STATES OF JERSEY

STATES ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2021 (P.A.C.1/2023): EXECUTIVE RESPONSE

**Presented to the States on 6th April 2023
by the Public Accounts Committee**

STATES GREFFE

FOREWORD

In accordance with paragraphs 69-71 of the Code of Practice for engagement between 'Scrutiny Panels and the Public Accounts Committee' and 'the Executive', the Public Accounts Committee presents the Executive Response to its report entitled: 'States Annual Report and Accounts 2021' (P.A.C.1/2023)' presented to the States on 30th January 2023.

The Public Accounts Committee has considered the response and will be presenting additional comments in due course.

Deputy L. Feltham
Chair, Public Accounts Committee

Chief Executive and Treasurer's Response to PAC review: P.A.C.1/2023 States Annual Report and Accounts 2021

Summary of response:

The Chief Executive and Treasurer welcome the report of the PAC, the constructive dialogue with, and challenge from, the PAC and share their objective of improved management and reporting of performance. The majority of recommendations are accepted. Target dates for the accepted actions are included below.

Action Plan:

Recommendations	Accept / Reject	Action	Target date	Responsible Officer
R1 The Chief Executive should ensure that in future iterations of the Annual Report and Accounts, alongside a foreword from the Chief Minister and Chief Executive, an executive summary is included which outlines the key messages and overall picture of Government finances and performance over the year being reported. A digital summary report of these sections should also be produced to aid accessibility for key stakeholders.	Accept	Accept for the Annual Report and Accounts for 2023 The Annual Report and Accounts for 2022 already continues to develop improved accessibility.	April 2024	Head of Strategic Communications
R2 The Chief Executive and Treasurer of the States should ensure that, after a general election, incoming	Accept	A briefing has been incorporated into plans for the induction for incoming States Members in 2026 following the next general election	March 2023	Treasurer

Recommendations	Accept / Reject	Action	Target date	Responsible Officer
States Members are provided with a briefing on the previous year's Annual Report and Accounts as soon as practicable after being sworn in. The incoming Council of Ministers should also be briefed on the previous year's document as soon as possible after their appointment.		The nature of this recommendation means that it will remain incomplete until 2026.		
R3 In preparing future Annual Report and Accounts, the Chief Executive should ensure that feedback is routinely sought from key stakeholders in relation to the accessibility and understandability of the report after it is published. This will assist in the preparation of future iterations of the report.	Accept	The Chief Executive is committed to ensuring accessibility standards are met across all communications and this forms a large part of the recent Information and Engagement Review. Actions on accessibility and understanding of Government reports, documents, and communications, as part of the review, are currently being worked on. M&D has developed Government digital standards to make sure users have a positive digital experience. These ensure that published HTML content is discoverable, accessible, consistent and useful. Several standards and guidelines are used to ensure content is consistent and adopts best practice, which includes: Web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 The Communications department has recently attended a lunch and learn session with a CLS Accessibility Champion, on 'How to improve the accessibility of documents', which included feedback on the accessibility and understanding of Government publications and reports and ways to make them more accessible. We are incorporating that feedback into our	Dec 2023	Head of Strategic Communications

Recommendations	Accept / Reject	Action	Target date	Responsible Officer
		communications and publications, including the ARA. We will continue to seek feedback on the ARA and other reports and publications for future iterations. It should be noted that the Risk and Audit Committee routinely provide feedback to GoJ as part of their review of the Annual Report and Accounts.		
R4 The Chief Executive should ensure, as part of the future Annual Report and Accounts, that information within the performance report is presented in a more understandable manner including infographics alongside succinct summaries of whether key performance indicators have been met, not met or exceeded.	Accept	Accept for the Annual Report and Accounts for 2023. The Annual Report and Accounts for 2022 continues to develop improved understandability. Reporting against performance measures is also available on gov.je Performance data and associated indicators are now published quarterly on gov.je and available for analysis at any time.	April 2024	Head of Marketing
R5 The Government of Jersey should ensure that, from the 2023 Annual Report and Accounts, departmental performance reporting is taken out and presented within separate departmental performance reports. This should also include links to Non-Ministerial and States-	Accept	Accept for the Annual Report and Accounts for 2023 Annual Report and Accounts for 2022 will contain an Annex providing performance analysis for each Ministerial Department that is intended to tell the story of each Department's year in a fair and balanced way. Annual Report and Accounts for 2022 includes link to Non- Ministerial and States Owned Entities annual reports.	April 2024	Associate Director, Strategic Planning and Accountability

Recommendations	Accept / Reject	Action	Target date	Responsible Officer
Owned Entities annual reports.				
R6 As part of the Annual Social Survey in 2023, the Government of Jersey should seek to include questions in order to gauge the level of public understanding in relation to how they can access and track government performance through the gov.je website.	Accept.	The content of JOLS (the Jersey Opinions and Lifestyle Survey) is decided by Statistics Jersey after engagement with departments and other stakeholders who may wish to include questions in the survey. The Chief Statistician will consider this request for a question in the 2023 Survey, which will take place in May. There is, in practice, a limit on how many questions can be asked in JOLS – if the questionnaire is too long households will not respond. If this topic were prioritised for the 2023 JOLS, it would also be necessary for Statistics Jersey to test whether it is possible to develop simple questions that Islanders find acceptable and can readily answer. Statistics Jersey will finalise the content for JOLS by April. The Chief Statistician will notify the PAC of the outcome in relation to this request.	End 2023 The Chief Statistician will notify PAC in April whether it has been possible to include the requested topic in 2023 JOLS. If so the results and analyses will be by end December.	Chief Statistician
R7 The Chief Executive should ensure that a process is developed whereby, at the end of a States Assembly term of office, government performance data can be examined across the four- year term showing the wider performance following the 'golden thread' from Common Strategic Priority	Reject	Performance data is already published quarterly online and is available for analysis at any time. As time progresses and more quarters of information are available any user will be able to compare performance across years. The Common Strategic Policy 2023-26 formally endorses the Future Jersey Vision and the Island Outcomes and Indicators which form the top-level of the 'golden thread'. The Annual Report and Accounts for 2022 links the Island Outcomes with the Common Strategic Policy Priorities, and the Delivery Plans link the Common Strategic Policy Priorities with Ministerial Priorities and Actions.		

Recommendations	Accept / Reject	Action	Target date	Responsible Officer
to individual services and indicators.		We will continue to use the 'golden thread' when developing performance reporting.		
R8 The Treasurer of the States should ensure that, in the presentation of the 2023 Annual Report and Accounts, the report contains clear information quantifying the risks faced by the Government of Jersey and detailing the link between risk and the overall objectives of the organisation.	Accept	Accept for the Annual Report and Accounts for 2023. The data already exists in the Enterprise Risk Management site and by the Annual Report and Accounts for 2023 we will look to see how we can best incorporate this in the document. Following the C&AG's comments we have already included some text to demonstrate how risk, governance and strategic priorities correlate.	April 2023	Head of Financial Governance and Head of Risk

Recommendations not accepted.

	Recommendation	Reason for rejection
R7	The Chief Executive should ensure that a process is developed whereby, at the end of a States Assembly term of office, government performance data can be examined across the four-year term showing the wider performance following the 'golden thread' from Common Strategic Priority to individual services and indicators.	Performance data is already published quarterly online and is available for analysis at any time. As time progresses and more quarters of information are available any user will be able to compare performance across years. The Common Strategic Policy 2023-26 formally endorses the Future Jersey Vision and the Island Outcomes and Indicators which form the top-level of the 'golden thread'. The ARA 2022 links the Island Outcomes with the Common Strategic Policy Priorities, and the Delivery Plans link the Common Strategic Policy Priorities with Ministerial Priorities and Actions.

		We will continue to use the 'golden thread' when developing performance reporting.