

STATES OF JERSEY



COMMON STRATEGIC POLICY 2026 - 2030 (P.75/2026): FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT

DIGITAL GOVERNMENT PLATFORM

Lodged au Greffe on 27th October 2026
by Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement
Earliest date for debate: 10th November 2026

STATES GREFFE

COMMON STRATEGIC POLICY 2026-2030 (P.75/2026): FOURTEENTH
AMENDMENT

1 PAGE 2 –

After the words “report accompanying this Proposition” insert the words –

“, except that on page 10 of the report, after paragraph two, there should be inserted the following new paragraph –

“We will ensure that any new or amended regulations that require interaction with Government, will be delivered through the Digital Government Platform, unless a more suitable alternative is already in use, whilst retaining in-person and 'offline' options.””.

2 PAGE 2 –

After the words “report accompanying this Proposition” insert the words –

“, except that on page 14 of the report, after paragraph three, there should be inserted the following new paragraph –

“Within the Government, we commit to an ambitious programme of digitisation on a common and affordable platform, supporting external contributors where it is safe. We will allocate a specific centralized budget to the programme and measure the cost of implementing new services, ensuring that it is driven lower through AI and modern ways of digital working.””.

DEPUTY A.F. CURTIS OF ST. CLEMENT

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

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

in accordance with Article 18(2)(e) of the States of Jersey Law 2005, to approve the statement of the Common Strategic Policy of the Council of Ministers as set out in the report accompanying this Proposition, except that on page 10 of the report, after paragraph two, there should be inserted the following new paragraph –

“We will ensure that any new or amended regulations that require interaction with Government, will be delivered through the Digital Government Platform, unless a more suitable alternative is already in use, whilst retaining in-person and 'offline' options.”; and

on page 14 of the report, after paragraph three, there should be inserted the following new paragraph –

“Within the Government, we commit to an ambitious programme of digitisation on a common and affordable platform, supporting external contributors where it is safe. We will allocate a specific centralized budget to the programme and measure the cost of implementing new services, ensuring that it is driven lower through AI and modern ways of digital working.”.

REPORT

Summary

Adoption of Digital tools and processes is one of the few ways the Government can deliver savings in expenditure, whilst retaining or even improving the quality and range of service delivery.

Despite this, the [Common Strategic Policy 2026 – 2030](#) (the CSP) makes little reference to an ambition to accelerate digital adoption across Government to rise to the challenges we face. Where references exist, they indicate ‘more of the same’, rather than a step change that will deliver the benefits we could realise.

This amendment seeks to set out a clear ambition for the Government and specify the high-level actions needed to start to achieve this.

Secondly, this amendment seeks to specifically address where and how regulation is administered through Digital platforms. It recognises that a fragmented approach to services increases the bureaucracy on businesses, organisations and individuals – and so requires the Government to consolidate regulation on to a single system as and when it is created or updated.

Background and Context

The CSP recognises the need to deliver a sustainable public sector that balances its budget in Priority 11 - *Deliver a leaner and less complex public sector with lower running costs*.

It also recognises in Priority 7 that the Government will use, and encourage the use of, *AI and technology solutions to increase productivity and protect Islanders*.

Despite identifying the challenge, the CSP offers little firm direction as to how to achieve this. Reference to consultancy and organisational structure is made, but no clear examples of how changes will result in the reduced expenditure needed.

Only once in Priority 11 is digital mentioned;

*Our priority will be to develop and promote talent from within the public service, simplify organisational structures, remove unnecessary management layers and bureaucracy, **and make better use of technology to improve productivity**. Current policy already requires formal business cases and additional approvals for senior, high-value and specified consultancy appointments.*

In Priority 7, Government adoption of Digital is also referenced in the narrative;

*We will support **the responsible adoption of digital tools across Government** and the wider economy, including practical projects that demonstrate measurable improvements in efficiency, customer service and value for money.*

As drafted, there is little reason to think we will see a change to the digital adoption of tools and simplification processes. This amendment provides the Government the chance to express a bolder ambition.

The need for Ambition and Discipline

The amendment to Priority 7 proposes two commitments;

1. We will be “**ambitious**”
2. We will enforce reuse of a common digital platform and ensure it is funded to deliver cross-Government capabilities.

Both of these are essential to achieve the outcomes desired from Digital.

The first element sets the tone. If the Government is ambitious, it should be clear and say it – and then be held to account for delivery.

The second element aims to deliver the common factor in most successful digital programmes; discipline in setting standards and holding to them

This can be seen by looking at countries that have succeeded in embracing digital in the public sector, and who can be shown to be benefiting from the results, for example;

- ***Denmark:*** *Ranked first in the UN E-Government Survey in 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2024. Denmark has used legislation to make digital self-service the default for many interactions with Government, while providing exemptions and assisted routes for those who need them.*
- ***Estonia:*** *Requires new and existing systems to share data extensively. The Public Information Act helps to enforce that data should only be provided to the Government once.*

These examples can be drawn from a wide evidence base, including the [UN E-Government Survey 2024](#).

Without discipline and enforcing standards, systems are built that don’t interoperate and create a wider technical ecosystem to maintain. Given the challenges of our existing digital estate such as its breadth and complexity, there will always be reasons not to build on/extend a common platform. These must be resisted and solutions must be found to enhance a cohesive digital system for Government.

Measuring and reducing the cost of digital services

Government digital projects have a reputation for being expensive and slow to deliver. This is not unique to Jersey, but as a small jurisdiction we feel the effect more acutely.

If we are to deliver on the ambition set out above, we need to deliver digital differently. Rather than funding standalone projects, Government should build common capabilities once (such as case management, online forms, payments, chat interfaces and shared data) and reuse them across services.

The cost of standalone projects has been a barrier to digitisation. Many of our processes serve only a handful of users, and on their own will never justify the expense of a bespoke system. A shared platform changes this. Each new service builds on what already exists, so the cost of delivery falls over time and ‘everyday’ digitisation becomes affordable.

For example, boreholes and wells must be registered with Government, but this is currently done by submitting a PDF form. On a shared, simple and reusable platform, it should be possible to digitise not just the form but the management of that data, at a cost that represents value for money.

To achieve this, we must measure the total cost of ownership of digital services: not only the cost to build, but to host, support, maintain and eventually replace them. AI and modern ways of working can drive these costs down, for example by speeding up the design, build and testing of new services and by reducing manual processing once they are live. That said, we must ensure that the use of AI is safe and ethical, the costs are included in measurement, and that the technology we build is secure against cyber threats.

A centralised budget for the programme will make it easier to prioritise delivery of key components and grow the Government’s digital maturity. When we can price the cost of digitisation, we can tackle the barriers that make it unaffordable, focus spending where it delivers most, and build a platform the right size for Jersey’s Government.

A focus on Regulation

The CSP places a significant focus on regulation and the impact of regulation on business. It rightly recognises that when poorly implemented, regulation creates ‘red tape’ that creates friction, increases costs and uncertainty.

This is felt most clearly when a business or Islander tries to deal with Government. A single business might need to use all of the following, among others;

- ***Tax and social security:*** Log in to the combined employer return platform¹
- ***Alcohol licence:*** Use a Government Form running on the “Achieve Forms” platform²
- ***Planning application:*** Use the Planning and Building Portal
- ***P30 Vehicle Exemption:*** Use the “in page” form (different to the main Forms platform)³
- ***Events Permit:*** Email a Word Document completed form⁴

Our management of regulation and licensing is fragmented and even those that provide a web form rarely provide a way to update, view, and amend data.

Before we remove or amend existing regulation or conversely create new regulation (such as Food Licensing or a new Events Licensing Law), we should address one of the main issues with regulation – that being the administrative burden.

¹ [SOJ Taxes Online: Home](#)

² [Liquor licence renewal application - one.gov.je - Data protection](#)

³ [Apply for a temporary exemption permit \(P30\)](#)

⁴ [Permission to hold a public event \(public entertainment licensing\)](#)

Imagine as a business (or individual) being able to log in to the Government portal and find all licences, registrations, forms and fees that you interact with. You can update details, request amendments, escalate decisions. This should be our goal, and achieving it requires the same discipline as wider digital government does - the use of clear standards and firm diligence.

Finally, the amendment seeks to secure that traditional routes of engagement such as paper forms and in-person are not lost. These are in fact enabled and made easier when a process is built from the ground up as a digital system. Ideally, staff will be left with more time to support those with more complex or nuanced requirements.

Conclusion

When we look back in four years at the end of the term of this Government and Assembly, we should be able to reflect on the great progress made in simplifying the public service, improving service delivery and reducing costs.

To do this, it requires a digital ambition. It requires Ministers and officers to work together to put common and shared improvements against siloed departmental needs. It needs fundamentally new ways of digital working and stepping out of our comfort zone whilst maintain cyber safety and resilience.

Members are urged to support this amendment to provide the Council of Ministers the clear direction needed to achieve this positive change.

Financial and staffing implications

There will be staffing and financial implications in a more ambitious delivery of a 'common digital platform', likely to be the existing 'Digital Government Platform'. As detailed in the report, it will require greater funding for more platform and functional build out.

This funding is to be sourced from greater funding in the early years of 2028 Budget, as an 'Invest to Save' initiative, and should deliver measurable savings in later years.

Secondly, it is likely that to gain the efficiencies required, departmental revenue, and digital capital budgets may be reduced or reprofiled to ensure centralisation of spend – where it delivers a cross-Government digital capability.

Children's Rights Impact Assessment

I consider that this amendment has no direct or indirect impact on children and that the duty to have due regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child does not arise. Accordingly, a Children's Rights Impact Assessment is not required under the Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022.