

Staff Recruitment and Retention

17 March 2025

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Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General: 17 March 2025

This report has been prepared in accordance with Article 20 of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Jersey) Law 2014.

Contents

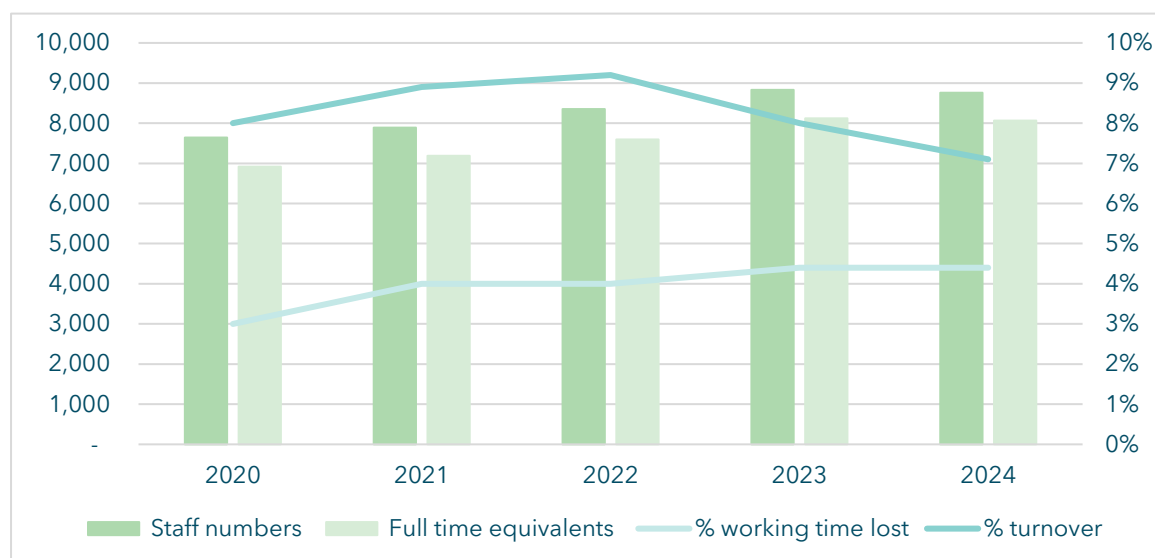
Summary	4
Introduction	4
Key Findings	5
Conclusions	6
Objectives and scope of the review	7
Detailed findings – Strategic workforce planning	8
Overall progress in strategic workforce planning	8
Progress at departmental level	9
Detailed findings – staff recruitment	13
Recruitment policies and procedures	13
Supporting systems	17
Senior level appointments	19
Relocation, accommodation and reward packages	23
Detailed findings – staff retention	26
Staff development	28
Leadership development	31
Workplace culture	32
Appendix One – Audit Approach	36
Appendix Two – Summary of Recommendations, Work planned that should be prioritised and Areas for consideration	40

Summary

Introduction

1. The States of Jersey collectively employ around 14% of the Island’s working population (8,834 staff at 31 December 2023). These are a mixture of full-time and part-time staff on permanent and fixed-term contracts. They are supplemented by agency and locum staff and consultants where considered necessary. In 2023, the States of Jersey Group spent £593 million on staff costs which represented 34% of total Group expenditure.
2. Over the past five years staff numbers (both headcount and full-time equivalent staff numbers) have risen, although both have seen a slight decrease in 2024. The reported percentage of working time lost to sickness has risen slightly and the turnover percentage has ranged between 7.1% and 9.2%. Exhibit 1 contains more details.

Exhibit 1: States of Jersey staff related data



Source: States of Jersey Group Accounts 2021-2023 and People Services Operational Dashboard for 2024

3. More generally, there are challenges in the local labour market in Jersey. In the period 2020 to 2023, average earnings across all sectors have decreased in real terms by 4.6%.
4. The Government has a stated intention to curb the growth in public expenditure and the growth in public services headcount. In August 2024 the Government introduced a recruitment freeze and this is planned to continue during 2025. The recruitment freeze has resulted in additional controls being put in place before

recruitment to a vacant Government Grade 11 or above role can be undertaken. It has also resulted in a degree of tactical restructuring of departments and services to eliminate posts from the overall structure.

5. One of the stated priorities of the States Employment Board (SEB) is 'the delivery of the strategic workforce plan with a particular focus on the production of associated departmental workforce, resourcing and succession plans so that recruitment and retention of staff in critical frontline services are best managed' (States Employment Board Annual Report 2023).
6. The States of Jersey are in the process of implementing and enhancing a new system - Talent Acquisition - to support recruitment. There is also a new job site on which vacancies are published.

Key Findings

7. The Government's Strategic Workforce Plan and People Strategy was published in 2022 and was refreshed and updated at the end of 2024. Work is however ongoing to develop and finalise departmental strategies and plans that support the overall Budget (Government Plan).
8. A key barrier to developing and finalising strategic workforce plans in a number of core service delivery areas is the lack of strategies and vision for the operational delivery models for those services. Examples of core service areas that do not have an approved strategic vision and a planned future service delivery model include acute clinical services, adult social care and, at the time of my fieldwork, children's services. There is a tension between implementation of action plans and the documentation of strategies. However none of the departmental workforce plans I reviewed as part of this audit were linked to service strategies and operational delivery plans.
9. In addition, none of the departmental plans reviewed had a documented action plan with key deliverables, responsibilities and timeframes, to give a route map for delivery. Finally, none of the departmental plans are supported by an education and training plan to ensure that there is a sufficient and strong pipeline for key professions and to fill the skills gaps identified.
10. The States have a number of policies in place relating to recruitment and the wider management of people. The main policy document on recruitment and retention was last updated in 2019 and is acknowledged by officers to be out of date. At the time of my fieldwork officers were in the process of drafting a new policy as well as a new rewards and benefits policy.
11. Historically, Chief Officers have applied different interpretations of policies to different appointments and there has been limited consistency. This creates risk

for the Government and has the potential for there to be a perception of unfairness in terms of employment and opportunity. Without clear agreed policies there is a risk that requirements will be interpreted differently with inconsistent and potentially costly outcomes.

12. The Government does not have a framework of modern recruitment processes in place to mitigate sufficiently the risk of 'bad hires'. Neither does the Government collect and review sufficient information on the effectiveness and efficiency of its recruitment and retention processes.
13. The Government has Human Resources (HR) dashboards which report turnover, starters, leavers, sickness absence and some aspects of employee training. Management information systems are not developed sufficiently to ensure data accuracy, report on staff performance (not just completion of staff appraisals), measure training linked to development needs and skills shortages, or to monitor exit survey outcomes, diversity performance and job satisfaction.
14. The Government recognises the importance of good, strong leadership in delivering high quality services and the need for a skilled, motivated, healthy workforce. It has invested in a number of leadership programmes over the past few years. It is essential for the Government to monitor the impact of this programme of investment. Ways in which the impact can be monitored include through the Connected Performance HR system and through the 'Be Heard' survey.
15. Very few staff who have left Government employment are interviewed to ascertain the reasons for leaving. The Government is therefore developing recruitment and retention initiatives with a key piece of information missing.

Conclusions

16. A complex interaction of economic, demographic, social and political factors impacts on demand for, and supply of, public sector staff. This interaction is even more acute in an Island economy such as Jersey.
17. Some progress is being made to improve the arrangements for workforce planning, recruitment and retention, although it has been recognised by SEB that this is much slower than anticipated and needs to be progressed at pace. Service strategies and operational delivery plans need to be developed and finalised and linked clearly to workforce and education and training plans.
18. Key elements of routine and good practice that I would expect to see in place in respect of staff recruitment and retention are not evident across the States.

Objectives and scope of the review

19. The audit has evaluated the effectiveness of the States of Jersey's recruitment, retention and development of capability required to undertake the States' core activities.
20. The audit has reviewed States-wide arrangements and procedures as well as procedures used by a sample of departments and for a sample of professions. The sample of departments comprises:
 - Children, Young People, Education and Skills
 - Health and Community Services; and
 - Infrastructure and Environment.
21. The audit complements but does not duplicate reviews undertaken or planned by other organisations such as the Jersey Care Commission and the Jersey Appointments Commission.
22. The following criteria were used during the audit to assess relative performance:
 - Departments have undertaken requisite activities to identify and quantify the staff capability required to undertake the core activities necessary to meet departmental objectives.
 - The States and individual departments have identified and implemented appropriate strategies, plans and processes to recruit, develop and retain staff.
 - There are appropriate governance arrangements to review, approve and provide oversight of staff recruitment, development and retention.

Detailed findings – Strategic workforce planning

Overall progress in strategic workforce planning

23. Effective strategic workforce plans are closely linked to service strategies and operational delivery plans. The most effective plans include the numbers needed as well as the actions required to deliver all the elements of the workforce strategy.
24. The Government commenced a programme of work in 2020 to deliver strategic workforce planning at departmental and Government level. The programme of work included the development of a toolkit to assist departments in workforce planning supported by facilitated sessions to drive the process forward.
25. The Government's Strategic Workforce Plan and People Strategy was published in 2022. This document was refreshed and updated at the end of 2024 with the publication of a Jersey Public Service Strategic Workforce Plan 2024 - 2027 and an Our People Strategy published in January 2025. Work is however ongoing to develop and finalise some of the departmental strategies and plans. There is variable progress across departments. The toolkit has not been completed consistently, and none of the workforce plans reviewed contain staff numbers or demonstrate the numbers and types of staff that are needed for the future. This has been recognised by officers as required in the next phase of development.
26. In overall terms, there has been slower progress in developing and finalising strategic workforce plans than had been expected when the people strategy was first published in 2022. In addition, planning is now taking place in an environment where there is a public commitment to reduce the size of the public sector in Jersey.
27. One of the key barriers to developing and finalising strategic workforce plans in a number of core service delivery areas is the lack of strategies and vision for the operational delivery models for those services. Examples of significant service areas that do not have an approved strategic vision and a planned future service delivery model include acute clinical services, adult social care and, at the time of my fieldwork, children's services.

Recommendation

- R1** Finalise and approve future service delivery models and strategies for all significant areas of public services.

Progress at departmental level

28. I have reviewed the development of workforce plans in three departments:
- Health and Community Services (HCS)
 - Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES); and
 - Infrastructure and Environment (I&E).
29. None of the departmental workforce plans were linked to service strategies and operational plans.
30. While each of the departments utilised the same toolkit provided by the Government's People Services, they have developed workforce plans encompassing different main areas. While it is important that the plans reflect a local 'flavour' it is also important that there is a level of consistency and comparability.
31. None of the departmental plans I reviewed had a fully operational action plan with key deliverables, responsibilities and timeframes, to give a route map for delivery. Neither was there specific reference in each plan to changes in technology which will impact on the skills (and training) that staff will need for the future. Without these in place, there is a real risk that the skills needed for the future will not be available within Government.
32. In addition few of the departmental plans are supported by an education and training plan to ensure that there is a sufficient and strong pipeline for key professions and to fill the skills gaps identified.
33. Some professional training is delivered on Island through Highlands College. However, it is not feasible to locally train all the professions needed by the Government. In any case many students will elect to travel to other places to undertake their undergraduate, and postgraduate, training. The Government has contracts in place with some UK Universities, however these do not form part of a co-ordinated Government education and training plan.
34. Students who receive funding for studies directly linked to public services are not required to commit to working in Jersey or for the Government of Jersey for any

specific time period after they have completed their studies. Some jurisdictions use such an approach to help to ensure that they have access to a strong pipeline of newly qualified individuals to work in public services roles.

HCS

35. HCS has recently produced a draft Strategic Workforce Plan which comprises a high level strategic intent accompanied by a draft strategic workforce implementation plan. The Strategic Workforce Plan covers all care groups rather than specific workforce plans for each care group and includes six areas:
 - recruitment and resourcing
 - career pathways and development
 - succession planning and talent management
 - early-in careers
 - learning and skills; and
 - performance management.
36. While the Strategic Workforce Plan includes actions for all six areas, it does not detail who is responsible for the actions and when actions will be delivered. All actions are however recorded as 'green' on the delivery scale. Further work is required to develop these actions and to present a robust delivery mechanism for monitoring and driving through implementation.
37. The Strategic Workforce Plan is not linked to an acute clinical service strategy, an adult mental health strategy and adult social care strategy and associated service operational plans, as these have not yet been developed.
38. In addition, the Strategic Workforce Plan does not sit alongside an education and training plan, outlining the pipeline for each of the professions and the numbers needed to deliver the chosen clinical model for Jersey. This is a significant gap and will need extensive work to ensure that there are sufficient numbers and skills to deliver safe services.
39. Unlike other departments, the HCS Plan does not include information on diversity, equality and inclusion, well-being, engagement and culture, as these activities are undertaken by a separate team. These factors are however fundamental to the recruitment offer and retention and development of staff, to ensure that all potential talent is harnessed in a fair and equitable manner. It was not evident from the Plan how these issues are embedded in the vision and monitored as such.

CYPES

40. CYPES has produced a Strategic Workforce Plan that the department is intending to develop across five themes:
 - workforce resource planning
 - recruitment and retention
 - people and culture
 - organisational change; and
 - capability and performance.
41. At the time of my fieldwork, CYPES had not yet developed service strategies for education or for children's services that take account of the falling birth rate in Jersey and the likely change in demand. As a consequence, the Strategic Workforce Plan is not linked to future service strategies and expected future service delivery models.
42. More work is required to translate the strategic direction outlined in the Strategic Workforce Plan into numbers and actions with specific timescales, responsibilities and delivery priorities. Workforce planning for children's services is not as well progressed as it is for education.
43. The teacher training scheme, the social work degree course and the youth workers training programme are captured in the CYPES Strategic Workforce Plan to address identified skills shortages.

I&E

44. I&E has produced a high level Strategic Workforce Plan that focusses on specialist skills and the impact of the scarcity of these (locally and globally), with an emphasis on 'growing home talent'.
45. The Plan focusses on five high level areas:
 - recruitment
 - talent development
 - learning and development
 - mental health and well-being; and
 - diversity, inclusion and equity.

46. Some parts of the Plan are fully drafted, but the timescales for action within the Plan and the link to service strategies are not clear.

Recommendations

- R2** Ensure that workforce plans for all departments are linked to available service strategies and departmental business plans and are updated when future service delivery strategies are developed and approved.
- R3** Document specific training and development plans that address the future skills needed by the current workforce and set out how the pipeline for the future workforce will be developed.
- R4** Document action plans for the implementation of the departmental strategic workforce plans to include the staff responsible for the actions and the timescales for implementation.

Area for consideration

- A1** Review the policy on student funding from Government to ensure that it is clear in both how it is to be applied and in how it delivers value for money.

Detailed findings – staff recruitment

47. I have considered the following aspects of staff recruitment:

- recruitment policies and procedures
- supporting systems
- senior level appointments
- the Chief Executive position; and
- relocation, accommodation and reward packages.

Recruitment policies and procedures

States wide policies and procedures

48. The States have a number of policies in place relating to recruitment and the wider management of people. The main policy document on recruitment and retention was last updated in 2019 and is acknowledged to be out of date. At the time of my fieldwork officers were in the process of drafting a new policy as well as a new rewards and benefits policy.
49. Historically, Chief Officers have applied different interpretations to policies for different appointments and there has been limited consistency. This creates risk for the Government and has the potential for there to be a perception of unfairness in terms of employment and opportunity. Without clear agreed policies there is a risk that requirements will be interpreted differently with inconsistent and potentially costly outcomes.
50. The cost of recruitment is significant. The cost of a 'bad hire' (employing the wrong person) is even more significant. The Government does not currently have a framework of modern recruitment processes in place to mitigate sufficiently the risk of 'bad hires'. In addition, the Government does not collect and review sufficient information on the effectiveness and efficiency of its recruitment and retention processes.
51. The Jersey Appointments Commission (JAC) is an independent body that oversees the recruitment of States' employees and appointees to States supported or related bodies. Under Article 23 of the Employment of States of Jersey Employees (Jersey) Law 2005 (the 2005 Law) JAC is responsible for overseeing the

recruitment of States' employees or States' appointees so as to ensure that, as far as practicable:

(a) the recruitment of persons as States' employees or States' appointees is fair, efficient and conducted in accordance with best practice principles and procedures

(b) States' employees or States' appointees are appointed on merit

(c) members of the States are only involved in the recruitment of States' employees in accordance with codes of practice issued under Article 8; and

(d) members of the States are only involved in the recruitment of States' appointees in accordance with guidelines made under Article 24 or otherwise in circumstances where, in the opinion of the Commission, it is appropriate that they be involved.

52. JAC has three guides on recruitment and selection:

- a recruitment code to set out the principles and processes to be applied in recruitment and selection activities for all appointments
- a guide on senior recruitment to provide processes for employing seniors within the public service; and
- a code of practice that sets out principles and processes for employment within States supported or related bodies.

53. The Annual Report of the JAC for 2023 included an encouragement for public service recruitment processes to be aligned with modern recruitment practices. In particular, the JAC encouraged utilisation of high-quality software applications for reviewing CVs, well-regulated psychometric testing, and training in panel interviewing, the purpose of which would be to reduce the risk of bias contaminating the selection process.

Department level procedures

54. I found that the procedures for recruitment are not consistent across the three departments considered as part of my audit (CYPES, HCS and I&E).

55. Currently the recruitment processes are not standardised and there is no common set of requirements. There is also no central repository for supporting documentation. Establishing standards in both processes and documentation would enable People Services to monitor compliance with required procedures.

56. I found good practice in CYPES in respect of the recruitment of teaching assistants and primary school teachers. A central process was introduced in the summer of 2022. This approach included changes to the contents of recruitment adverts and changes to the advertising approach adopted, including more use of social media. An initial 'come in for a chat' opportunity was implemented as the first stage in the recruitment process. A much higher success rate has been achieved with this approach and over 80 teaching assistants have been recruited since this process was introduced.
57. Building on the success of this approach, the same process was implemented for the recruitment of primary teachers off Island. The approach resulted in 35 primary teachers being recruited in 2023 and there were no vacancies between the summer and December 2023, as there had been in previous years.
58. The approach is now being extended to children's services where the previous process adopted had not been effective in retaining staff after recruitment.
59. HCS has a small website (a microsite) which explains the issues to be considered when moving to Jersey and I&E has a process which advises potential applicants of the Jersey relocation issues. However, the good practice processes observed in CYPES are not replicated across HCS or I&E.
60. A Talent Acquisition Portal was implemented in May 2024 to improve central procedures for recruitment. There are key areas however where improvements are still required in recruitment processes including:
 - reducing the elapsed time from the vacancy being approved for recruitment and the recruitment process starting
 - earlier advertising of posts to maximise access to the talent pool in the market place
 - streamlining the application process
 - improving the speed of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks; and
 - improving job descriptions in job adverts.
61. HCS was unable to locate and provide me with the recruitment packs used for ten of the sample of 13 packs requested for review. The recruitment packs that were provided to me by HCS did not give assurance that the processes followed complied with States' requirements. In one instance, a senior appointment appears to have additional benefits in the contract outside of stated policy and there is no evidence that these have been agreed and approved in accordance with requirements.

Recommendation

R5 Update and improve recruitment pack procedures to include:

- introducing a standard recruitment pack template accompanied by clear guidelines on what is required from recruiting managers
- a requirement for departments to submit completed recruitment packs to People Services; and
- a programme of central review of completed recruitment packs to provide assurance on compliance with required processes and procedures.

Work planned that should be prioritised

P1 Finalise and approve updated policies in respect of:

- recruitment and retention; and
- rewards and benefits.

P2 Finalise the development and implementation of key performance indicators in respect of staff recruitment and retention.

Supporting systems

Connect People

62. The Connect People HR system went live in January 2023. It does not however reconcile with the Resource Link HR payroll system. The Connect People HR system provides HR dashboards for departmental and Government leadership teams as well as for the States Employment Board (SEB). There remain however some concerns within departments over the accuracy of data because of the lack of controls over access to the system for making changes.
63. HR dashboards contain data on headcount, starters, leavers, turnover percentage, sickness absence, staff costs, performance appraisals, induction for new starters, completion of manager training programmes ('espresso' and 'world class') and completion of statutory and mandatory training programmes. The dashboards do not monitor the trend of total expenditure on staff capacity (employed staff, agency staff and contingent labour) or the movement in expenditure between these categories. As a result, the financial impact of the current recruitment freeze cannot be assessed accurately.
64. The Connect People HR system does not report on funded vacancies (posts that are funded but not recruited to). For financial budgeting and reporting purposes a staff establishment model is prepared on an excel spreadsheet, based on the previous year and known in year changes, and reconciled with the finance general ledger. Staff within the Treasury and Exchequer Department reconcile the establishment data by cost centres not by individual posts.
65. Significant resources are being used to reconcile finance and HR data, which reduces the capacity of both HR and Finance Business Partners to carry out other support functions.

Talent Acquisition

66. The Talent Acquisition module of Connect People went live in January 2024 on a phased roll-out and was fully live by April 2024. This assists with job advertising. There were initial difficulties with the data input to the system.
67. During 2024 the Government introduced a recruitment freeze. This resulted in more than 600 live recruitment adverts being withdrawn.
68. The Government has been developing its Careers Site which is intended to showcase clearly the different careers that can be followed within the Government. I understand that the Careers Site is planned to be relaunched during 2025.

69. The implementation of the Talent Acquisition module represents an opportunity to set out clear processes and guidance for recruiting managers including templates and checklists. This has the potential to help to ensure consistency of process applied and equity of treatment.
70. However, this system does not have key controls over recruitment. A workaround control process has been implemented that requires the Chief Executive to approve all potential senior recruitments and supports the implementation of the recruitment freeze. At the time of my fieldwork in October 2024, I observed that CYPES was using the workaround control process, I&E was not yet using the process and it was unclear as to the applicability of the new arrangements to HCS, which has a separate recruitment portal for healthcare professionals.

Work planned that should be prioritised

- P3** Finalise the planned relaunch of the Careers Site.

Senior level appointments

The 'P.59 process'

71. There are additional processes in place in respect of senior level appointments as required under a Proposition agreed by the States Assembly in 2011 (P.59/2011). Under the 'P.59 process' there is a requirement for approval by the:
- SEB for non-ministerial department appointments where annual remuneration is more than £100,000
 - Chief Executive for appointments by Government departments where annual remuneration is between £100,000 and £150,000; and
 - SEB for appointments by Government departments where annual remuneration is more than £150,000.
72. In addition, under the 2005 Law, JAC is required to observe recruitment to a senior States' office or has a discretion to observe recruitment to the office. The SEB and JAC are required under the 2005 Law to agree a list of offices of States' employees or States' appointees, or classes of offices of States' employees or States' appointees, that are to be senior States' offices for these purposes.
73. The JAC annual report for 2023 sets out some clear recommendations surrounding the consistency of the requests from the Government for JAC involvement in senior recruitment processes, and more specifically around the P.59 process. In my view the process would benefit from some clarification, and some consistency around documentation and timescales for involvement.
74. Some officers find the P.59 process to be unclear in terms of salary band, reporting principles and what was expected to be provided in terms of documentation. While it is clear that a business case is required, those I reviewed vary considerably in quality and quantity of information provided. They also generally considered options from an individual department perspective with little narrative on what the different options for recruitment might be were a Government-wide view to be taken.

The Jersey Appointments Commission (JAC)

75. The JAC is required to be involved in all senior appointments - that is staff who report directly to a Chief Officer. There is a lack of clarity regarding the requirements in respect of Arm's Length Bodies. In addition, there have been some situations where JAC should have been involved in senior appointments processes but has not been.

76. A template checklist, produced in June 2018, should be completed to assist the JAC to discharge its duty where it is undertaking a full oversight role. The checklist is designed to ensure compliance with the current required recruitment procedures. The checklist does not however reflect the application of modern recruitment processes in appointments.
77. Completed checklists were not included in the documentation retained by People Services for the sample of appointments tested as part of my audit. My review of documentation showed that the JAC had not been provided with all of the information it required in order to approve the recruitment decisions for certain appointments.

Interim appointments

78. At January 2025 the Government is operating with a significant number of interim or acting up appointments at Chief Officer level. These arrangements include key 'front line' delivery departments such as HCS and CYPES.
79. The appointment processes for acting up and interim positions can be made complex by the interaction and potential conflict between recruitment policies and other policies such as the recruitment freeze, the organisation change policy and redundancy policies. In addition, certain employment rights and legislation (for example, settled status) may have an impact on SEB decisions regarding senior interim and acting up appointments. The formal documentation of decision making when decisions are made to balance particular risks or to prioritise one policy over another was not always clear.
80. Where interim appointments have been made a timescale for review and further decision making has not always been set out. Not doing so creates a risk that rights will arise that will result in interim appointments becoming permanent appointments outside of the stated recruitment policy.

The Chief Executive position

81. Since 2018 five individuals have held the position of Chief Executive or Interim Chief Executive (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2: Chief Executive post holders since 2018

Dates	Postholder	Type of appointment
January 2018 - December 2020	Charlie Parker	Permanent
January 2021 - March 2021	Charlie Parker	Fixed term
March 2021 - January 2022	Paul Martin	Interim
February 2022 - June 2023	Suzanne Wylie	Permanent
July 2023 - August 2023	Tom Walker	Interim (acting up)
September 2023 - April 2024	Andrew McLaughlin	Interim (secondment arrangement)
May 2024 - June 2024	Tom Walker	Interim (acting up)
July 2024 - December 2026	Andrew McLaughlin	Fixed term

Source: Jersey Audit Office analysis

82. Not having stability in the chief executive position gives rise to a number of risks including:
- uncertainty and inconsistency in decision making, which can affect long-term planning and strategy
 - decreased employee morale due to uncertainty about the future direction of the organisation
 - focussing on short-term goals rather than long-term strategic objectives, causing the organisation to drift from its strategic mission and vision
 - operational disruption with risks to critical decision making; and
 - talent retention if employees perceive a lack of stable leadership and direction within the organisation.
83. Since 2017, significant additional costs have been incurred by the States of Jersey in respect of the Chief Executive position. Additional cost will also be incurred in the recruitment of a permanent Chief Executive for 2027 and beyond. Exhibit 3 contains some analysis of these additional costs.

Exhibit 3: Additional costs associated with the Chief Executive position

Year	Nature of cost	£000
2017	Recruitment costs for permanent Chief Executive	50
2021	Severance payment	500
2021	Recruitment costs for interim Chief Executive	95
2021	Recruitment costs for permanent Chief Executive	67
2023	Recruitment costs for interim secondment arrangement	95
2023-2024	Recruitment costs for permanent Chief Executive prior to the pausing of the process	60

Source: Jersey Audit Office analysis based on information provided by Government

84. In total over £360,000 has been spent since 2017 on recruitment costs associated with the Chief Executive position, with more than £310,000 spent since 2021 without a successful permanent appointment (lasting more than two years) being made. The cost and impact of not having stability in the Chief Executive position however goes beyond just the costs of recruitment.

Recommendations

- R6** Review and clarify the requirement to involve the JAC in senior appointments, including senior appointments at Arm’s Length Bodies.
- R7** Ensure that interim appointments are made for defined periods and are reviewed sufficiently early within the defined period. Maintain a central record of such appointments to ensure that review procedures take place on a timely basis.
- R8** Document formally the factors taken into account when making recruitment decisions that go outside of stated policies so that it is clear how risks have been balanced and policies prioritised.
- R9** Ensure that a robust strategy is documented and actioned sufficiently early to mitigate risks to the successful appointment of a permanent Chief Executive.

Relocation, accommodation and reward packages

85. Two of the main constraints to recruiting off-Island individuals to work in Jersey are the cost of living and the choice and availability of accommodation. This has been recognised by the States and a new policy on accommodation benefits linked to job licenses is being prepared by People Services.

Relocation packages

86. Relocation expenses are paid for certain posts. The States' relocation and rewards policy has recently been updated to provide greater clarity and to support improved compliance. However, I found that HCS was still showing an old and out of date policy on its website, and that this old policy had recently been used in a particular appointment. This resulted in the successful candidate being given an additional allowance that under the new policy they would not have been entitled to.

Entitlement to Government accommodation

87. Some employees are entitled to Government owned and/or managed accommodation as part of their contract. However, I am not clear how decisions are made to attach accommodation to jobs or why some staff are living rent free and other staff are paying for accommodation. At the time of my audit, efforts were being made to centralise the data relating to accommodation in People Services and work was on-going to improve the quality of the information.
88. As well as finding that rent free accommodation is being offered as part of recruitment on an inconsistent basis, I found that some departments have no access to Government accommodation. Where departments have access, not all have clear accommodation policies - for example I found nothing documented for the accommodation provided for CYPES and HCS staff.
89. Where accommodation is provided, it is a benefit linked to the job and as such is potentially taxable. Internal Audit has undertaken a recent review in this area and made recommendations for improvements in systems and processes regarding benefits in kind.
90. The 'keyworker' accommodation policy was revised in July 2023 and was effective from August 2024. Since then, Chief Officers are required to submit their proposed requirements to the Executive Leadership Team on an annual basis, aligned to business planning, workforce planning, and resourcing plans.
91. The Public Finances Manual requires that Accountable Officers establish and maintain sound systems of internal control that support the achievement of the States' policies, aims and priorities. My audit work and that of Internal Audit has

identified awards of additional benefits of £30,000 each year in respect of free accommodation for some senior employees. This had not been approved by the SEB and the award of these benefits is not in accordance with policy requirements.

Management of Government accommodation for employees

92. I found that Government accommodation for employees is managed differently across departments, with no consistency of application.
93. Accommodation is 'attached to' and managed in different departments based on history and the prevalence of 'key worker' posts. HCS has the bulk of the accommodation, with the rest being spread across other departments. At the time of my audit, the management of accommodation for prison officers had just been transferred into I&E from Justice and Home Affairs (JHA), although officers were not clear which department held the budget for maintaining the properties.
94. It was also the case in other departments that there is a lack of clear agreement about how the income from the rental of the properties is allocated and where the budgets for maintenance are set out.

Reward packages

95. One further area pertinent to recruitment and retention is the reward package that might be offered.
96. There is however significant inconsistency in the reward packages offered to candidates, particularly at senior levels. I have observed that pay supplements and/or market supplements are offered for some hard to fill posts. These are paid on top of salary and are intended to be time limited.
97. However, such supplements are not systematically or regularly reviewed and neither are they generally, in fact, time limited. While Chief Officers and the SEB are required to approve a supplement, a control and review process is not systematically undertaken to ensure that the duration of the supplement is in line with the approval.

Recommendations

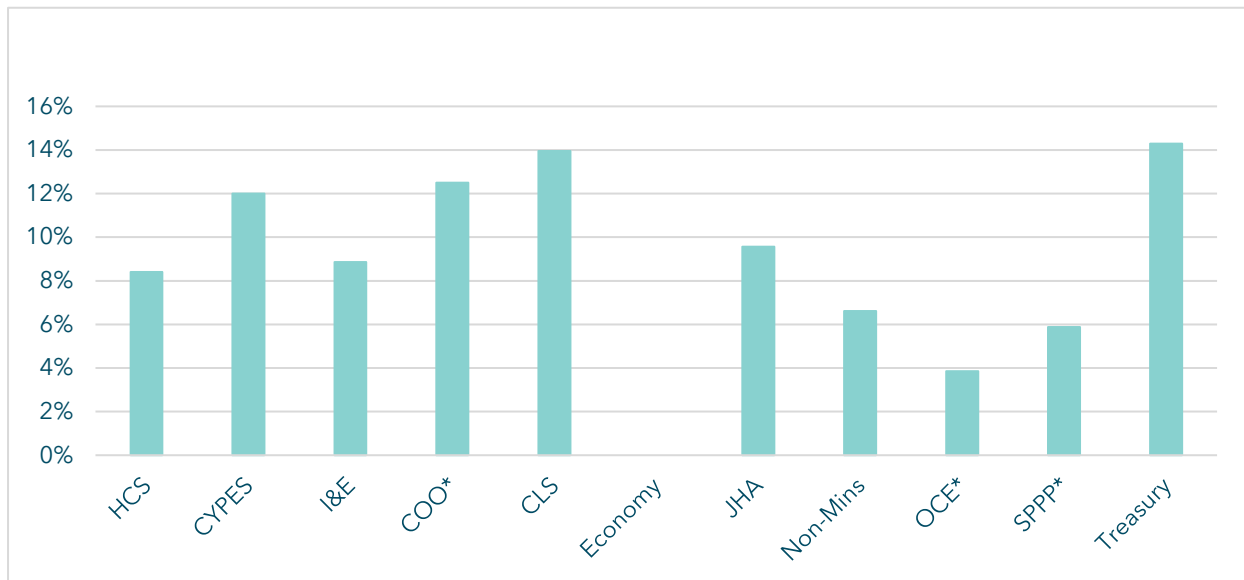
- R10** Ensure that all departments are advertising and applying the policy regarding relocation expenses on a consistent basis.
- R11** Ensure that a consistent policy is applied for the provision of Government accommodation for employees.

- R12** Undertake a review of the management of Government accommodation for employees and consider which option delivers best value for money. In doing so, ensure that there is an agreed alignment of rental income and maintenance budgets.
- R13** Document and apply a consistent policy and monitoring programme for the design and application of reward packages across the States.

Detailed findings – staff retention

98. Successful staff retention is promoted by several factors including:
- development opportunities - providing training, mentorship, and clear pathways for career advancement
 - supportive leadership – having leaders who are approachable, empathic and invested in their team’s success
 - effective communications - that maintain open and transparent communication channels between management and staff; and
 - positive work environment - having a supportive and inclusive workplace culture where employees feel valued, engaged and respected.
99. The ideal level of staff turnover for an organisation or department within an organisation can vary. Having an appropriate level of staff turnover allows for fresh talent and new ideas to enter the organisation while maintaining stability and retaining valuable institutional knowledge.
100. High turnover can lead to increased recruitment and training costs, loss of experienced employees, and potential disruptions in operations.
101. People Services has not developed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for recruitment and retention. As part of my review I have calculated the first year turnover rates for each Government department for the two year period from September 2022 to August 2024. This is an indicative KPI for the ability to retain staff who have been recently recruited and tends to reflect how effective the pre-application and onboarding procedures are (see Exhibit 4).

Exhibit 4: First year staff turnover rates



* part of Cabinet Office in this period

Source: Jersey Audit Office analysis

102. Exhibit 4 shows a first year turnover rate of in excess of 10% for four Government departments. This indicates that recruitment, onboarding and initial retention activities are not as effective as they should be and that value for money is not being achieved from these activities.

103. I have considered the following aspects of retention as part of my audit:

- staff development
- leadership development; and
- workplace culture.

Staff development

Early stage career development

104. Significant work has been done on 'growing your own' across the departments that I reviewed, with particular focus on apprentice schemes and interns.
105. The Government Public Service Strategic Workforce Plan 2024-2027, Government Plan, Ministerial Plans, and Departmental Workforce Plans document the commitment to identifying the very best of local talent to join the public sector in Jersey. The Plans also set out to identify and develop existing talent within the public sector to reduce the Island's reliance on importing skills not readily available among the local workforce, to deliver excellent services to Islanders.
106. 'Early in Careers' forms the foundation for the Talent Charter and is a core component for stimulating and inspiring young people to think about the options available to work in public service. It is comprised of:
 - paid internships - from GCSE level through to post-graduate level internships
 - apprenticeship and trainee programmes - for young people and career changers
 - work experience placements - for those still at school; and
 - university work placements - for those undertaking a year in industry.
107. The number of interns employed in Government in 2024 totalled 70.
108. People Services works with departments to build apprenticeship opportunities to support the development of talent in skill shortage areas and to grow local talent. The level of engagement in providing apprenticeship opportunities varies across departments due to a range of factors including; staffing budgets, departments not being sufficiently resourced to provide the supervision needed to take on an apprentice, the need for clarity of the role and the availability of funding for the qualifications attached to apprenticeship opportunities.
109. Despite these potential barriers, the number of apprenticeship opportunities within Government has increased to a target of 50 apprentices across Government in 2024 (of which 17 apprentices were appointed).

Ongoing staff development

110. One of the key factors in a healthy, motivated workforce is the ability to progress and to learn new skills.
111. A number of skills deficits have been identified by the Government, including performance and project management and digital skills. Digital skills and technology training for future jobs and how the workforce will need to change and adapt is fundamental to the future. In my review I did not however see sufficient evidence that appropriate attention is being given to driving new skills and to how a different type of workforce will be trained. There is, as far as I can see, no clear match between identified skills shortages and relevant tailored training programmes.
112. The staff performance appraisal and development system (Connected Performance) can, if properly populated, identify individual staff training and development needs. This data is not however used to monitor whether those needs have been met. There is no mechanism to ensure that identified development needs are met by structured training programmes.
113. There are specific opportunities to drive efficiencies through the development and delivery of multi-disciplinary training across different professions. Some multi-professional training is being undertaken within HCS and CYPES, however most training is silo based within departments and within professions. For example, training budgets within HCS are allocated to the different professions, hampering the use of training materials and multi-professional approaches to training exercises.

Statutory and mandatory training

114. Statutory and mandatory training dashboards are produced for each department to monitor compliance with requirements. At the time of my audit fieldwork the non-completion rates for statutory and mandatory training were relatively high. There is limited accountability over the non-compliance with statutory and mandatory training requirements.
115. There are opportunities to consider making more courses mandatory, particularly those that relate to identified development needs and skills gaps (such as upskilling managers in staff management and appraisal and in performance and project management).

Recommendations

- R14** Develop, adopt and implement a clear and consistent approach to apprenticeship opportunities including a consistent approach to funding.
- R15** Ensure structured training and development courses are connected clearly to identified skills shortages and identified training and development needs.
- R16** Undertake a review to identify opportunities for multi-disciplinary training.
- R17** Enhance the monitoring and enforcement of compliance with statutory and mandatory training requirements.

Area for consideration

- A2** Consider making more courses mandatory, particularly those that relate to identified development needs and skills gaps.

Leadership development

116. The Government recognises the importance of good, strong leadership in delivering high quality services and the need for a skilled, motivated, healthy workforce. The Government has invested in a number of leadership programmes over the past few years including:
- the Team Jersey programme which ran from 2019 to 2022 and cost around £1.8 million
 - the 'espresso' and 'world class' manager programmes introduced as part of the Team Jersey programme that allow managers to attend short sharp sessions focussing on different aspects of leadership; and
 - a new leadership programme driven by the Chief Executive.
117. The new leadership programme was initially delivered by a provider who specialises in bespoke leadership programmes. The contract was awarded at a cost of \$200,000 to deliver training to 200 senior managers. Following the delivery of the first two courses, the Government took the decision to use a local supplier at an additional cost of £36,800 to deliver the course instead, using the same materials and training methods, as agreed with the initial supplier.
118. It is important for the Government to monitor the impact of this programme of investment. Ways in which the impact can be monitored include through the Connected Performance system and through the 'Be Heard' survey.
119. The Chief Executive has set an expectation that his colleagues will be utilising the tools that they have learned from the leadership programme. Senior Leadership Group (SLG) events are being held to practice using the tools. Although 360 degree feedback formed part of the pilot cohort of the leadership training programme, managers and leaders in Government are not required to obtain 360 degree feedback as a regular part of their performance appraisal data.

Recommendation

- R18** Require managers and leaders to collect 360 degree feedback as part of their performance appraisal data.

Workplace culture

120. I have considered the following factors that contribute to or provide evidence of workforce culture as part of my audit:
- staff performance appraisal and development
 - succession planning and talent pool creation
 - 'Be Heard' survey results; and
 - exit interviews.

Staff performance appraisal and development

121. Effective performance appraisal and learning and development are key factors in a fostering a motivated and developed workforce and contribute to effective staff retention.
122. Objectives and performance appraisals are required to be recorded on Connected Performance for those staff identified as 'in scope' for this system. At July 2024, 4,883 staff were identified as being 'in scope' from a headcount at that time of 8,568 (57% of staff).
123. At 31 August 2024 74.3% of staff 'in scope' had objectives approved on Connected Performance. However for one department only 57% of staff in scope had objectives approved on Connected Performance.
124. Also at 31 August 2024 51.6% of all staff 'in scope' had a mid-year review recorded on Connected Performance although for some departments the percentage was as low as 11.1%. By 31 December 2024, 57.3% of all staff 'in scope' had a year-end review recorded on Connected Performance. This was an increase of 41.7% on 31 December 2023.
125. Currently, the Government reports on performance appraisal completion data but not on how effective the process is. There is no system in place or data for checking the quality and appropriateness of the performance reviews undertaken. People Services intends for the calibration of performance reviews to be the next stage in the process, to assess quality and consistency in the review process. No timescale however has been set for this.
126. No data is currently collected on the outcomes of objective setting so there is no information on whether identified learning and development needs for individual staff are delivered to support retention of staff. Although developing this information is a stated aim for the Organisational Development Team, there is as yet no resourced plan in place to achieve it.

Succession planning and talent pool creation

127. Succession planning is an important element of sound workforce planning and staff retention. Training the next cadre of senior managers and professionals (particularly where there are few of a very specialised nature) is vital.
128. The benefits of good succession planning include:
- leadership continuity
 - knowledge retention; and
 - career development and motivated staff with high morale.
129. Succession planning is being developed in the Government. A Succession planning toolkit has been developed which covers all aspects of good succession planning, and there are some 'espresso' sessions for staff to access. Further work is needed however to embed effective succession planning.
130. Better data is needed from the Connect People system on individual staff performance to feed into succession planning and talent pool creation activities. One of the tools from the leadership programme provides senior managers with the opportunity to critically assess staff performance to help identify the workforce that is fit for the future.
131. There are no specific training programmes offered within Government for aspiring leaders or aspiring Chief Officers. Many organisations use such programmes as a key stepping stone for managers wishing to develop into leaders.

'Be Heard' survey

132. The Government undertook surveys of staff in 2020, 2023 and 2024 known as the 'Be Heard' survey. This exercise invites all staff to participate in a questionnaire regarding a range of aspects relating to their job and the wider organisation.
133. The 2023 'Be Heard' survey demonstrated positive outcomes such as staff feeling that they were paid fairly for their responsibilities and able to make a contribution to the organisation. On the whole, there was some positive feedback on immediate managers, with many staff feeling that managers were approachable and listened. The survey results were less positive however in the feedback on leadership and senior managers.
134. In 2023 staff consistently raised concerns about internal politics, exhaustion in the job, departments not working well with each other and skills not being fully utilised. The opportunity for career development was also raised frequently as an issue.

135. The 2024 'Be Heard' survey demonstrated overall improvements with more employees being engaged and satisfied at work than indicated in the 2023 survey.
136. For the departments considered as part of my audit the results included the following:
- CYPES - strong positive feedback was given in terms of being able to make a contribution to the organisation and in respect of managers. There were also some strong and consistent scores within schools. Scores in 2024 have improved compared to 2023. There was however less positive feedback in both years on leadership, training and career development and about power struggles within teams
 - HCS - staff recorded much less positive scores across many aspects of the survey. Although the results have improved since 2020 there are still two areas in which performance falls below the identified benchmark in 2024 (leadership and giving something back). The score for 2024 was lower than for 2023 in respect of 'my team' and overall HCS has consistently lower scores than those for the Government as a whole. The HCS surveys consistently show a low score in respect of raising concerns; and
 - I&E - strong positive feedback was given consistently in 2023 and 2024 in respect of managers and a feeling of being able to make a contribution. Issues were raised about training, career development and power struggles within teams.
137. The Government has not published a specific action plan or commentary in response to the 2023 or the 2024 'Be Heard' surveys.

Exit interviews

138. Interviews of staff who voluntarily leave employment, called 'exit interviews', are not consistently undertaken in the Government and as a consequence the data on why staff leave is not well documented.
139. A reminder was issued to managers in February 2025 emphasising the importance of exit interviews.

Recommendations

- R19** Implement a programme of work that provides assurance as to the quality and consistency of the staff performance review process.

R20 Monitor the up take of exit interviews and determine whether further actions are required to ensure departments implement a standard policy and procedure for exit interviews. In doing so, ensure that leavers are encouraged to share their reasons for leaving.

Area for consideration

A3 Consider developing specific programmes for aspiring managers and aspiring leaders/Chief Officers.

Appendix One

Audit Approach

This audit used a combination of a result-orientated and system-orientated approach.

To assess relative performance during the audit, the following criteria were used:

- Departments have undertaken requisite activities to identify and quantify the staff capability required to undertake the core activities necessary to meet departmental objectives.
- The States and individual departments have identified and implemented appropriate strategies, plans and processes to recruit, develop and retain staff.
- There are appropriate governance arrangements to review, approve and provide oversight of staff recruitment, development and retention.

The approach included the following key elements:

- Review of States-wide arrangements and procedures as well as procedures used by a sample of departments and for a sample of professions. The sample of departments comprised: Children, Young People, Education and Skills, Health and Community Services and Infrastructure and Environment.

The audit complemented but did not duplicate reviews undertaken or planned by other organisations such as the Jersey Care Commission and the Jersey Appointments Commission.

The documents reviewed included:

- 'Be Heard' survey and results 2023 and 2024
- Contracts for the provision of an executive leadership development programme during 2024
- CYPES staff model reconciliation and other documentation in relation to reconciliations of finance and HR data
- Delivery Unit report- 'Central accommodation service' (October 2023)
- Government draft discussion paper on 'Our future health and care workforce' (January 2024)
- Government of Jersey Public Service Strategic Workforce Plan 2024-2027

- Government Strategic workforce planning guide and toolkit
- Government succession planning guide and toolkit and details of training conducted to August 2024
- HR management information dashboards
- HR policies relating to recruitment and retention
- Jersey Appointments Commission annual report 2023
- Jersey Care Commission Discussion Paper-‘Addressing challenges and risks in social care’ (November 2022)
- Jersey Care Commission inspection reports
- Jersey Public Service Strategic Workforce Plan 2024 - 2027
- Our People Strategy (January 2025)
- Overview of Connect Finance system
- Overview of HR Connect People system, including the Connected Performance module
- Overview of Resource Link system
- Overview of staff performance and development arrangements for teachers and head teachers
- Overview of Talent Acquisition Portal
- Previous C&AG reports relevant to the audit and Government spreadsheet tracking implementation of the reports’ recommendations
- Public Accounts Committee presentation to the States of Jersey of the executive response to the C&AG report *Use of Consultants - Follow up* (June 2024)
- Recruitment packs for a sample of appointments made in Children, Young People, Education and Skills, Health and Community Services and Infrastructure and Environment departments
- Reports from professional bodies referencing good practice in recruitment and retention
- States Employment Board agendas, papers and minutes from July 2023 to June 2024

- States Employment Board annual report 2023
- States Employment Board/Government People Strategy 2022
- States of Jersey Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel - 'People and culture follow up review' (August 2024)
- Workforce plans for Children, Young People, Education and Skills, Health and Community Services and Infrastructure and Environment departments

The following people contributed information through interviews or by correspondence:

- Associate Director of People
- Associate Director Public Policy
- Business Partner for Talent Programmes
- Chair of Jersey Appointments Commission
- Chair of States Employment Board
- Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Executive Officer Jersey Care Commission
- Chief Internal Auditor
- Chief Minister
- Chief Officer Health and Community Services
- Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment
- Chief People Officer
- Committee and Panel Officer States Greffe
- Deputy Chief Officer Children, Young People, Education and Skills
- Deputy Head of Finance Business Partners
- Director Health Policy
- Director of Finance HCS and Head of Finance Business Partners

- Finance Business Partner Treasury (seconded to Children, Young People, Education and Skills)
- Group Director Financial Business Partnering and Analytics
- HCS Finance Business Partner
- Head of Children, Young People, Education and Skills HR People Operations
- Head of Data Quality and People Analytics
- Head of Finance Business Partners for Children, Young People, Education and Skills
- Head of Training and Development
- Health Advisory Board Secretary
- Infrastructure and Environment HR Business Partner
- Interim Head of Talent Acquisition
- Internal Audit Manager
- Joint Head of School Improvement and Advisory Service
- Nurse Education Director
- People Services Business Partner Governance & Strategy
- Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive Officer and Head of Public Service
- Property Holdings Manager
- Recruitment Contractor for Children, Young People, Education and Skills
- Recruitment Manager for Children, Young People, Education and Skills
- Research and Project Officer States Greffe

The fieldwork was carried out by affiliates working for the Comptroller and Auditor General, from August to October 2024

Appendix Two

Summary of Recommendations, Work planned that should be prioritised and Areas for consideration

Recommendations

- R1** Finalise and approve future service delivery models and strategies for all significant areas of public services.
- R2** Ensure that workforce plans for all departments are linked to available service strategies and departmental business plans and are updated when future service delivery strategies are developed and approved.
- R3** Document specific training and development plans that address the future skills needed by the current workforce and set out how the pipeline for the future workforce will be developed.
- R4** Document action plans for the implementation of the departmental strategic workforce plans to include the staff responsible for the actions and the timescales for implementation.
- R5** Update and improve recruitment pack procedures to include:
- introducing a standard recruitment pack template accompanied by clear guidelines on what is required from recruiting managers
 - a requirement for departments to submit completed recruitment packs to People Services; and
 - a programme of central review of completed recruitment packs to provide assurance on compliance with required processes and procedures.
- R6** Review and clarify the requirement to involve the JAC in senior appointments, including senior appointments at Arm's Length Bodies.
- R7** Ensure that interim appointments are made for defined periods and are reviewed sufficiently early within the defined period. Maintain a central record of such appointments to ensure that review procedures take place on a timely basis.
- R8** Document formally the factors taken into account when making recruitment decisions that go outside of stated policies so that it is clear how risks have been balanced and policies prioritised.

- R9** Ensure that a robust strategy is documented and actioned sufficiently early to mitigate risks to the successful appointment of a permanent Chief Executive.
- R10** Ensure that all departments are advertising and applying the policy regarding relocation expenses on a consistent basis.
- R11** Ensure that a consistent policy is applied for the provision of Government accommodation for employees.
- R12** Undertake a review of the management of Government accommodation for employees and consider which option delivers best value for money. In doing so, ensure that there is an agreed alignment of rental income and maintenance budgets.
- R13** Document and apply a consistent policy and monitoring programme for the design and application of reward packages across the States.
- R14** Develop, adopt and implement a clear and consistent approach to apprenticeship opportunities including a consistent approach to funding.
- R15** Ensure structured training and development courses are connected clearly to identified skills shortages and identified training and development needs.
- R16** Undertake a review to identify opportunities for multi-disciplinary training.
- R17** Enhance the monitoring and enforcement of compliance with statutory and mandatory training requirements.
- R18** Require managers and leaders to collect 360 degree feedback as part of their performance appraisal data.
- R19** Implement a programme of work that provides assurance as to the quality and consistency of the staff performance review process.
- R20** Develop and implement a standard policy and procedure for exit interviews. In doing so, ensure that leavers are encouraged to share their reasons for leaving.

Areas for consideration

- A1** Review the policy on student funding from Government to ensure that it is clear in both how it is to be applied and in how it delivers value for money.
- A2** Consider making more courses mandatory, particularly those that relate to identified development needs and skills gaps.
- A3** Consider developing specific programmes for aspiring managers and aspiring leaders/Chief Officers.

Work planned that should be prioritised

- P1** Finalise and approve updated policies in respect of:
- recruitment and retention; and
 - rewards and benefits.
- P2** Finalise the development and implementation of key performance indicators in respect of staff recruitment and retention.
- P3** Finalise the planned relaunch of the Careers Site.



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