FPP - that a rise in taxation may have to be considered by the next Treasury Minister following June's election.

### ***The Minister for Treasury and Resources:***

*There may well be a tax rise considered. We do not need to do it now, but that from the future point of view would have to be considered quite what tax and in what form. We have not got to looking at that in this Government Plan, but I think with the expenditure that is being incurred at the moment we may have to look at that.*<sup>17</sup>

It is the view of the Minister for Treasury and Resources that the 'Government Plan leaves public finances in good order, and plans for the ongoing long-term financial sustainability of the Island.'<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> [Response from the Minister for Treasury and Resources to the Government Plan Review Panel – 30 November 2021](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Corporate Services Panel Public Hearing with the Minister for Treasury and Resources](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Response from the Minister for Treasury and Resources to the Government Plan Review Panel – 30 November 2021](#)

However, across all Panels, concerns have been raised about the continued uncertainty of funding and whether significant projects for the Island's future have been adequately prioritised. This concern was particularly apparent in the work conducted by the Children, Education and Home Affairs Panel and is highlighted in the amendments to the Government Plan that the Panel has brought.

## Transparency

The Panels have also touched on transparency of reporting in their reviews and it is a matter raised at the Government Review Panel's Public Hearing with the Chief Minister<sup>19</sup> in relation to actual growth.

At the hearing it was highlighted that there was additional growth and capital expenditure that would aid in 'Putting Children First', this is highlighted as an additional £6.8 million<sup>20</sup>. While it is noted that the overall budget for the department of Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES) for 2022 has increased by £6.75 million, the net Revenue Expenditure in CYPES will only increase by £792,000 over what had been indicated in last year's plan.<sup>21</sup>

During the exchange at the hearing, the Chief Minister was pressed to express whether he believed this was properly represented as a growth in budget.

**Deputy R.J. Ward:**

*... It was clear in the public hearing<sup>22</sup> we had that £11.2 million of so-called growth in education, over £6 million of that was simply to repay deficits because schools have been running at a deficit for so long.*

**The Chief Minister:**

*It is still an improvement.*

**Deputy R.J. Ward:**

*Okay. I am just saying, do you see that as growth?*

**The Chief Minister:**

*Sorry, you have got less money here, you have got more money there, which we put in.*

**Deputy R.J. Ward:**

*So they were spending it anyway, they just should not have been spending it?*

**The Chief Minister:**

*Well, all I can say is they have got more money that has been put in and for children, for C.Y.P.E.S. as a whole, it is about £140 million over 4 years.*

The Minister for Treasury and Resources was also asked whether she believed that it is an appropriate and transparent way in which to report 'growth' in a department's budget?

*This plan proposes to invest further monies into our strategic priorities, including £45 million in 2022. This includes £8 million identified in previous plans, as well as £37 million of new investments (including hospital financing costs).” Much of the investment in Putting Children First had already been identified in previous plans –*

<sup>19</sup> [Government Plan Review Panel Public Hearing with the Chief Minister – 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021 – transcript](#)

<sup>20</sup> [Government Plan 2022 - 2025 p.123](#)

<sup>21</sup> [Annex to the Government Plan 2022 – 2025 p19](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Transcript - Children Education and Home Affairs Panel Public Hearing with Minister for Children and Education – 1 November 2021](#)

*Page 19 of the Annex 21-24 showed an increase of £6m between 2021 and 2022. Newly identified investment for this plan is set out in Appendix 3. Table 8 in the Annex to the Government Plan shows the changes in Heads of Expenditure, which separately includes both new and previous investment, but also other items such as service transfers and rebalancing. This is, in my view, very transparent.<sup>23</sup>*

It is the Panel's view that it is difficult to track projects which have been approved in previous Plans but which have subsequently been removed or altered and the funding reallocated. Further transparency would be achieved if such projects were clearly marked. The Panel continues to question the level of this transparency in a context in which there has been a refusal to provide the documentation requested by the Children Education and Home Affairs Panel (outlined in an earlier section of this report).

## Accountability

Following the work of the individual Panels, the Government Plan Review Panel sought an overview of the process by which accountability based on outcome was being encouraged.

The Panel's response from the Minister for Treasury and Resources included the following information.

*The Department for Treasury and Exchequer (T&E) collates, reviews and provides the financial information set out in the 'Our Financial Context' section of each Departmental Operational Business Plan (DOBP). Responsibility for the rest of the content of each DOBP rests with the Director General for each Department. With respect to accountability based on outcomes, the Island Outcomes and Indicators are published on the Jersey Performance Framework. They allow the Government of Jersey to monitor the sustainable wellbeing of Islanders over time. As part of the completion of Business Cases for inclusion in the Government Plan, Departments are required to consider the impact of the Business Case on sustainable wellbeing. This impact is set out in the Business Cases which are found at the Government Plan Annex.<sup>24</sup>*

The Sustainable Wellbeing Impact assessments are a requirement outlined in Article 9(9) of the Public Finance (Jersey) Law 2019.

The Panel sought to find out how consistently the approach to carrying out the assessments was applied across different departments and learned that during the preparation of the Business Cases for the Government Plan 2022-2025 guidance had been provided to departments.<sup>25</sup>

## Fund as required

It has been noted during the course of the Scrutiny reviews that there are eight projects denoted as 'fund as required'.

The projects in question are:

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<sup>23</sup> [Letter - Minister for Treasury And Resources To Government Plan Review Panel Re Government Plan - 30 November 2021, page 8](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Letter - Minister for Treasury And Resources To Government Plan Review Panel Re Government Plan - 30 November 2021, page 7](#)

<sup>25</sup> [Letter – Chief Minister to the Government Plan Review Panel – 7 December 2021](#)

Project	Dept	Minister	Government Plan page
Covid-19 Helpline	CLS	MSS	P43
Covid-19 Test and Trace Programme and Technology	JHA	MHSS	P44
UK/EU TCA Biosecurity Border Controls and Vienna Convention Vehicle Testing	IHE	MENV	P57
Future Fisheries and Marine Resources Management	IHE	MENV	P70
Disposal of Recycling Materials	IHE	MINF	P70
Glass Contract	IHE	MINF	P71
Brexit Transition - Legal and Policy Support	JHA	MHA	P79
Climate Emergency Fund and Sustainable Transport	SPPP	MINF	P69

A number of these projects fall within the remit of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure (EHI) Panel and have, therefore, been noted within that Panel's report and are subject to findings as part of that review.

In its report, the EHI Panel have committed to closely monitor the progress of projects which fall within its remit and, in the case of the UK/EU TCA Biosecurity Border Controls and Vienna Convention Vehicle Testing and Future Fisheries and Marine Resources Management projects, have issued amber RAG ratings for the projects, reflecting the uncertainty around funding levels.

In addition, concern about the uncertainty around resourcing these projects was raised by the Corporate Services Panel during their evidence gathering. This concern focused on the accountability and transparency of funding without a robust business case to support the funding. With the exception of the Climate Emergency Fund, each of the projects has been marked for funding from the General Reserve. At the Corporate Services Panel Hearing held on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> November, the Treasury Minister was asked whether there was adequate provision in the general reserve to cope with the costs.<sup>26</sup> The matter was also addressed in correspondence with the Treasury Minister.<sup>27</sup>

During fact-checking by the Treasury and Exchequer it was noted that the Panel's position was understood but that Treasury did not agree with the conclusion drawn.

Despite the assurances given, the collective view of the Government Plan Review Panel is that there is a public expectation that all projects require rigorous budgetary oversight. This is to some extent evidenced by the responses provided to the Panel's public survey on the Government Plan with 31 of 39 (79%) respondents believing that a full budget for the projects should be provided before the spending is approved.<sup>28</sup>

It is acknowledged that the nature of a number of these projects means that there is uncertainty about the level of future need, however, the Panel believes that, to ensure that appropriate funding is delivered and that there is suitable accountability at each stage, there should be an

<sup>26</sup> [Transcript Corporate Services Panel Public Hearing with the Treasury Minister – 12 November 2021](#)

<sup>27</sup> [Letter from the Treasury Minister to the Corporate Services Panel – 28 October 2021](#)

<sup>28</sup> [Research - Survey of Public Perception of the Government Plan 2022-25 - 23 November 2021, page 11](#)

increased level of reporting in each case and the updated financial position should be published on a quarterly basis.

It is felt that these updates will assist the work of Government and will tie in with findings 7, 23, 25 and 28 of the Environment Housing and Infrastructure Panel's report.<sup>29</sup>



#### **FINDING 10**

It is difficult to track projects which have been approved in previous plans but which have subsequently been removed or altered and funding reallocated. Further transparency would be achieved if such projects were clearly marked



#### **FINDING 11**

There are eight projects contained in the Government Plan 2022-2025 which are denoted as "Fund as Required" for which business cases have not been included in the Government Plan as the potential cost of each project remains uncertain.



#### **RECOMMENDATION 7**

Projects which have been approved in previous plans but which have subsequently been removed or altered and funding reallocated should be clearly marked.



#### **RECOMMENDATION 8**

Quarterly reporting including updated budgets should be introduced for the duration of each of the projects to ensure accountability.

## **Borrowing**

The borrowing required to fund the £804 million budget for the Our Hospital Project has been well examined in other reviews and has been the subject of public discussion for some time. The community has also been appraised of the use of a revolving credit facility as a source of emergency funding for COVID-19 related spend and projects.

It is now known that the full capacity of the revolving credit facility was not used to fund the emergency spending of the Pandemic and, in fact in recent weeks, it has been announced that the Minister for Treasury and Resources has agreed to allocate a proportion of this funding to the Our Hospital Project in lieu of the first bond issuance for that project. The bond issuance is not taking place before the end of 2021 and funding is required to fund ongoing project costs.

The Minister for Treasury and Resources was asked to explain how the debt policy limits the uses of external financing and whether a change to those conditions would be considered for other projects, partly in the context outlined above and also in response to calls for borrowing to fund the Climate Emergency Fund and other priority projects.

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<sup>29</sup> [S.R. 18/2021 Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel – Government Plan 2022 – 2025 Review](#)

*The debt policy (Debt Framework) is a Report to the Assembly incorporating the Council of Ministers policy on obtaining financing (required under the Public Finances Law) and the Debt Strategy of the Minister for Treasury and Resources. Limitations on the level of financing/borrowing permitted are determined through the approvals provided separately by the Assembly either through individual Propositions or the Government Plan. It is difficult to determine when borrowing or the use of reserves might or might not be appropriate based on individual circumstances. The most recent obvious example of an emergency is the COVID pandemic for which it was the Assembly who determined the most relevant source of funding. Funding for the response to Climate Emergency, will be further considered in the Carbon Neutral Roadmap to be debated in early 2022, and the next Government Plan. From a personal perspective I believe that the proposed levels of borrowing within the current Government Plan are appropriate for our fiscal position and I would not be in favour of additional debt being raised at this time to support the transition to carbon neutrality.<sup>30</sup>*

## 8 Rebalancing measures

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Last year the Government Efficiencies Review Panel conducted scrutiny of the proposed efficiencies and rebalancing measures included in the Government Plan 2021-2024 lodging a report detailing its findings and recommendations [[S.R.17/2020](#)].

As part of this year's work, each standing Panel has conducted a review of efficiencies attributed to Ministers under their remits, however, in noting the winding up of the Government Efficiencies Review Panel, this Panel included oversight of the Rebalancing Programme as outlined in the Government Plan 2022-25.

This section looks at the transparency of the Programme as well as its impact upon the provision of services.

### Transparency and the impact on service provision

In its report on the Government Plan 2021-2024, the Government Efficiencies Review Panel made a number of findings, some of which still resonate a year later.

**Finding 6:** *The last minute amendment by the Council of Ministers to reinstate the funding for the Office of the Public Ombudsman is yet more evidence that the Government simply proposed reduced budgets without truly considering or understanding the impact on already disenfranchised members of the community and without due regard for Common Strategic Priorities, especially Improving Islanders' Wellbeing and Improving Islanders' Standard of Living.*

**Response:** *The Government is required to produce a balanced budget and identify means by which this can be achieved. Proposed measures are debated and the Government will act on the decisions of the Assembly. It is normal to respond to some proposed amendments before and during the debate. The proposal not to implement the Ombudsman in 2021 was accepted.<sup>31</sup>*

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<sup>30</sup> [Letter - Minister for Treasury And Resources to Government Plan Review Panel Re Government Plan - 30 November 2021, page 6](#)

<sup>31</sup> [S.R.17/2020 Res.](#)

The Panel has noted that advice given to the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel has identified the need for the Government to provide greater information to allow assessment of the success of efficiencies (and rebalancing) that have taken place. That Panel's report has specifically recommended that the Government should identify practical benchmarks against which costs can be scored.

In a public hearing with the Panel the Chief Minister highlighted that some efficiencies and rebalancing measures may be small amounts of only £4,000. The Interim Chief Executive further explained how these could be achieved.<sup>32</sup> It is felt that, overall, it is difficult to identify exactly where a saving may be coming from and under what action.

The Panel notes that the Government Plan 2022-2025 sets out the following (and this information was cited by the Minister for Treasury and Resources<sup>33</sup>) as the measure by which Government was ensuring that departments do not come under undue pressure to find savings in a way that is detrimental to the delivery of services:

*During the development of the Government Plan 2022- 2025, the Departments for CYPES (Children, Young People, Education and Skills) and IHE (Infrastructure, Housing and Environment) found it challenging to identify measures to meet the full initial target requested, in part due to the timescales required to put forward proposals and due to some uncertainties or market conditions which cannot be confirmed at this time.*

*As such, the Government Plan sets out (on page 83) the following with the proposed approach to be taken: "Plan D: Non-pay inflation available to departments is reduced to the same value as undelivered targets. Departments (CYPES and IHE) will continue to work with the Treasury & Exchequer to determine the extent to which they can implement saving measures to achieve their targets, one off or recurring i.e. Plan B or C. Plan D should be considered as the last option."*

The Chief Minister highlighted that Plan D was a final resort:<sup>34</sup>

*"So the plan D, which Andy can elaborate on further, but that is what is written down and which we covered in the quarterly hearing, I think, with C.S.S.P., essentially plan D is the end stop amount. So it will achieve a one-off saving to get us to the target and that is on raising part of the non-staff inflation budget and reducing that. The point that was covered at the time was that I think departments in the past did not have an inflation budget, if I recall, and so they have just got a smaller one now, which is therefore bigger than what they have had previously, loosely. So that was the fall-back, but also we were pointing out that again with the whole levels of uncertainty, if you look at Health and you go back 6, 7 years, Health was a black box and you could never save any money out of it, so we are kind of challenging the review that Education is that same black box and saying: "We think you need to keep the pressure on" and it may be, having said all that, with the volume of that budget and with the growth, bearing in mind the level of growth that is in there as well, so C.Y.P.E.S., £140 million over the next 4 years, are you seriously going to tell me they are going to spend every penny of that year's allocation during 2022? So I think that is kind of the loose position, is it not, or high-level position?"*

However, the Panel is concerned that it may not be clearly communicated when a rebalancing measure has failed to meet its originally stated target, what alternative has been used and

<sup>32</sup> [Transcript - Government Plan Review 2022-25 - Chief Minister - 10 November 2021, page 36](#)

<sup>33</sup> [Letter - Minister for Treasury and Resources to Government Plan Review Panel - 30 November 2021](#)

<sup>34</sup> [Transcript - Government Plan Review 2022-25 - Chief Minister - 10 November 2021, page 41](#)

what impact this has had on public finances and services provided. Indeed, the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel has identified efficiencies, such as reviewing and securing reduction in non-staff budget, provide no certainty of where spend reductions will come from within the Justice and Home Affairs Department and as such it cannot ascertain if the figure given is achievable.

The Panel would also highlight that the Government Efficiencies Review Panel in its report on the Government Plan 2021- 2024 found that “Not only is the original definition of an ‘efficiency’ flawed, it has been widened to encompass a swathe of cost cutting measures”.<sup>35</sup> It has again been confirmed by the Chief Minister that one off items, such as savings due to staff vacancies, have been used.<sup>36</sup>

The Panel highlights that one off measures and income have been used to meet the rebalancing and efficiencies target again for this year. Page 87 of the Plan highlights that meeting this figure of £129,000 will be met through further Target Operating Model review processes and/or the Zero-based budgeting programme. However little mention is made of previous years, which calls into question how the Government will have transparently achieved previous recurring savings by the end of its term and over the course of this Government Plan.

In its review of the Government Plan, the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel has made the following finding:

*There are no efficiencies assigned to the Minister for Housing and Communities and Minister for the Environment. There are proposed efficiencies totalling £500k under the remit of the Minister for Infrastructure which relate to proposed recurring spend reductions by Jersey Property Holdings.*<sup>37</sup>

The Children, Education and Home Affairs Panel has made the following related recommendations as part of its review:

**Recommendation 1:** *The Panel is concerned about the rationale for the removal of a social worker post which is planned as a £50,000 recurring spend reduction. The Minister for Children and Education should ensure that the impact of the cost reduction is be assessed through the quarterly performance report for the department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills and an update provided to the Panel in advance of the Government Plan 2023-2026.*

**Recommendation 2:** *The Minister for Children and Education should ensure that the proposed efficiency savings are not impacting service delivery within the Integrated Services and Commissioning service. An assessment of this reduction should be undertaken on a bi-annual basis against the new people strategy and any negative impact on services or wellbeing of staff rectified.*<sup>38</sup>



## FINDING 12

The efficiencies and rebalancing programme continues to use one off savings, both in preidentified items and as back-up measures. It is unclear what will be done to ensure £120 million of recurring efficiencies across 2020 to 2024 and what impact on public services these have had.

<sup>35</sup> [S.R.17/2020 Res.](#)

<sup>36</sup> [Transcript - Government Plan Review 2022-25 - Chief Minister - 10 November 2021, page 37](#)

<sup>37</sup> [S.R.18/2021 - Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel Review of the Government Plan 2022 – 2025](#)

<sup>38</sup> [S.R.16/2021 – Children Education and Home Affairs Panel Review of the Government Plan 2022 – 2025](#)



### RECOMMENDATION 9

The Council of Ministers should, prior to May 2022, identify and communicate publicly a final figure of recurring efficiencies and impact of those, and one-off measures, on public services across its term of office.

## 9 Conclusion

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As stated at the outset, the main purpose of this Panel has been to provide an over-arching view of the Government Plan 2022-2025. There is a recognition that this plan is the final one to be produced by this Government and covering the priorities set at the beginning of this Council of Ministers' term of office.

This report highlights that there are areas of concern in relation to the allocation of funding, the financial implications of proposals and the Government's commitment to the Common Strategic Priorities set at the start of this Council of Ministers' term of office.

Importantly, however, it is the view of the Panel that more should have been done to engage with the community about the importance of this content for the Island's future and to ensure that there was a real understanding of the direction being taken and the allocation of public finances.

## 10 Witnesses and Evidence Gathered

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A Public hearing was held with the Chief Minister, Senator John Le Fondré:

- [Transcript - Government Plan Review 2022-25 - Chief Minister - 10 November 2021](#)

Responses to written questions were received from the Minister for Treasury and Resources:

- [Letter - Minister for Treasury and Resources to Government Plan Review Panel re Government Plan - 30 November 2021](#)

### Public Perception Survey

The Government Plan Review Panel conducted an online survey in order to gain public perception of the Government Plan 2022-25. The survey ran from 8 November to 23 November 2021 and was promoted via the States Assembly social media channels and 'meet and greet' public sessions run by the Panel.

As non-probability (voluntary) sampling was used there is difficulty in identifying sampling error, bias and non-response rate. As such the research cannot be seen as statistically representative, however it is still a useful tool in allowing the public to share their views.

188 responses were received, of these 39 were completed questionnaires and 149 were partial. Following data case cleaning (removal of cases in which no answers were given) 36 partial responses were included in the survey results. As such, in total, there were **75 responses** to the survey. The Panel is grateful to those who took the time to share their views.

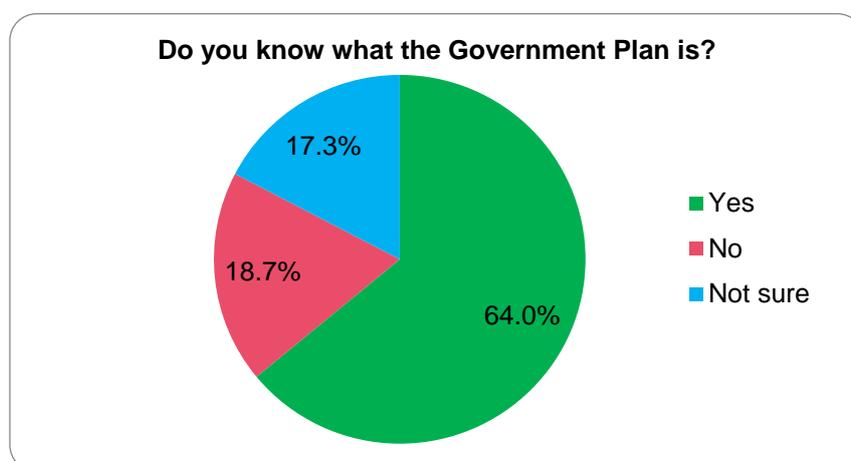
The survey explored a number of topics concerning the Government Plan, including:

- knowledge and awareness the plan
- ease of navigation and understanding of the document
- views on the meeting of the Common Strategic Priorities
- views on proposed government expenditure
- views on proposed revenue measures
- views on proposed borrowing
- views on proposed rebalancing and efficiencies

Full results of the survey have been uploaded to the [Scrutiny website](#),<sup>39</sup> however the Panel wishes to highlight the following points.

### Knowledge and awareness of the Plan

The preliminary section of the survey asked respondents if they knew what the Government Plan was, over two thirds indicated that they did. The Panel would highlight that during previous qualitative research, conducted by the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel,<sup>40</sup> a key finding was confusion between the Government Plan and Island Plan, however as discussed below there were only marginal mentions of the Island Plan, despite the Bridging Island Plan document being publicised in a similar timeframe.



Number of respondents (n) =75

<sup>39</sup> [Research - Survey of Public Perception of the Government Plan 2022-25 - 23 November 2021](#)

<sup>40</sup> [Research - Focus Groups full presentation - 20th November 2020](#)

*“To estimate the financial income and outgoings of the island. To then look at what else can be afforded with what is left. (Nothing these days) To look at short, medium and long term plans and take into account any budgeting needed for these. It should look at how to improve the overall life for all islanders but will fall short I am sure.”*

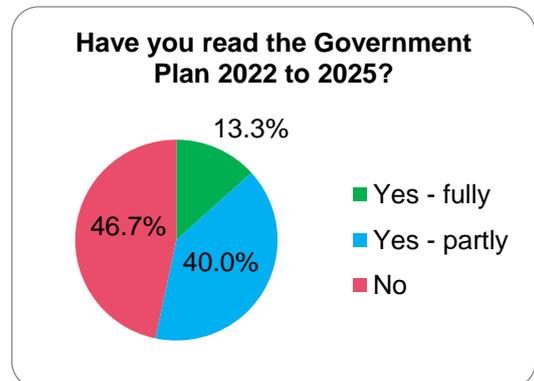
Varied and mixed responses were given when asking participants what they understood to be the purpose of the Government Plan. The most common themes given were identifying resources and budgets needed (24/60 responses), to set out priorities/policies/services (22/60), 8 responses gave negative views of the Government, interestingly 2 comments mentioned the Alliance Party. Only 1 mentioned the Island Plan indirectly stating the purpose to be “To govern how buildings will be built over the term of the plan”. The WordCloud below highlights the analysed themes of comments given, the larger the text the more a theme was mentioned:

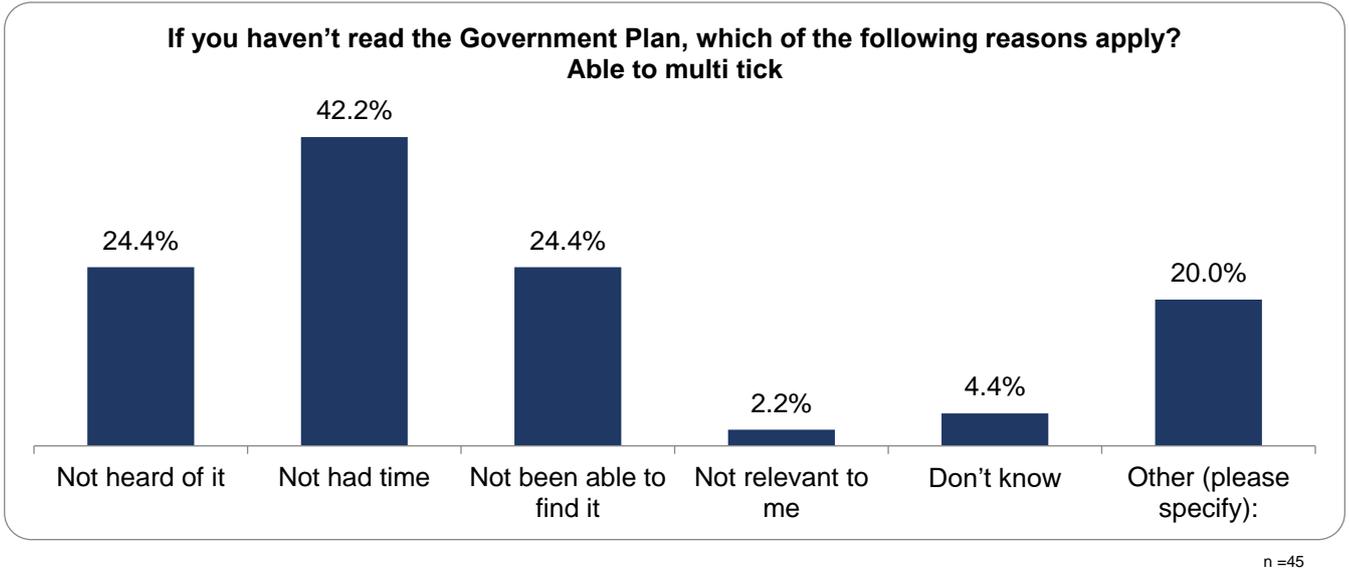


WordCloud, comments on “purpose of the Government Plan” coded into themes.

Of the 75 respondents, only 10 indicated that they had read the Government Plan fully, a further 30 stated they had done so partly. 35 specified had not read the Government Plan.

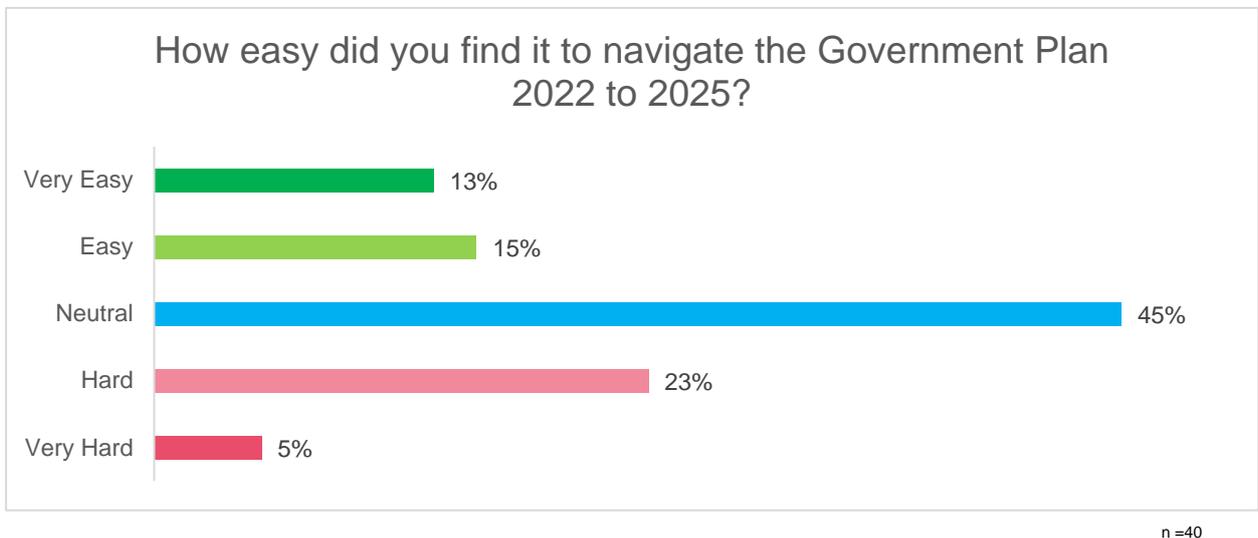
The largest reason for not having read the document related to not having the time, with 19/45 (42%) giving this reason. A quarter of those responding indicated that they had not heard of the Government Plan, with a quarter highlighting that they had not been able to find it. “Other” reasons given included accessibility issues and mistrust of the content.



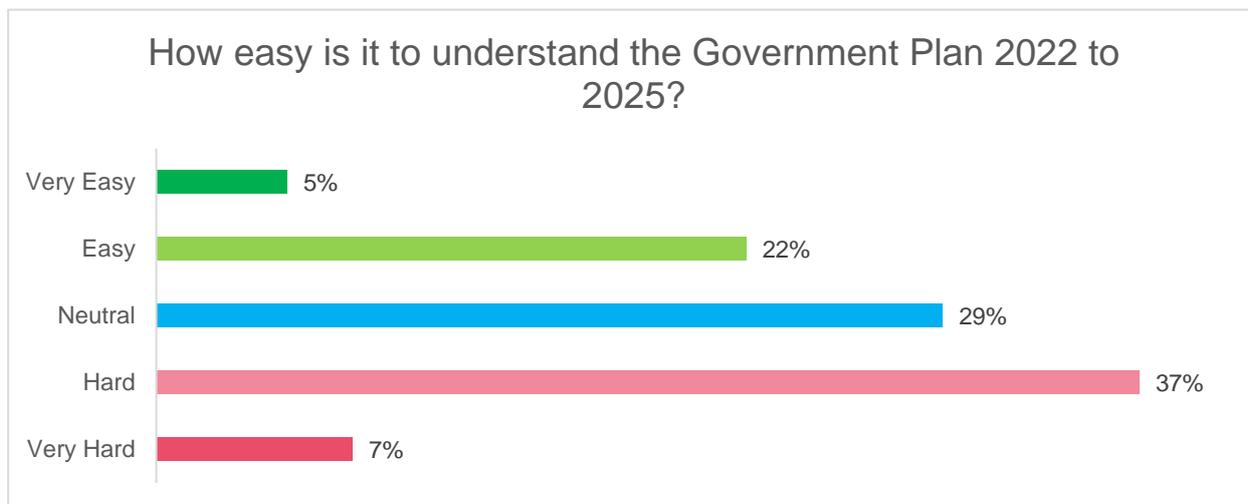


### The Government Plan document

The Panel was interested in exploring how easily Islanders found it to navigate the Government Plan. Removing 9 respondents who answered “Don't know”, results were mixed, with 28% (11/40) of respondents both answering that they had found it either hard or easy to navigate.

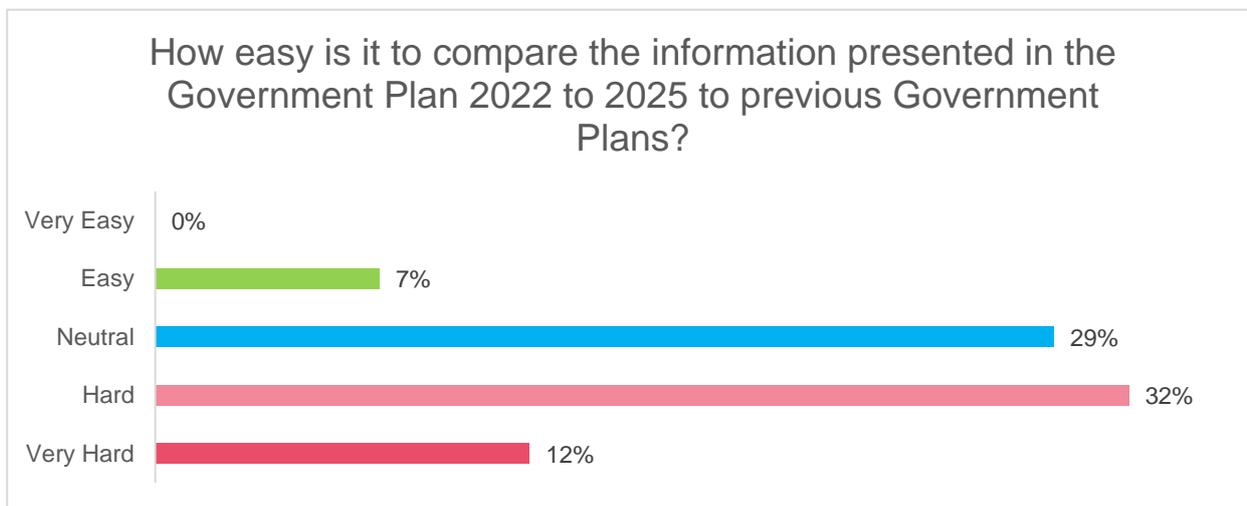


However when asked how easy it was to understand the Government Plan, 44% (18/41) found it hard to do so compared to 27% (11/41) who found it easy to do so.



n =41

Ease dropped further when asked how easy it was to compare the information presented in the Government Plan 2022-2025 to previous Government Plans. Only 6% (3/33) felt it easy to do so, none very easy, and 44% (18/33) found it hard or very hard to do so. It should be highlighted that a further 15 respondents answered “don’t know”.



n =48

Respondents were given the opportunity to add further comment about how easy it was to read and understand the Government Plan, with 27 participants choosing to do so. Many expressed the inaccessibility of the document and the need to use plain English. Some made some suggestions, including the publication of a condensed version alongside a fuller document, as well as highlighting the need for hard copies and difficulty in using PDFs. The Panel would mention the following comments:

Government Plan Review Panel Government Plan 2022 – 2025 Review

*"I read the PDF version which doesn't seem like the intended format for it to be read (surprising if the intention is for it to be ready by the largest amount of islanders). Formatting is all over the place. Hyperlinks in the contents page would be useful for instant navigation. Otherwise, headings were clear and text easily digestible, nevertheless, in terms of real content it was lacking - it seemed to be mostly a political fluff piece with no detail on what the plans are - just vague indications that money will be spent on X with no description of what will be achieved and how."*

*"Too long and too biased and promotional in nature and lacks factual underpinning of why certain priorities were chosen. Document should set out facts, action points as well as challenges (every action will have them!) and scrutiny comments so readers can understand how and why (or not as the case may be) an initiative has been supported. It should not read like a glossy political manifesto!"*

*"Needed a lawyer to fathom it out!"*

*"I asked for a hard copy from the town hall and they said they weren't giving any out, it was only available online. It is an extremely hard document to only read online, hence why I gave up partial way through."*

## Appendix 1

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### Terms of Reference

#### **Government Plan 2022 - 2025 Terms of Reference**

To coordinate the overall scrutiny of the 2022-2025 Government Plan. This will include responsibility for:

- 1) Coordinating the scrutiny of the Government Plan (projects, sections, etc.) by the standing Panels. Panels will be guided to use the following criteria as a guide:
  - a. Where funding over £500,000 has been allocated
  - b. Where funding has been withdrawn or decreased significantly from the previous year
  - c. Where funding has been increased significantly from the previous year
  - d. Projects which the Panels consider are of most concern (as a result of, for instance, delays, deferrals, overspends or because they are not in keeping with Common Strategic Priorities)
  - e. Projects which have been identified as of concern by stakeholders
  - f. Projects which are contentious and/or in the public eye.
  - g. Projects where insufficient information has been provided and more information is sought
  - h. Concern is held on the project's alignment with Common Strategic Priorities, social impact and impact upon children.
- 2) Undertaking an overarching review of the Government Plan 2022 – 2025 to determine whether, overall, funded projects meet Ongoing Initiatives, Common Themes and Common Strategic Priorities.
- 3) Considering the financial, social and administrative implications that rebalancing Government finances may have on Islanders.
- 4) Considering overall spend and growth outlined in the Government Plan.
- 5) Considering the format, presentation and the ease with which the Government Plan can be read and understood by the public and States Members.

## Panel membership

The Panel comprised of the following States Members:



Senator Kristina  
Moore (Chair)



Connétable Mike  
Jackson



Deputy Inna Gardiner



Deputy Mary Le  
Hegarat



Deputy Robert Ward



Deputy David  
Johnson

## Appendix 2

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### Reports by the Standing Scrutiny Panels

#### [Children, Education and Home Affairs Government Plan 2022 – 2025 Review](#)

- *Responding Ministers: Ministers for Children and Education and for Home Affairs*

#### [Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel Government Plan 2022 – 2025 Review](#)

- *Responding Ministers: Chief Minister, Treasury Minister*

#### [Economic and International Affairs Government Plan 2022 – 2025 Review](#)

- *Responding Ministers: Ministers for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture and for External Relations*

#### [Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Government Plan 2022 – 2025 Review](#)

- *Responding Ministers: Ministers for the Environment, Housing and Communities and for Infrastructure*

#### [Health and Social Security Government Plan 2022 – 2025 Review](#)

- *Responding Ministers: Ministers for Health and Social Services and for Social Security*

### List of amendments to the Government Plan 2022-2025

In total there were 26 lodged amendments to the Government Plan 2022, with Scrutiny Panels lodging 12 of these. A list and brief summary of these is included below:

Amendment	Proposer	Outline
<a href="#">Amendment 1</a>	Senator Mézec	This amendment seeks to enable the Housing Minister and Treasury Minister to authorise a change in the social housing rents policy to cap rents at 80% of the market rate rather than 90%.
<a href="#">Amendment 2</a>	Connétable Jackson	This amendment seeks to enable the undertaking of an independent review of the Island's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
<a href="#">Amendment 3</a>	Deputy Southern	This amendment seeks to expand Eligibility for the Health Access Scheme to include all those ordinarily resident in the Island by 2023 and to specify that the role of the Health Insurance Fund in meeting the requirement to subsidise the cost of G.P. consultations and the cost of prescriptions and other primary care services shall be maintained during a full

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		review of future health costs proposed to start in 2022.
<a href="#">Amendment 4</a>	Senator Valois	This amendment seeks to reinstate the original business case funding request for the project “Regulatory Sustainability”.
<a href="#">Amendment 5</a>	Deputy Gardiner	This amendment seeks to identify and ensure ongoing funding for the Inclusion project run by the Youth Service and fund a 2-year pilot of a transition program within the Inclusion Project.
<a href="#">Amendment 6</a>	Deputy Ward	This amendment seeks to create a bus pass system to enable all Islanders 18 years old or under to unlimited free access to the bus network.
<a href="#">Amendment 7</a>	Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel	This amendment seeks to remove the ability to borrow £20.359 million for use in the Fiscal Stimulus Fund.
<a href="#">Amendment 8</a>	Children, Education & Home Affairs Panel	This amendment seeks to reinstate the Jersey Child Care Trust’s full grant for 2022.
<a href="#">Amendment 9</a>	Health and Social Security Panel	This amendment seeks to increase the funding for Mental Health Services by £500,000 in 2022, in order to assist the services which are experiencing pressure as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
<a href="#">Amendment 10</a>	Privileges and Procedures Committee	This amendment seeks to allocate funding to allow for a feasibility study of the use of Piquet House for States Members office space.
<a href="#">Amendment 11</a>	Deputy Ward	This amendment seeks to ensure that all schools have a guaranteed minimum 15% headroom funding remaining after staffing and accommodation costs have been taken into account.
<a href="#">Amendment 12</a>	Senator Mézec	This amendment seeks to remove the Upper Earnings Limit, as defined within the Social Security (Jersey) Law 1974, abolishing the upper earnings limit cap on Social Security Contributions and on Long Term Care Contributions.
<a href="#">Amendment 13</a>	Connétable Shenton-Stone	This amendment seeks to facilitate and support the creation of a Citizens’ Panel in relation to improving women’s safety, and gender equality,

		and to develop and propose changes in policy, strategy and culture in this area.
<a href="#">Amendment 14</a>	Minister for External Relations and Financial Services	This amendment seeks to establish a Ministry of External Relations.
<a href="#">Amendment 15</a>	Health and Social Security Panel	This amendment seeks to establish several political commitments in relation to the use of the Health Insurance Fund as the source of funding for the Jersey Care Model.
<a href="#">Amendment 16</a>	Children, Education & Home Affairs Panel	This amendment seeks to increase the level of funding for the Nursery Education Fund for 3-4 year olds in 2022.
<a href="#">Amendment 17</a>	Children, Education & Home Affairs Panel	This amendment seeks to provide additional funding to allow further development of Best Start Plus part-time early education offer for 2-3 year olds, initially to children at risk of disadvantage.
<a href="#">Amendment 18</a>	Children, Education & Home Affairs Panel	This amendment seeks to provide additional funding to allow for the recommendations of the Inclusion Review to be implemented in 2022 and also address any shortfalls identified by the school funding formula.
<a href="#">Amendment 19</a>	Children, Education & Home Affairs Panel	This amendment seeks to address a minor procedural point in respect of the allocation of funding from the Covid Health and Social Recovery Project which sits under Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance (SPPP) to Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES).
<a href="#">Amendment 20</a>	Children, Education & Home Affairs Panel	This amendment seeks to provide additional funding in 2022 to meet training policy aims of the Early Years Policy Development Board and allow practitioners within the private nursery settings to access degree level training in 2022.
<a href="#">Amendment 21</a>	Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel	This amendment seeks to remove an outlined transfer from the Consolidated Fund to a Technology Fund.
<a href="#">Amendment 22</a>	Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel	This amendment seeks to introduce a higher Stamp Duty rate for 'Buy to Let' investment properties, second homes and holiday homes.
<a href="#">Amendment 23</a>	Deputy Gardiner	This amendment seeks to create an additional capital

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		project to purchase field H153, undertake a feasibility study and prepare a business case into the conversion of the field for redevelopment into a playing field and forest school for the use of First Tower school and wider community.
<a href="#">Amendment 24</a>	Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel	This amendment seeks to reduce proposed Alcohol Duty on Wines and Spirits, whilst increasing Alcohol Duty on Beers and Cider, to create a flat increase across all alcohol.
<a href="#">Amendment 25</a>	Senator Gorst	This amendment seeks to remove borrowing ability for refinancing of Public Employees Contributory Retirement Scheme Liabilities and stipulate that borrowing relating to COVID-19 and Fiscal Stimulus Fund requirements should be of a short-term nature only.
<a href="#">Amendment 26</a>	Connétable Jackson	This amendment seeks to provide funding from the Climate Emergency Fund (“the Fund”) for a new air monitoring project.



States Greffe | Morier House | Halkett Place | St Helier | Jersey | JE1 1DD  
T: +44 (0) 1534 441 020 | E: [statesgreffe@gov.je](mailto:statesgreffe@gov.je) | W: [Statesassembly.gov.je](http://Statesassembly.gov.je)

