

STATES OF JERSEY



PROPOSED BUDGET (GOVERNMENT PLAN) 2025-2028 (P.51/2024): THIRD AMENDMENT

STATISTICS JERSEY FUNDING

Lodged au Greffe on 7th November 2024
by the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel
Earliest date for debate: 26th November 2024

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSED BUDGET (GOVERNMENT PLAN) 2025-2028 (P.51/2024):
THIRD AMENDMENT

1 PAGE 4, PARAGRAPH (o) –

After the words “as set out in the Appendix to the accompanying Report” insert the words –

“,except that, on page 41, after Table 10, there should be inserted the words “Within the Revenue Head of Expenditure for the Cabinet Office, funding for Statistics Jersey will be increased by £157,000 to include £78,000 budget allocation and £79,000 growth allocation, through the reallocation of other departmental expenditure within the Cabinet Office.””.

CORPORATE SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to receive the Government Plan 2025 – 2028 (entitled “Budget 2025-2028”) specified in Article 9(1) of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019 (“the Law”) and specifically –

- (a) to approve the estimate of total States income to be paid into the Consolidated Fund in 2025 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 1 to the Report, which is inclusive of the proposed taxation and impôts duties changes outlined in the Government Plan, in line with Article 9(2)(a) of the Law.
- (b) to approve the proposed Changes to Approval for financing/borrowing for 2025, as shown in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 2 to the Report, which may be obtained by the Minister for Treasury and Resources, as and when required, in line with Article 9 (2)(c) of the Law, of up to those revised approval amounts.
- (c) to approve the transfers from one States fund to another for 2025 of up to and including the amounts set in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 3 in line with Article 9(2)(b) of the Law.
- (d) to approve a transfer from the Consolidated Fund to the Stabilisation Fund in 2025 of up to £25 million, subject to a decision of the Minister for Treasury and Resources based on the availability of funds in the Consolidated Fund as at 31st December 2024 in excess of the estimates provided in this plan, or from budgeted underspends identified before 31st December 2025.
- (e) to approve a transfer from the Consolidated Fund to the Agricultural Loans Fund of up to £2 million, subject to a decision of the Minister for Treasury and Resources based on availability of funds in the Consolidated Fund as at 31st December 2024 in excess of estimates provided in this plan, or from budgeted underspends identified before 31st December 2025;

- (f) to approve each major project that is to be started or continued in 2025 and the total cost of each such project and any amendments to the proposed total cost of a major project under a previously approved Government Plan, in line with Article 9(2)(d), (e) and (f) of the Law and as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 4 to the Report.
- (g) to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from the Consolidated Fund for 2025, for each head of expenditure, being gross expenditure less estimated income (if any), in line with Articles 9(2)(g), 10(1) and 10(2) of the Law, and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Tables 5(i) and (ii) of the Report.
- (h) to approve the estimated income, being estimated gross income less expenditure, that each States trading operation will pay into its trading fund in 2025 in line with Article 9(2)(h) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 6 to the Report.
- (i) to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from each States trading operation’s trading fund for 2025 for each head of expenditure in line with Article 9(2)(i) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 7 to the Report.
- (j) to approve the estimated income and expenditure proposals for the Climate Emergency Fund for 2025 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 8 to the Report.
- (k) to approve an updated and consolidated policy of the Strategic Reserve Fund as follows:

“The Strategic Reserve Fund, established in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2005, is a permanent reserve only to be used:

- i. in exceptional circumstances to insulate the Island’s economy from severe structural decline such as the sudden collapse of a major Island industry or from major natural disaster.
- ii. if necessary, for the purposes of providing funding (up to £100 million) for the Bank Depositors Compensation Scheme established under the Banking Business (Depositors Compensation) (Jersey) Regulations 2009, including to meet the States contribution to the Scheme and/or to meet any temporary cash flow funding requirements of the Scheme.
- iii. to support the development of future healthcare facilities and the borrowing costs for such work, in line with a financing strategy agreed by the Assembly;
- iv. as a holding fund for any or all monies raised through external financing until required, and for any monies related to the repayment of debt raised through external financing used to offset the repayment of debt, as and when required; and
- v. in accordance with Article 24 of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019, where the Minister for Treasury and Resources is satisfied that there exists an immediate threat to the health or safety of any of the inhabitants

of Jersey, to the stability of the economy in Jersey or to the environment, for which no other suitable funding is available.”

- (l) to approve the transfer to the Strategic Reserve of the amounts due as a result of the move from prior-year basis taxation after 31st December 2025, as and when these payments are received (estimated at £280 million).
- (m) in relation to the new Government Headquarters (office), to approve;
 - i. the exercising of the option to acquire the new Government Headquarters (estimated at £91 million), by the Public of the Island, in line with the pre-agreed terms; and
 - ii. the acquisition of the new Government Headquarters as an investment of the Social Security (Reserve) Fund (including authorising the meeting of expenses incurred in connection with the acquisition); and
 - iii. the subsequent leasing of the new Government Headquarters by the Public of the Island from the Social Security (Reserve) Fund, with commercial terms to be agreed between the Minister for Infrastructure (on behalf of the Public) and Minister for Social Security and the Minister for Treasury and Resources (both on behalf of the Fund); and
- (n) in relation to the new Government Headquarters, to authorise H.M. Attorney General, the Greffier of the States, the Ministers for Infrastructure, Social Security and Treasury and Resources, and the Public of the Island, to enter into such arrangements, including financing, and pass any contracts as are necessary to put into effect paragraph (m).
- (o) to approve, in accordance with Article 9(1) of the Law, the Government Plan 2025-2028, as set out in the Appendix of the accompanying Report, **except that, on page 41, after Table 10, there should be inserted the words “Within the Revenue Head of Expenditure for the Cabinet Office, funding for Statistics Jersey will be increased by £157,000 to include [£78,000 budget allocation] and [£79,000 growth allocation], reallocated from other departmental expenditure within the Cabinet Office.”.**

REPORT

Purpose of the Amendment

The Corporate Services Panel (hereafter “the Panel”) Amendment to the Proposed Budget (Government Plan) 2025-2028 (hereafter “Budget 2025-2028”) seeks to align the Budget 2025-2028 funding position for Statistics Jersey for 2025 to the funding position previously proposed for 2025 in the Government Plan 2024-2027.

An [announcement](#) made by Statistics Jersey on 18th September 2024 reported that, due to Cabinet Office budget reductions, it would be reprioritising work and discontinuing certain outputs including:

1. Business Tendency Survey - BTS (last report to be published on 16th October 2024)
2. Actively Seeking Work - ASW (last report to be published on 10th July 2024)
3. Energy Trends (last report to be published on 7th August 2024)
4. Jersey Opinion and Lifestyle Survey - JOLS (after 2025, the survey would be carried out every two years and therefore would not run in 2026)

The Panel’s proposed Amendment aims to reinstate the funding position for 2025 by reflecting an increase in Budget allocation and Growth Allocation so that Statistics Jersey can continue to produce key statistical outputs including the BTS, the JOLS (annually) and to undertake work in relation to Gross Value Added (GVA) for quarterly reporting. This funding should be made available through the Cabinet Office Head of Expenditure.

Background and Context

Following the Statistics Jersey’s announcement and Panel’s recognition of the effect of the reduction of key statistical outputs, the Panel sought to understand the rationale for the proposals and raised this in a [Public Quarterly Hearing](#) with the Chief Minister. The Panel was concerned regarding the loss of key statistical data, as the data produced by Statistics Jersey does not only inform Government decision-making but also provides direction to community services and businesses.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

In terms of right-sizing, I think there was an announcement yesterday that the budget for Statistics Jersey has been reduced so that they will no longer be producing the Business Tendency Survey, so that they will no longer be producing the J.O.L.S. - the Jersey Opinions and Lifestyle Survey - on an annual basis. What sort of discussions went on that led to a reduction in budget so that they would lose those 2 particular pieces of research?

Group Director of Policy:

The chief statistician has to take a view based on savings that are needed, but also risk and prioritisation of what departments and the wider Island needs, and that was his professional recommendation to Ministers, that on that basis we can trim some of these - we will not do them all together - or in some cases

we reduce the frequency in order to make sure that we can still live within that right-sized budget, but also provide the most essential data services.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

...Statistics Jersey do not just produce statistics for the direction of Government, it is also community services, business and the like. Is there an argument that you are embarking on a journey, but you are taking away your map and your compass by making cuts like that to the Statistics Department?

Chief Executive Officer:

...the Cabinet Office had a £2.9 million saving from the previous Government to find this year, and then £4 million from the amendment to find. So, every part of the Cabinet Office has been obviously looking at its budget and trying to think thoughtfully about, if they had to make changes, where would they make them? In this instance, the chief statistician to get in the process would have played their part in that with the chief officer and came forward with a number of different options of things that they could stop, or they could do on a biennial basis and so forth, adjust frequencies. Out of that process, the final recommendation were the ones that you have quoted to us. The issue with this is, this has been an area of very significant growth as well in recent years, as you all know. Even after these changes, the Budget is still higher than it was in 2021. We have got a number of areas of government that have grown significantly, in some cases almost exponentially in recent years. This is about choices; you cannot have everything.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You can argue that Statistics were starting from an extremely low base in terms of what was being provided. Again, if you are looking at policy development, that has to be developed on good data and evidence. So, I think the question was largely around the discussions he had about the risk, because everybody in the Cabinet Office has to take off whatever percentage it is, which is that salami slice can become problematic if actually your service is not focused, I think.

Chief Executive Officer:

I agree. That is why we find it really difficult when we get specific targeted amendments at individual departments. It is very difficult for us to deal with them.¹

Stakeholder Engagement

In light of the evidence from the hearing, which identified that decision-making was based on the professional recommendation of the Chief Statistician. The Panel explored this further and [wrote](#) to the Chief Minister to request detail in the form of any briefings that were provided by the Chief Statistician as part of that process. The Panel also sought to understand if any risks were raised as a result as, in its view, the discontinuation of those statistical outputs would reduce the level of information available for evidence-based decision-making. The Panel notes that it received two briefing papers in

¹ [Transcript – CM – 20 September 2024](#)

confidence from the Chief Minister on 31st October 2024. The Panel also received detail on the funding position for 2025 across the sections of the Cabinet Office.²

Noting that the Chief Statistician would have a statutory obligation under the [Statistics and Census \(Jersey\) Law 2018](#) (hereafter the “2018 Law”) to seek advice from the Statistics Users Group (SUG) on the discontinuation of the statistical reports, the Panel also sought feedback from the SUG to understand its engagement with the Chief Statistician on the matter and to request any advice that was shared by the SUG.

Furthermore, noting that the Fiscal Policy Panel (FPP) had made several references to the BTS within its Annual Report for 2024³ and also raised the importance of the requirement for GVA data, the Panel sought the FPP’s views in respect of the discontinuation of the statistical reports and its effect on the work of the FPP in understanding the economic context of Jersey.

Stakeholder Responses

Statistics Users Group

In a response [letter](#) from the SUG, the SUG emphasised the importance of maintaining and expanding statistical reporting by Statistics Jersey and other public authorities to support Government policymaking, business decisions and public benefit. The SUG highlighted the findings of their annual user survey, which showed the importance of public authority statistics and recommended improvements to frequency and coverage, including quarterly GVA reporting.

The SUG had engaged with the Chief Statistician regarding the proposed cuts and while it understood the budget constraints, it was of the view that cutting back on the production of statistics by Statistics Jersey, did not align with the Government’s core strategic objectives and expressed concerns that the cuts may hinder strategic decision-making and policy development.

The SUG noted the following in respect of the cuts to statistical productions:

- 1. Business Tendency Survey - likely to result in an information gap as no other government department/public authority has committed to picking this up*
- 2. Actively Seeking Work Report - Customer and Local Services have committed to publish this data on a quarterly basis but with no supporting narrative report*
- 3. Energy Trends Report - some confidence that this reporting will be picked up by Carbon Neutral team who will have less constraints from a data protection perspective that will hopefully enable more granular analysis*
- 4. JOLS Survey - every two years instead of annual with implementation of modular approach to accommodate more questions*

The SUG raised that maintaining robust statistical outputs was essential for Jersey to meet reporting requirements under the 2018 Law to protect and enhance statistical

² [Letter – CM – 31 October 2024](#)

³ [FPP Annual Report 2024](#)

production for the Island’s competitiveness and progress towards a sustainable economy.

It was further noted by the SUG that Statistics Jersey had a requirement for an additional full-time employee (FTE) to increase the core reporting activity to any significant degree (in the order of approximately £100,000 increments). The SUG supported the view that, should any additional funding be made available to Statistics Jersey for additional statistical output, the first priority should be to move to quarterly GVA reporting rather than reinstating the BTS and ASW reports. Furthermore, any further funding should be used to prioritise reinstating the JOLS on an annual basis.

Fiscal Policy Panel

The FPP noted in its response [letter](#) that the Public Finances (Jersey) Law (2019)⁴ requires it to assess the Island's fiscal position by considering the economy's strength, outlook, and sustainability, as well as global factors and the use of the reserve funds. To do so, the FPP relies on high-quality, timely economic data, primarily provided by Statistics Jersey and other reputable sources.

The FPP also emphasised that the BTS was especially valuable because it provided up-to-date, easy-to-understand, and forward-looking information about Jersey’s economy, which complements the GVA data (currently reported on an annual basis). The FPP noted that the BTS was crucial for assessing Jersey’s economic cycle and guiding decisions related to the Stabilisation Fund, especially since the financial sector (a key part of Jersey's economy) was difficult to measure in GVA alone. The FPP highlighted the importance of the BTS in informing the 2024 Annual Report considering the infrequency of GVA data (only GVA data for 2022 and previous years was available), which meant there was a greater reliance on the BTS.

The FPP has recommended increasing the frequency of GVA reporting for a more comprehensive assessment and understanding of the performance of Jersey’s economy. Noting that Statistics Jersey is already small (relative to the size of Jersey’s economy and Government), the FPP raised concern that the proposed budget reductions will reduce the availability and development of economic statistics, such as quarterly GVA reports, which will negatively affect the FPP’s ability to assess Jersey’s fiscal and economic health.

Funding Position

The below table shows the funding position for Statistics Jersey as seen in the financial annexes to the Government Pan 2024-2027 and Budget 2025-2028 (linked to in the table below):

	Government Plan 2024-27	Budget 2025-2028
Budget Allocation 2025	£1,994 Million	£1,916 Million
Growth Allocation 2025	£436 K	£357 K

The table below shows the reconciliation between the Government Plan 2024-27 allocation and Budget 2025-2028 allocation for the year 2025:

⁴ [Public Finances \(Jersey\) Law 2019](#)

Government Plan 2024-27 Allocation	£1,994 Million
2024 savings applied in-year	(£0,063)
2024 pay award	£0,142
Growth reduction	(£0,079)
2025 savings target	(£0,081)
Non-pay inflation	£0.003
Budget 2025-2028 Allocation	£1,916 Million

In a [letter](#) received from the Chief Minister a table (shown below) demonstrates the £ and % movement in budgets for 2025 compared to 2024, how the role savings have been allocated to each of the service areas in 2025, and the 2026-2028 service analysis showing the year-on-year budget changes for each service area. The Chief Minister noted that while a number of budgets have been reduced in absolute terms, in some cases this follows previous years' growth.

	2024 Approved Government Plan £000	2025 Published Budget Annex £000	2024 – 2025 Budget change £000	2024 – 2025 Budget change %	2025 Role Saving Allocation £000	2026 Budget £000	2027 Budget £000	2028 Budget £000
Ministerial Office and FOI	3,203	3,422	219	6.8	81	3,301	3,301	3,301
Public Policy	3,809	4,622	813	21.3	162	4,128	4,004	4,004
Housing, Environment & Place Making	2,004	2,605	601	30.0	162	2,362	2,362	2,362
Governance and Assurance (including Delivery Unit for 2024)	1,485	555	-930	-62.6	0	555	555	555
Communications	2,529	2,366	-163	-6.4	122	2,184	2,184	2,184
Statistics and Analytics	1,888	1,916	28	1.5	81	1,795	1,795	1,795
Public Health	7,165	6,785	-380	-5.3	122	6,276	6,276	6,276
Safeguarding Partnership	773	783	10	1.3	41	722	722	722
Care Commission	1,764	1,767	3	0.2	81	1,596	1,596	1,596
Children's Commissioner	958	980	22	2.3	41	919	919	919
Charities Commissioner	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Advice and Conciliation Service	473	473	0	0	0	437	473	473
Total	26,052	26,274	222	0.9	893	24,311	24,187	24,187

Note 1: 2025 Budgets Increased due to 2024 Pay Award and Non-Staff inflation allocation

Note 2: Between 2024 and 2025 Budget transfers will also impact budget allocations. For example, FOI has moved from Treasury and Resources to the Cabinet Office; and following the dissolution of the Delivery Unit the budgets have been realigned in 2025 to reflect the move of those staff to other policy priorities.

Note 3: Some of the services have received increases in previous years, for example, the Public Health published budget in 2023 was £3,576,000; Statistics and Analytics was £1,386,000; and Communications £2,450,000. More information can be provided on request.

Please see Reconciliation of the Opening 2024 Budget to the Opening 2025 budget (please see Table 5, page 8): [Draft Budget Annex \(v1 31072024\).pdf](#)

Although Statistics and Analytics is noted by the Chief Minister above as a service which has received growth funding in previous years, it is the Panel's understanding that the increase in 2023 was as a result of the service previously being underfunded. The Panel highlighted this in the hearing with the Chief Minister:

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You can argue that Statistics were starting from an extremely low base in terms of what was being provided.⁵

The funding shortfall, which was noted as unsustainable, was also brought to the attention of the previous Panel when reviewing the Proposed Government Plan 2024-27. It was noted then that Statistics Jersey was struggling with capacity challenges and that without investment it would have to cut the BTS and reduce output for the JOLS. It was also noted that £172,000 of the funding for 2023 *was simply to plug the inherited funding shortfall in Statistics Jersey budgets, and to prevent the cutting of existing*

⁵ [Transcript – CM – 20 September 2024](#)

outputs and that the additional £146,000 of funding was for a new, small development team to allow Statistics Jersey to maintain the quality of existing outputs and to develop new outputs. The following update provided, through a submission⁶ from Statistics Jersey at that time, further explains the budget shortfall for Statistics Jersey:

Government Plan 2023-2026

Statistics Jersey – Capacity I-SPPP-GP23-002

There are two elements to this item:

Statistics Jersey has had a budget shortfall for its business-as-usual work, which has been funded through temporary sources, which is no longer sustainable. Without this investment Statistics Jersey would have had to cut the Business Tendency Survey, run the Jersey Opinion and Lifestyles Survey every two years, and make further cuts in 2024. This investment will enable Statistics Jersey to continue to operate sustainably and to provide existing statistical outputs, including the annual Jersey Opinions and Lifestyle Survey. To mitigate the total increase in cost, the Business Tendency Survey will now run every six months (rather than quarterly).

Statistical development. Statistics Jersey has 8.5 FTEs in its core team (additional temporary staff are recruited for projects such as the census). This team are currently fully committed to producing business-as-usual outputs in line with the Statistics Jersey release schedule. Statistics Jersey has no capacity to develop existing statistics (e.g. responses to changing international standards) nor to develop new outputs or analyses in response to changing demands from users in government and elsewhere.

This funding will allow Statistics Jersey to build a small (2.5 FTEs) statistics development team to address its backlog (e.g. moving National Accounts onto the latest international industrial classification). This will ensure Statistics Jersey is more responsive to new and emerging data needs, such as potentially producing quarterly GVA data based on admin data already held by government and working with parishes to improve statistics on housing, including the House Price Index.

£172,000 of the Government Plan 2023 funding was simply to plug the inherited funding shortfall in Statistics Jersey budgets, and to prevent the cutting of existing outputs. It has been possible during 2023 to maintain the Business Tendency Survey on a quarterly basis.

The additional £146,000 of funding was for a new, small development team to allow Statistics Jersey to maintain the quality of existing outputs and to develop new outputs. During 2023 the funding has been sufficient, and we now have two people in post.

The funding has supported the development of the first experimental all-economy gender pay gap report and the 2022 GVA estimates (published 4 October) have been moved to SIC 2007 – the latest international standard. The current priority is to review and modernise the production systems for the

⁶ [Submission – Statistics Jersey - 2023](#)

quarterly Retail Prices Index. During 2024 the team will also review the methods used for the Living Costs and Household Income Survey, which have not been fully updated since 2009/10 (for the 2014/15 survey).

Government Plan 2024-2027

The Panel also notes that the growth allocation of £436,000 provided through the Government Plan 2024-2027 was new revenue growth for the Administrative Data Linkage Team, with allocations as follows:

- 2024 - £393,000
- 2025 - £436,000
- 2026 - £436,000
- 2027 - £436,000

The previous Panel reviewed this workstream when undertaking scrutiny of the Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027. A [submission](#) from Statistics Jersey noted that the growth allocation was to recruit a small team (four posts with an additional post in 2025) and that the workstream aimed to address gaps. Several qualitative benefits of that workstream were as follows:

- Production of better population estimates
- Production of better migration estimates
- Production of whole economy gender pay gap reporting
- Development of more frequent economic statistics such as quarterly GVA, labour market and earnings statistics
- Development of more granular economic statistics such as GVA and earnings statistics
- Development of population and household statistics including such as deprivation and longitudinal analysis of life outcomes⁷

Budget 2025-2028

In light of the evidence available, it is the Panel's view, that the reduced budget allocations for Statistics Jersey for 2025 will not only result in the discontinuation and reduction of the statistical outputs as raised by the Chief Statistician but will also reduce the admin data production as a result of the reduced growth funding of £79,000 in 2025 for the Administrative Data Linkage Team.

This will in turn impact upon the work to develop more frequent and granular economic statistics such as quarterly GVA reporting, which was highlighted by the SUG and FPP as crucial to assessing and understanding Jersey's fiscal and economic position. Without frequent GVA reporting, the BTS becomes critical to the work of the FPP to complement the current annual GVA reporting. The below is taken from the [submission](#) from Statistics Jersey to demonstrate the work specific to GVA reporting through the growth funding for the Administrative data linkage Team.

⁷ [Submission – Statistics Jersey - 2023](#)

Development of more frequent economic statistics such as quarterly GVA, labour market and earnings statistics.	Developing more frequent economics statistics, such as GVA earnings and labour market will support more responsive decision making and greater insight into seasonal economic activity.
Development of more granular economic statistics such as GVA and earnings statistics.	Developing more granular level statistics in these areas will provide a better understanding of individual sectors and sub-sectors that make up the Jersey economy.

Statistics and Census (Jersey) Amendment Law

The Panel further notes that in September 2024, that the States Assembly adopted Proposition [P.29/2024 Draft Statistics and Census \(Jersey\) Amendment Law 202-](#), to amend the 2018 Law, in line with international best practice standards to maintain the public’s trust and confidence in Jersey’s statistical system. The Panel extensively reviewed P.29/2024 and presented [Comments](#) in August 2024, ahead of the States Assembly debate on the Proposition. The States Assembly will recall that the report accompanying the Proposition highlighted the significant changes that would be brought by its adoption to the governance of Statistics Jersey, including in relation to how it is funded, noting that it will:

“provide the Chief Statistician with an unfettered right to comment on any aspect of statistics including their funding, use, accuracy, reliability, adequacy, erroneous interpretation and misuse;

“provide a process to secure adequate funding for Statistics Jersey which is commensurate with its responsibilities under the Law.”

The accompanying report to the Proposition also raised that:

37. The Chief Minister must provide the Chief Statistician with the resources they require to discharge their functions economically, effectively and efficiently, under new Article 4(3). In effect, it provides that the Chief Minister will make an assessment of the funding (and other resources) which the Chief Statistician requires to carry out their work economically, effectively and efficiently, on the advice of the Chief Statistician – see below.

38. New Article 4(4) of 2018 Law in effect provides that, as part of this assessment of the Chief Statistician’s funding requirements and before any bid for funding is submitted for consideration by the Council of Ministers as part of the Government Plan process, the Chief Minister must consult the Chief Statistician. Under Article 20 of the draft Law, the Chief Statistician will be added under Schedule 6 to the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019 (the “2019 Law”). The effect of this change is to ensure that Article 10 of the 2019 Law applies to the Chief Statistician so that the Government Plan must set out the amount which the Chief Minister determines is required by the Chief Statistician to discharge their functions. The Council of Ministers may issue a statement indicating its disagreement with the Chief Minister’s submission, but the submission must still go forward into the Government Plan which is submitted by the Council of Ministers to the States Assembly. The Assembly would ultimately determine whether to approve or to amend the level of funding for the Chief Statistician which the Chief Minister has proposed under the Government Plan. Governance of the public finances of the Office of the Chief

Statistician will sit within the Accountable Officer structure provided by the 2019 Law.

40. In addition, new Article 4(5) places a duty on the States Assembly to hold the Chief Minister to account for the funding of key tier 1 statistics which are produced by other public authorities rather than Statistics Jersey. The Chief Statistician holds responsibility for alerting the Assembly to whether they believe tier 1 statistics are being adequately resourced in their annual report under new Article 6(5)(c) of the 2018 Law. The Assembly may then use this information to keep the funding of tier 1 statistics under continuing review and, where necessary, challenge.

The Panel wishes to highlight the significance of the recent decision of the States Assembly to amend the 2018 Law and thereby the duties beholden to the Chief Minister and the States Assembly. Although not yet implemented, it is the Panel's view that through the adoption of P.29/2024, a commitment has been signalled by the States Assembly and should be acted upon accordingly.

Conclusion

In light of the evidence, the Panel is of the opinion that the budget allocation for Statistics Jersey for 2025 reflects reductions in funding for growth and for roles, hence a reduction in FTEs (even if reflected as vacant posts which can no longer be recruited to). This is in respect of an already small team, which will further reduce the capacity of Statistics Jersey.

The Chief Statistician has been transparent regarding the impact of the reductions in budget on statistical outputs and notes that the reprioritisation of its work and reductions are required because Statistics Jersey shares in the budget cuts for the Cabinet Office.

Both the SUG and FPP have highlighted the importance of GVA reporting and improving its frequency and are supportive of quarterly GVA reporting. Concern has been raised that the reduction in budget will hinder strategic decision-making and policy development.

The FPP also highlighted the importance of the BTS which complements GVA data, particularly as GVA data is currently produced annually. It was also noted that the BTS is crucial for assessing Jersey's economic cycle and guiding decisions related to the Stabilisation Fund, since the financial sector is difficult to measure with GVA alone.

Through increasing the budget for Statistics Jersey in the Budget 2025-2028 for 2025, the Panel is of the view that, at a minimum, the following three statistical workstreams should be prioritised:

- GVA quarterly reporting
- BTS annually
- JOLS annually

The Chief Minister has committed in writing to the Panel on 31st October 2024 that the

BTS⁸ will be reinstated, however, no further detail on how this will be actioned has been provided.

The Panel emphasises the Chief Minister's statutory obligation to provide the Chief Statistician with the resources they require to discharge their functions economically, effectively and efficiently. The Panel urges the Chief Minister and the States Assembly to support this Amendment.

Financial and staffing implications

This Amendment would require funding to be made available from within the Head of Expenditure for the Cabinet Office to increase the funding in 2025 for Statistics Jersey.

Children's Rights Impact Assessment

A Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) has been prepared in relation to this proposition and is available to read on the States Assembly website.

⁸ [Letter – CM – 31 October 2024](#)