

Government Plan – Review.

Submission to the Environment and Housing Scrutiny panel.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to lodge comments upon the proposed Government Plan.

In brief, it is a very wordy and laudable appearing document, it has clearly consumed considerable resources in the development and presentation of the sort of policy statement one might expect to encounter in a corporate headquarters, not in a small island jurisdiction. The use of jargon and acronyms is a deliberate tactic to alienate the public and is indefensible.

Terms of reference;

1. Are funded projects in the best interests of the public and do they demonstrate best available practice from everywhere, not just the UK?
3. Levels of resourcing must be clearly stated (possibly as a % of GDP/GDA?) and usage must be defined, restrict the quantum the proportion that can be expended by government including quangos and consultants, possibly 30-40% of total
4. Allocations must be made explicit and 'ring fenced'.
5. The public interest must have primacy at all times and levels not 'Departmental Objectives', decisions have to be made by politicians and not fonctionnaires. Public benefit must be regarded as being the measure of validity in all cases.
6. There is a need for clear accountability to the public via politicians, not fonctionnaires or spokespersons.
7. This somewhat ill-defined; oneGov, the Government Plan and the new Island Plan are all unsustainable and unsound in the absence of the implementation of a robust and sustainable migration & population policy to underpin it. It is morally questionable to continue to spend public money on work streams that may prove to be fruitless, the 'Future Hospital' fiasco is a clear warning of this risk.

Climate Emergency Fund.

- Subject to comments made above, it is clear that it is going to cost a substantial amount to bring this work to fruition, the question as per 3. Is how much is going to be spent on research and reports before any action is even contemplated? I can find no evidence of any great activity on behalf of the government, the private sector is ready willing and able to provide information and solutions here and now, we have access to both

Academia and Industry. There is yet again a risk that valuable resources will be squandered on the public sector writing reports and defining the problem, others much more qualified have already done this and shared it with the world.

- **Assessment of infrastructure and resources.**

- For starters it is amazing that this is not an ongoing function, it should be feeding directly into the Treasury Minister without any interference or editing from any other part of government, and treasury should then be responsible for presenting regular updates on each area/sector.

- **Countryside access.**

- Another meaningless term, is this meant to enable the public to access publicly owned land or to enable greater access to agricultural and/or privately owned land? There is a real issue with the latter in as much as the public are often too quick to assume and demand their 'rights' without have the education / information and attitudes to fulfil their obligations.

- **Jersey National Park.**

- There is a clear need to sustain and protect this valuable public asset, it deserves to be established and maintained on a regular financial footing and not to be regarded as a 'poor cousin'. There is also the related, and critically overlooked, matter of our marine environment, the RMA (Ramsar Management Authority) does what it can to protect and enhance the 4 Ramsar sites but there is insufficient strategic thinking and management of the greater area, there is also an almost wilful refusal to engage with our neighbours both of which present huge opportunities for collaboration and cooperation.
- There is a clear impression amongst those who are most closely engaged that the Government Plan appears to offer a great many wishes and aspirations but beneath all the misleading verbiage there is a sad lack of real focus, comprehension and substance.
- I finish with a simple question, what is the current internal carbon footprint of Jersey?