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24 October 2023

Dear Deputy Mézec

Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel Government Plan Review 2024 - 2027

I am responding to your letter to me of 13 October in relation to Statistics Jersey and Government Plan 2023 and Government Plan 2024.

1 - Admin Data Linkage – mainstreaming

You have asked specifically about the Government Plan 2024 entry ‘Statistics Jersey – Administrative data linkage team (I-SPP-GP24-001)’. I understand that the Scrutiny Liaison Committee has been provided with the business case that I wrote with my team, but I will pull out the pertinent points.

1.1 Budget

The Government Plan 2024 budget figures are:

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

1.2 Objectives

You have asked for “Detail on the objectives you intend to achieve in 2024 as a result of the proposed revenue expenditure growth allocation and whether the proposed funding for 2024 is sufficient to meet the objectives as outlined.”

A Covid Health Recovery project provided funding for 2022 and 2023 for a Covid Data Insights project. This included the following strands of work:

- 1) Qualitative analyses (focus groups) with a range of islanders to understand the impacts of Covid on their lives. This included a particular focus on less-heard-from voices.
- 2) Quantitative analyses – linking of government datasets by Statistics Jersey, including Statistics Jersey data, to quantify the size of various groups identified through the qualitative analyses.
 - a) The first part of this work was to create a statistical population spine of people who were resident in Jersey at various dates

- b) Analyses will be produced on the characteristics of those who were vaccinated for Covid and who tested positive for Covid.

Once a population spine had been produced for the Covid analyses it could be leveraged to provide additional analyses at low cost. To date the team of four have produce innovative analyses of population and migration [Microsoft Word - Population and migration statistics \(Jersey\) 2011 - 2021 140623 \(gov.je\)](#)

The previous method for population estimates relied on changes from the last census. Births and deaths are measured accurately, but out-migration, in particular, is extremely difficult to measure. This 'cohort' method produces reasonable results close to the census, but errors accumulate the further one gets from the census. The fact that the 2019 Population Estimates were about 4,000 higher than the 2021 Census is an example of the weaknesses in this method.

Use of administrative data, however, allows for reliable 'bottom-up' estimates of population and migration at each period; we count all people administrative data suggests are in the Island. The first population and migration report includes, for the very first time, quarterly migration data, and in-and out migration flows (not just net migration). It also includes, for the first time, migration by residential status. Such data is critical to informing population and migration policy for the Island.

The Government Plan 2024 business case seeks to mainstream this team – i.e. to make this part of business as usual, as well as to grow it by one post. As set out in the business case, this will allow Statistics Jersey to:

- Produce regular (annual) population and migration reports, to include quarterly data
- Explore and develop longitudinal outcomes analysis. This might include examining a cohort of migrants and analysing what happens to them five years later (are they still in Jersey, are they working in the same industry etc.). It might also be possible to identify industry of school leavers who stay in Jersey, etc.
- To produce an annual all-economy gender pay gap report (i.e. to mainstream the one-off experimental report published in February 2023 [R AdminEarnings 20230222 SJ.pdf \(gov.je\)](#))
- To develop new administrative data-based Labour Market data. During 2024 the priority will be on development work, including the creation of a 'business spine' and development of a person-based approach rather than a jobs-based approach. This will allow Statistics Jersey to produce, more detail on people with have multiple jobs. Future development might include more frequent Labour Market reports (quarterly rather than six-monthly)
- We also intend to explore the potential to use administrative data from Revenue Jersey to produce statistics on low incomes on a more frequent basis than is possible just from the four-yearly Living Costs and Household Income Survey

The proposed funding in Government Plan 2024 is the full funding I requested in the business case and is sufficient. The reduced budget for 2024 recognises that whilst we have an existing project funded team of four posts, if States Assembly approval is received in December, it will take time to recruit the fifth member of the team. The future year budgets are based on a full team being in post.

1.3 Challenges, concerns or risks

You have additionally asked about 'Any challenges, concerns or risks that have been identified and considerations for mitigating these.'

Overall, I see mostly opportunities from the work that this funding will enable Statistics Jersey to deliver for the States Assembly and Islanders.

Statistics Jersey have recruited a small (four posts) but effective team for the existing administrative data linkage work.

It is critical that Statistics Jersey complies with the Statistics and Census (Jersey) Law 2018 and the Data Protection (Jersey) Law 2018; we need to protect the confidentiality and security of Islanders' data and treat it with respect. This means agreeing Data Sharing Agreements for each new dataset that we wish another department to share with us. It also means completing thorough Data Protection Impact Assessments. These important and necessary processes can slow down our ability to innovate.

To mitigate these impacts we are starting work early on the necessary documentation, and working proactively with the Government of Jersey's Data Protection team, and with the Jersey Office of the Information Commissioner. I have met personally with Paul Vane, the Jersey Information Commissioner, to explain this work and the protections we are putting in place.

1.4 The data gaps that this workstream aims to address:

This has been outlined above, but includes:

- Better, more reliable, and more frequent population and migration estimates
- More frequent and reliable population estimates should permit more frequent population projections, as improved estimates give much more reliable starting points for each projection
- Annual all-economy gender pay gap statistics
- Better and more frequent labour market data
- Exploration of administrative data base estimates of low income, which could be produced more frequently than those based on the four-yearly Living Costs and Household Income Survey

1.5 The anticipated tangible benefit to the Government and Islanders as a result of the proposed allocation in the short, medium and long term and how this will be measured.

The tangible benefits to Government and islanders are listed in the table below from the business case for this proposed allocation. In summary, this allocation will deliver better data to inform future policies and planning on population and migration; gender pay gap, labour market participation, and low incomes. The published data will also allow the States Assembly to be better informed and to hold government to account. The benefits to Islanders should arise from themselves being better informed, and from better decision-making by government, based on better data. These are the *raison d'être* of official statistics.

The business case includes this table of benefits:

Qualitative Benefit	
Production of better population estimates	Production of better population estimates will allow policy colleagues, ministers and the States Assembly to better understand population dynamics and the impacts on the workforce, educational requirements, the dependency ratio of those of working age to those not working, infrastructure requirements etc in order to enable more effective and relevant policy decision making
Production of better migration estimates	Production of better migration estimates (including longitudinal analyses) will allow policy colleagues, ministers and the States Assembly to better manage/control migration, with potential benefits for housing affordability, reduction in building on green fields, etc
Production of whole economy gender pay gap reporting	Production of gender pay gap reporting will meet the Council of Ministers' commitment to do so, and support monitoring and improving pay equality
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.
Development of population and household statistics such as deprivation and longitudinal analysis of life outcomes (such as employment and earnings and how these are associated with migration patterns or educational journeys)	Developing population and household statistics from admin data will provide new insights for monitoring and deciding policy direction on a variety of issues, for example deprivation, or impact of educational journeys on later outcomes in life.

1.6 [Whether I-SPP-GP24-001 delivers on the Panel's Recommendation 12 of its scrutiny report, S.R.20/2022 Report - Corporate Services Panel - Government Plan 2023-26 Review - S.R.20.2022.pdf](#) appropriately and, if so, how.

RECOMMENDATION 12 of the above report was 'The Council of Ministers should consider how administrative data collected from businesses and households can be used to assist in framing Jersey's economic and fiscal strategy more accurately in order to get a proper purchase on local economic activity given the limitations of national accounting in a Jersey context. This work should be completed in time for inclusion in next year's Government Plan.'

I-SPP-GP24-001 is in line with the panel's recommendation as it specifically includes development resources for the exploration of administrative data to help produce better economic statistics, including: development of more frequent economic statistics such as quarterly GVA, labour market and earnings statistics; and development of more granular economic statistics such as GVA and earnings statistics. The benefits of these developments are outlined above.

Statistics Jersey cannot really comment on how the outputs will be used in the framing of Jersey's economic and fiscal strategy as that element is outside of our remit, but it is envisaged that this improved data will help drive improved decision making in those areas.

2 - Government Plan 2023

The panel have said that they "would also appreciate to receive an update on the progress of Statistics Jersey – Capacity I-SPPP-GP23-002 which provided £318,000 for Statistics Jersey on an ongoing basis."

2.1 Response to (a) 'Whether the £318,000 for 2023 has been sufficient to meet the aims and objectives of the Revenue Expenditure Growth and whether any challenges have been identified to date.'

The Annex to Government Plan 2023 [Government Plan 2023 to 2026 Annex.pdf](#) contained (pages 47-48) the following:

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 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).

Challenges relate to recruitment, which I will address below.

2.2 Response to (b) 'Whether staffing capacity is at a suitable level to administer the functions of Statistics Jersey effectively.'

Assuming that the Government Plan 2024 additional funding is approved, the number of posts within Statistics Jersey is currently at a suitable level for our current range of outputs and the commitments we have made in respect of new outputs from new funding.

The real challenge is in actually recruiting statisticians and analysts in Jersey to fill those posts. Statistics Jersey currently has five vacant posts, one of which we have advertised four times over the course of a year without success. This difficulty is not restricted just to Statistics Jersey but also applies to the analyst teams in departments such as Treasury, Revenue Jersey, HCS, and CYPES.

The kind of experienced analysts we are looking for will have done a numeric degree, and many Jersey-born students choose to work in the UK, where there is also high demand for statisticians and data scientists. For those that return to Jersey, the Government of Jersey is competing with the Finance Industry.

To mitigate this challenge Statistics Jersey recruits early in career staff and puts them through the four-year Master's (MSc) in Data Analytics for Government run at Southampton University – we currently have six staff at various stages of this modular MSc (two complete apart from dissertations; one mid-way through the MSc; and three staff doing specific relevant modules). We have also this year introduced a Level 4 Data Analyst apprenticeship pilot for which we had two successful candidates (one in Statistics Jersey and one in Treasury).

Statistics Jersey's priority at the moment is to consolidate, to recruit to fill posts, and to develop and then routinely produce the new outputs we have committed to from the new funding.

2.3 Response to (c) 'The review and refinement of the Jersey Performance Framework indicators and how this is reflected within the Government Plan 2024-27 (S.R.20/2022 – Finding 2 and Recommendation 2).'

Recommendation 2 was:

The Council of Ministers should consider how the Jersey Performance Framework indicators outlined within the Common Strategic Policy can be reviewed, tightened and refined. Further consideration should be given to supplementing real mean equivalised household income with further metrics to assess progress of the Housing and Cost of Living priority. Indicators including low income and duration, key drivers of poverty, should also be considered for inclusion within next year's Government Plan.

During 2023 Statistics Jersey have reviewed the Island Outcome Indicators with a view to making them more relevant and meaningful, and to also present the indicators in a way that it is possible to get a clear overview of progress.

Future Jersey was published in 2018 [FUTURE JERSEY SPREADS 12072017.pdf \(gov.je\)](#) and included 58 indicators. In January 2020 the number of indicators was expanded to 193. Not all these new indicators were informative or useful, and there is overlap between indicators. Whilst there is a wealth of data linked from here [Jersey Performance Framework \(gov.je\)](#) it is not possible to see an overview of progress.

Statistics Jersey's initial proposal is to reduce the number of indicators to 71, closer to those included in Future Jersey. We also propose to change the presentation of the Island Outcome Indicators so that it is easier to get an overview of progress on the sustainable wellbeing indicators. The proposed new format, which is still under development, is here [Island Outcome Indicators - New Chart \(gov.je\)](#) .

The Red, Amber, and Green rating is based on whether the indicator is moving in the intended direction. Blue boxes indicate where we are missing data but expect to be able to fill the gaps shortly, grey boxes indicate data gaps that might take longer to address. One advantage of the new presentation is that it makes these existing data gaps more visible.

Over the autumn we are holding workshops with colleagues within government for each of the ten outcomes with the aim of:

- Identifying sources to fill existing data gaps as much as possible
- Reviewing the current indicators and identifying additional indicators which might be relevant.

On 12 October I emailed all States Assembly members (copy of email attached) drawing their attention to the progress made to date and the next steps. The current presentation of the Island Outcome Indicators will not be removed until development work on the new suite of indicators and their presentation has been completed, and the view of stakeholders, including States Assembly members have been taken into account. We will not switch off the existing suite of Island Outcome Indicators until there is broad acceptance of the new suite of indicators and their presentation. We expect this will be next spring/summer.

2.4 S.R.20/2022 – Finding 2 and Recommendation 2

On low income and its duration, the request for Government Plan 2024 funding for admin data linkage work by Statistics Jersey would include a research project on low-income statistics from administrative data held by government. Such data linkage has the potential to enable annual estimates of low income based on administrative data already held by government. CLS data could enable Statistics Jersey to produce statistics on the patterns of those who are Actively Seeking Work – such as duration as ASW; do cohorts regularly move in and out of ASW; etc.

Revenue Jersey data linked to other data could provide statistics on those in low income by age, sex and ethnicity and/or nationality. It might also be possible to produce statistics on duration in low income and whether cohorts of people cycle in and out of low income. These will, of course, be subject to obtaining the data and researching its quality. Data on individuals in low-income should be possible from administrative data. It will be more challenging to produce household level low-income data as this will require reliable formation of households based on administrative data, although this is also a subject of research to be funded by this request.

It has obviously not been possible to produce such statistics yet, but the proposal to provide Statistics Jersey Government Plan 2024 funding provides the funding for staff to research such data, identify its quality and any data gaps and, hopefully, to start to build such statistics.

Final thoughts

You will probably be aware from [wq.371-2023.pdf \(gov.je\)](#) that Statistics Jersey submitted two business cases that were not included in Government Plan 2024 – these were for resources as a consequence of the proposed new Statistics Law, and to rerun the Living Costs and Household Income Survey in 2025/2026 (with initial results before the 2026 election), with initial development work on the LCHIS in 2024. Ministers approved these projects, with funding to be found from reprioritisation or carryovers. This is feasible for 2024.

I hope that the above information provides clear answers to the panel's questions. I don't feel a need to meet with the panel on most of these issues but would be happy to do so if the panel would find this helpful. I have already offered to brief the panel on the proposed changes to the Island Outcome Indicators.

Yours Sincerely,



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Dear States Assembly members

This email is for information about changes that Statistics Jersey are proposing to make to the suite of Island Outcome Indicators (Jersey's sustainable wellbeing indicators). We won't make any changes to the existing suite of Island Outcome Indicators [Jersey Performance Framework \(gov.je\)](https://www.gov.je/PerformanceFramework) until we have completed further development work and invited feedback on our proposed changes. This email is to ensure that all States Assembly members are aware of these proposals.

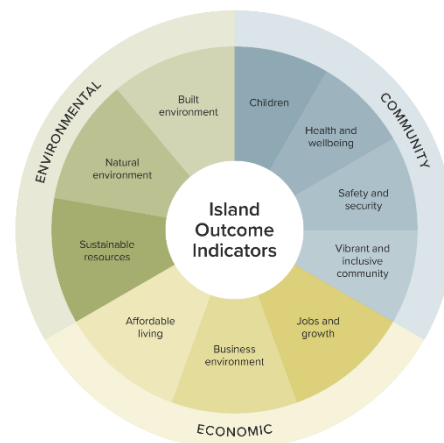
Background

The Island Outcome Indicators derive from the 'Future Jersey' report.

- 2016 - 'Shaping out Future' consultation
- 2017 - Further documents / consultations
- 2018 – Final 'Future Jersey' report [FUTURE JERSEY SPREADS 12072017.pdf \(gov.je\)](https://www.gov.je/FutureJerseySpreads12072017.pdf)

Future Jersey included:

- 3 sustainable wellbeing themes - Community, Economic, Environmental
- 10 Outcomes (e.g. 'Health and Wellbeing')
- 58 Indicators



In January 2020 the number of indicators was expanded to 193. Not all these new indicators were informative or useful, and there is overlap between indicators. Whilst there is a wealth of data linked from here [Jersey Performance Framework \(gov.je\)](https://www.gov.je/PerformanceFramework) it is not possible to see an overview of progress.

Proposed Changes

1 - Changes to indicators

Statistics Jersey have carried out a review of the current suite of Island Outcome Indicators and propose:

- To retain the three themes and the ten outcomes of Future Jersey
- To reduce the number of Indicators (from 193 to 71) to provide more focus. This will include:
 - All 58 indicators from the Future Jersey consultation
 - Plus, indicators that:
 - Are meaningful (provide a good insight into an aspect of one of the Outcomes)
 - Are available (good quality data is available at regular intervals)
 - Don't have significant overlap with other indicators.

All 58 Future Jersey Indicators, and current Island Outcome Indicators which are in Annex 2 of the CSP [Common Strategic Policy 2023 to 2026.pdf \(gov.je\)](https://www.gov.je/CommonStrategicPolicy2023to2026.pdf) will be retained plus others that meet the criteria.

2 - Changes to presentation

We also propose to change the presentation of the Island Outcome Indicators so that it is easier to get an overview of progress on the sustainable wellbeing indicators

- The proposed new format is here [Island Outcome Indicators - New Chart \(gov.je\)](#) and allows for an overview of progress. The Red, Amber, and Green rating is based on whether the indicator is moving in the intended direction.
- In the current presentation, blue boxes indicate where we are missing data but expect to be able to fill the gaps shortly, grey boxes indicate data gaps that might take longer to address.
 - One advantage of the new presentation is that it makes these existing data gaps more visible.

Briefing to date

During the summer we briefed on the proposed changes including:

- Chief Officers in Government
- Council of Ministers
- Public Account Committee
- Statistics and Analytics Departmental Leads in departments

There was broad support for the proposed changes

Next Steps

Over the autumn we are holding workshops with colleagues within government for each of the ten outcomes with the aim of:

- Identifying sources to fill existing data gaps as much as possible
- Reviewing the current indicators and identifying additional indicators which might be relevant

We are sharing the new presentation of the reduced set of Island Outcome Indicators alongside the existing suite of indicators – i.e. not taking anything away. You can see them both on this page [Publication schedules \(gov.je\)](#). Once we have completed the above review process, we would aim to update the new presentation and will ensure that stakeholders are made aware of the proposed new suite of indicators.

After taking account of workshops and feedback we would aim to switch off the existing presentation and only have the new presentation and reduced set of Island Outcome Indicators, but this won't happen until the spring/summer of next year.

How you can help

If you have any questions or comments on these proposals, please get in touch.