

Chief Minister



Deputy Helen Miles,
Chair, Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel
By email

9th September 2024

Dear Chair,

Proposed Budget 2025-2028

Thank you for your letter of 16th August 2024 regarding your Panel's review of the proposed Budget 2025-2028.

It has been the Council of Ministers' objective to produce a realistic Budget that seeks to curb the growth in expenditure.

It is essential to exercise a level of spending constraint to ensure prudent stewardship of taxpayers' money. As a result, budgets will increase more slowly, rising by 5.7% in 2025 compared to 9.4% in 2024, and resources will be focussed on frontline activities and the delivery of the Common Strategic Policy as approved by the States Assembly.

The early lodging of the Budget was intended to provide additional time for the Panel to undertake their work, and a range of underlying information has been provided to support the process, which has included a full listing of revenue growth for 2025. The business cases for revenue growth will be provided to Panels, having been collated by Treasury officials.

The Budget also includes, in Appendix 3, reductions in previously approved growth by Departments. Any reductions in growth should be compared in the context of where money has been reprioritised towards what is considered to be essential services or in line with Common Strategic Policy.

A full listing of capital project funding for 2025 shows which projects are new, which are continuing, and any changes in allocations across the Government. The business cases for new or additional capital spend will also be provided to Panels shortly. Business Plans for 2025 will reflect the factors above, as well as continuing the ongoing work programmes in the 2024 Business Plans.

In terms of your specific questions:

Detailed list of the project and/or workstreams that will be undertaken in 2025

Our priorities for delivery in the next two years are outlined in the Common Strategic Policy, which includes key workstreams for delivery in 2025 the detail of which is in the information provided.

An outline of the 2025 legislative programme

The Council of Ministers is currently reviewing a draft of the Legislative Programme for 2025-2026. This will set out which legislative projects will be prioritised for drafting and lodging before the election in 2026. Once finalised, this will be shared with Scrutiny panels and the Assembly so that we can all plan our workload for the coming years. A commitment has already been made to some legislative projects for 2025, and in my areas of responsibility these include:

- Control of Housing and Work Law secondary legislation.
- Comptroller and Auditor General (Jersey) Law 2014 revisions.

Progress update in respect of any projects and/or workstreams agreed by the States Assembly as part of the Government Plan 2024-2027 including:

- a) Where these are continuing in 2025**
- b) Where these have been delayed and the rationale**
- c) Where these have been cancelled and the rationale**

The additional information already provided to the Panel shows the changes in revenue and capital budgets between 2024 and 2025.

An outline of any changes in policy direction or delivery for 2025 and the impact thereof

The Council of Ministers' policy direction is set out in the Common Strategic Policy and the Budget. Ministers have provided clear direction that policy resource should be directed towards delivering upon the Common Strategic Policy and, once complete, the legislative programme will further show where policy resources will be focussed.

An outline of any changes to staff posts and restricting within your department and the anticipated resultant savings and impact on service delivery

The Common Strategic Policy includes a commitment to curb growth in the public sector, and Ministers have ensured that commitment is reflected in the Budget. In the case of the Cabinet Office, Digital Services and People Services, the allocated savings target for payroll reduction is £1.8m in 2025 and a further £2.7m in 2026.

As part of delivering this, an external recruitment freeze has been put in place until March 2025, with a focus on all roles at or above civil service grade 11 or equivalent. Recruitment will still take place for essential roles as required, ensuring we maintain frontline and essential public services.

It is still the policy of the States Employment Board to avoid compulsory redundancies where possible, and instead to use alternatives such as redeployment.

A progress update in respect of the Public Services Ombudsperson workstream and detail on where and how this is allocated within the Proposed Budget 2025-28

Work is under way to consider the best approach to improving complaints handling. This project is being led by the Assistant Minister for Sustainable Economic Development, Deputy Moz Scott and is expected to be complete during the early part of next year. We will keep Scrutiny updated on the progress.

Yours sincerely,



**Deputy Lyndon Farnham
Chief Minister**

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