

Government of Jersey  
Union Street | St Helier | Jersey | JE2 3DN

Deputy Helen Miles,

Chair, Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

27<sup>th</sup> May 2025

## **BY EMAIL**

Dear Chair,

### **Re: Follow up questions from Gender Pay Gap Hearing**

Thank you for your letter dated 12 May with follow up questions from the Public Hearing on the topic of the Gender Pay Gap, held on 6 May 2025. I have provided answers to your questions below.

**1. Please can you confirm the title and grade of the Policy Officer assigned to undertake work on Government Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives?**

This work is primarily undertaken by a Policy Principal (Grade 13), and some resource is shared with an Associate Director (Tier 3) officer where necessary. There is other work conducted within People Services, that is not accounted for here to develop DEI initiatives, as discussed during the hearing (e.g. mentoring schemes, employee networks, training sessions and workshops, HR policy development), for Government employees.

**2. During the Hearing, the Panel heard that the Economics Unit had advised you that it was not clear that “narrowing the gender pay gap would automatically grow the economy” and that whilst narrowing the gender pay gap would bring economic benefits, the impact on economic growth was “overstated”. If possible, please can the Panel be provided with the advice provided to you by the Economics Unit in relation to the gender pay gap?**

The Chief Economic Advisor provided advice in advance of this hearing about how other jurisdictions are tackling the gender pay gap. In 1991, Italy introduced a gender pay gap reporting obligation for large companies, in 2013 Denmark introduced mandatory reporting on gender pay gaps for large companies, and in 2017 the UK introduced a similar requirement. Other countries followed and in May 2023 the EU issued its Pay Transparency Directive, and now 21 of the 38 OECD countries now have a gender pay gap reporting regime. We are aware that changes in the gender pay gaps happen slowly, and it is difficult to prove causation.

Researchers at the London School of Economics found that gender pay gap reporting led to only a 1.6% reduction in pay gaps, and similar findings have been found with respect to Denmark. However, the reduction in gender pay gaps in Denmark was associated with

pay decreasing for men, whilst the primary motivation for gender pay gap reporting was for the advancement of women in the labour market. Further, a study of pay differentials in the UK financial services industry found that gender pay gap reporting led to a reduction in the pay gap by 4.8-5.6 ppt principally by reducing the wages of males working in firms where pay reporting became mandatory.

Pay transparency appears to have a greater effect on the reduction of the gender pay gap, but this can have a knock-on effect on overall pay (one study found it reduced pay by 2% as it reduced the bargaining position of employees), so we must be conscious of any unintended consequences this could have.

### **3. Has there been consideration of conducting longitudinal data on career progression by gender?**

Over time, Statistics Jersey should be able to examine longitudinal data on income as more data is captured, however, it is worth noting that this would require detailed analysis not currently considered within their budget or workflow, and would not provide any clear indication of career progression and pay by gender for at least 5 years.

Further, although it is feasible to track how income changes over time for different age cohorts, by gender, it could not capture what grade, for instance, people were.

Statistics Jersey's strategy aim is to make better use of administrative data already held by Government, but further thinking is necessary to consider the most effective measures to examine long term changes in pay.

### **4. How is the government addressing the financial dependency of women within households, and what policies are in place to promote women's economic independence?**

### **5. What steps are being taken to better understand and mitigate the barriers to women's financial autonomy, both at the individual and household levels?**

Surveys could be conducted on financial and economic independence, to examine women's autonomy and control over their finances, and Statistics Jersey have indicated that it might be possible to explore aspects of this through the Jersey Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, however, it is not without challenges. It is difficult to assess economic independence through this type of a household survey, which cannot account for the family circumstances surrounding its completion, and provide assurance that factors which might inhibiting autonomy, such as coercive control, are not influencing the data submitted.

The Panel may also be aware that, as of 1 January 2026, the final stage to introducing Independent Taxation will commence. This long-overdue change will modernise and simplify Jersey's personal income tax system, ending the archaic practice of treating a wife's income as her husbands for tax purposes and removing the inequality between how co-habiting couples and married couples or civil partners are taxed.

**6. What measures are being taken to address economic abuse within households, and how will the Government support the financial autonomy of women experiencing financial control or coercion to regain their independence?**

The Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022 introduced a domestic abuse offence that was grounded in the concept of 'coercive control'. That is intended to address ongoing behaviours which allow one partner to negate or reduce the autonomy of the other. That would encompass financial and economic autonomy, so in circumstances where an enforced economic dependency met the criminal threshold there is now a pathway to resolution and support through the justice system.

Further amendments to the Domestic Abuse Law are being developed which will increase the scope for making emergency barring orders, which will allow victims of coercive control, including economic coercion, some time and space to make decisions about their situation and potentially remove themselves from the controlling environment.

Separately, officers are working to update the guidance for the 13-week Domestic Abuse Concession. This Concession provides 13-weeks of financial support to those experiencing abuse who may not be eligible for income support, for example, migrant victim-survivors on temporary work visas. Officers are working closely with support services, including Jersey Domestic Abuse Support (JDAS) and Free from Domestic Abuse (Freedra), who support those applying for the concession, to hear their feedback on how the Concession is currently working, to amend the current guidance to support applications further. Officers are also working with Jersey Customs and Immigration to better understand what groups are most vulnerable and find out how better to support them through their applications.

The Concession is available to anyone experiencing domestic abuse, who requires financial support to leave the relationship and move to safety. So far, it has had promising and positive effects for victim-survivors.

Yours sincerely,



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**Assistant Chief Minister**

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