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# STATES OF JERSEY



## **ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND HEALTH RELATED RECOVERY FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC (R.145/2023): EXECUTIVE RESPONSE**

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**Presented to the States on 28th March 2024  
by the Public Accounts Committee**

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**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 (PAC) presents the Executive Response to the Comptroller and Auditor General’s (C&AG) Report entitled: [Economic, Social and Health related recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) (R.145/2023, presented to the States Assembly on 25th September 2023).

### **Deputy I. Gardiner**

Chair, Public Accounts Committee

***IMPORTANT NOTE** – The following comments are those of the previous PAC prior to the change in the Council of Ministers. They were intended to be presented in their current form prior to this change and it is the intention of the current PAC to honour these comments and present them alongside the Executive Response.*

## COMMENTS

The Committee has reviewed the response provided by Government and has no further comments on the recommendations at this time. The PAC would however note the following.

Within the report the C&AG made six recommendations and recommended that one area of planned work should be prioritised by Government. Within this response, the Government has not responded to this area of planned work that should be prioritised, with the justification being that the organisation is having a stronger focus on prioritisation and is stopping committing to initiatives it does not have capacity to deliver. The ‘work planned’ highlighted by the C&AG is noted as being progressed within ‘business as usual’ when capacity allows against other priorities. This is noted and understood by the PAC, however, it would suggest that further consideration is given by Government as to how this is reported clearly in future Executive Responses where there may be several areas for prioritisation identified by a report.

The PAC will continue to ensure that the implementation of the recommendations is revisited as part of its ongoing work programme and analysis of the open recommendations within the recommendation’s tracker.

**Additional note:** The current PAC notes that the Executive Response indicates that five of the six recommendations are targeted to be actioned by end of December 2024. The PAC intends to undertake a follow up piece of work in 2025 to focus on the “lessons learned” from the Covid-19 pandemic and to assess whether the recommendations have been implemented to obtain assurance that the Government of Jersey is better prepared for any future pandemic. It is intended that the PAC’s future work will consider recommendations from all of the reports published in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic response in Jersey (to include nine reports undertaken by the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and also any independent, Scrutiny Panel and PAC reports).

**Chief Executive and Treasurer of the States Response to C&AG Review: [Economic, Social and Health-related Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic](#) – Executive Response to PAC by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

Summary of response:

Government of Jersey welcomes the C&AG review into Economic, Social and Health-related Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and recognition that the economic and social recovery schemes appear to have met objectives set. Also welcome was the acknowledgement that the Government moved at pace to introduce a range of measures aimed at supporting economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

All recommendations have been accepted. However, as you are aware, the organisation is having a stronger focus on prioritisation and is stopping committing to initiatives it does not have the capacity to deliver. Therefore, only the ‘recommendations’ in the report have been prioritised and included in this response. I acknowledge the additional “Work planned that should be prioritised” and this will be progressed as business as usual when capacity allows against other priorities.

Action Plan

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>
<b>R1</b> Enhance procedures to ensure that post payment audit checks take place on a timely basis for all benefits, grants and support schemes that rely on such checks as a key element of internal control.	Accepted. This can be incorporated into a revised version of the Grants and sponsorship section of the Public Finances Manual.	End of 2024	Group Strategic Treasury and Exchequer Director, Finance,
<b>R2</b> Document the lessons learnt from the implementation of the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme in a final report and ensure they are used when considering the design of future benefits and other schemes established by Government to support businesses and individuals.	Accepted – the final report is planned for the first half of 2024 to allow it take account of both the performance of the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme (CFPS) and the outcomes of the CFPS Appeal process. Amongst other things, it will document lessons learned from the Scheme.	June 2024	Group Strategic Treasury and Exchequer Director, Finance,
<b>R3</b> Review the lessons learnt from the implementation of all COVID-19 support schemes when considering the design	Accepted. This can be incorporated into a revised version of the Grants and sponsorship section of the Public Finances Manual.	End of 2024	Group Strategic Director, Finance,

of future benefits and other schemes established by Government to support businesses and individuals.			Treasury and Exchequer
<b>R4</b> Enhance procedures to ensure that the existence of potential conflicts of interest and the mitigation actions taken are recorded in minutes of all oversight and decision making groups.	Accepted. This can be incorporated into a revised version of the Conflicts of Interest section of the Public Finances Manual. As with all sections of the Public Finances Manual (or indeed any policies or regulations), compliance cannot be 100% guaranteed.	End of 2024	Group Director, Strategic Finance, Treasury and Exchequer
<b>R5</b> Enhance procedures for awarding grants, to document clearly how the criteria for the grant award are met or are expected to be met.	Accepted. This can be incorporated into a revised version of the Grants and sponsorship section of the Public Finances Manual. The criteria introduced will be proportionate, recognising that increased requirements or documentation will not be cost-effective for smaller grants or where they form part of a defined and approved scheme.	End of 2024	Group Director, Strategic Finance, Treasury and Exchequer
<b>R6</b> Review current and implement enhanced procedures to improve performance and financial management information in HCS. Ensure that management information reports that are produced relate finance to service outputs and service outcomes.	Accepted. Budget setting, Monthly Finance Reports and FRP Reporting for FY24 onwards to include KPIs tracking and use of QPR Reports to align with performance and activity information. Service Line Reviews (SLR) reporting which provides P&L insight at service level and relates activity to finance with measurable service outcomes is not yet available but is recommended for business case and implementation in FY25.	End of 2025	Head of Finance Business Partnering, HCS

Recommendations not accepted

	Recommendation	Reason for rejection