
STATES OF JERSEY



STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION (R.35/2025 RES): EXECUTIVE RESPONSE – COMMENTS

Presented to the States on 26th June 2025
by the Public Accounts Committee

STATES GREFFE

REPORT

COMMENTS

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) presented the [Executive Response](#) to the Comptroller and Auditor General's (C&AG) report 'Staff Recruitment and Retention' on 14th May 2025. Usually, the PAC would present its comments on the Executive Response alongside the response itself, however, given the nature of the report, and its relevance to work being undertaken by the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel (CSSP), it was deemed important to present it immediately at the time of receipt. The PAC has given further consideration to the Executive Response since presenting it, and has agreed to present the following comments:

Workforce Planning

The following was set out by the Government in respect of the improvement plan not committing to any specific actions in relation to individual departments but to include activity to strengthen support for departments in sequencing and delivering service and workforce plans:

Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring that the resources of departments are used economically, efficiently, and effectively and organisational design should be a matter of business as usual for all departments. For this reason, this improvement plan does not commit to any specific actions in respect of individual departments but does include activity to strengthen the support available to departments in sequencing and delivering service and workforce plans. Chief Officers will be reminded of the requirement to maintain service delivery models, which then link into a robust workforce plan, ensuring that skills shortages are noted at an early stage to enable relevant focused delivery of specific training and / or focused recruitment.¹

It is the view of the PAC that this is not an acceptable rationale given the fundamental shift in workforce planning that is required to be implemented to future proof the workforce. The view that this is seen as 'business as usual' is also not accepted by the PAC, as evidence found within the C&AG's report does not show that an assessment for the future has been carried out which, it should be noted, is something that was highlighted during interviews conducted by the Jersey Audit Office as part of this review. The PAC would, therefore, consider that this rationale be revisited and reprioritised by the Government to ensure that the correct planning for individual departments is carried out as intended by the recommendations of the C&AG.

Recommendation 2

Recommendation	R2 Ensure that workforce plans for all departments are linked to available service strategies and departmental business plans and are updated when future service delivery strategies are developed and approved.
Risk of Non-Implementation	Failure to align, review and update workforce plans could lead to negative impacts on the future capability, capacity of a department and their ability and future performance in the delivery of objectives and services.

¹ Executive Response – Staff Recruitment and Retention (R.35/2025)

Risk Profile	Low
Other Considerations in prioritisation	Departments are required to develop workforce plans. A toolkit, processes and support are in place to support Chief Officers. The toolkit ensures alignment with department strategy and service plans. This will include the Department or service vision, Common Strategic Policy priorities, Department business plan and any other future service delivery that may be in place. Progress in the delivery of workforce plans are monitored.
Is the recommendation agreed?	Agreed. A toolkit, process, training and support is in place to enable Departments to undertake and review workforce plans and ensure alignment to Government and Department strategy and priorities. People Services continually monitor progress, quality and facilitate the continuous improvement of department workforce plans.
Improvement theme	Workforce Planning – No further action at this time, continued development and regular monitoring and review of workforce plans will be driven through People Services.

The PAC is surprised to note that the risk profile for this recommendation is stated as low given that workforce plans and future proofing the workforce are a critical plank of future Government Plans and budgets. Furthermore, the C&AG report outlined that whilst departments have all made a start in developing workforce plans, no department currently has a full workforce plan with numbers and timescales and how it intends to train and develop scarce skills. It was highlighted by the C&AG report that Health and Care Jersey (HCJ) was the furthest away from achieving a full workforce plan and, given the budgetary constraints and concerns already existing within the department in respect of locum and agency staff, this is a critical element to be implemented to ensure health and care services are being effectively delivered.

It is also the view of the PAC that workforce plans are not the exclusive domain of People Services, and individual departments will need to specify their own needs and areas to be addressed with People Services as a support and enabling function. The PAC would expect a greater level of risk to be placed on the non-implementation of this recommendation and the suggestion that no further action is required at this time is of significant concern.

Recommendation Four

Recommendation	R4 Document action plans for the implementation of the departmental strategic workforce plans to include the staff responsible for the actions and the timescales for implementation.
Risk of Non-Implementation	Failure to document action plans with timescales and allocated responsible owners could lead to skills shortages in key areas and negatively impact

	the organisation's capability and capacity to deliver services to the public.
Risk Profile	Low
Other Considerations in prioritisation	Documenting action plans is a departmental responsibility; a toolkit and support are available to support this activity. Departments have appointed Senior Leaders who are responsible to lead this work. People Services undertake regular review and progress reporting is in place. People Services will provide guidance and support where skills gaps are identified by a department. Key issues are included in the Jersey Public Service Strategic workforce plan.
Is the recommendation agreed?	Agreed People Services will ensure that all Chief Officers are made aware of their responsibility to implement plans.
Improvement theme	Workforce Planning - No additional actions at this time however the regular monitoring, review, support and quality improvement of workforce plans will continue to be driven by People Services as part of business-as-usual activity.

Once again, the PAC is surprised to note the risk profile for this recommendation is set at low. Noting the risk of non-implementation within the Executive Response outlines risks to service delivery and the fact that workforce plans are not fully implemented (as outlined in the comments on recommendation two), the PAC is also concerned to note that not further actions are being considered at this time. It is the PAC's view that the strategic objective of delivering a future proofed, well-equipped workforce has been missed entirely. The PAC would also suggest that consideration is given to how the increased use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) affects current roles and ensuring staff have a clear path to upskilling and retraining.

The PAC would also like to see evidence that People Services are challenging timelines for implementation of workforce strategies within the departments. Finally, the PAC would like to reiterate its point that workforce plans should be a primary objective for all Accountable Officers and not the domain of People Services.

Recommendation Five

Recommendation	R5 Update and improve recruitment pack procedures to include: introducing a standard recruitment pack template accompanied by clear guidelines on what is required from recruiting managers
-----------------------	--

	• a requirement for departments to submit completed recruitment packs to People Services; and • a programme of central review of completed recruitment packs to provide assurance on compliance with required processes and procedures.
Risk of Non-Implementation	If this recommendation is not implemented, hiring managers / recruiters may be unconsciously non-compliant with recruitment policy. Inconsistency in the application of recruitment policy and procedure can affect the quality and timeliness of appointments and future capability of the organisation. Possible conflicts of interests not documented as part of the process, could lead to real or perceived conflicts in the recruitment process. There is a high possibility of non-return of packs or completed packs which would prevent effective audits, leading to an inability to evidence practice and negatively impact the ability to improve practice and procedure.
Risk Profile	Medium
Other Considerations in prioritisation	Hiring managers / recruiters are required to comply with the recruitment and selection policy. Hiring managers are required to retain documentation of the recruitment process they have undertaken – this is identified in the older and newer versions of Recruitment and Selection policy. For Government of Jersey senior posts as defined by the Jersey Appointments Commission (JAC), records are already maintained by the Talent and Resourcing Team.
Is the recommendation agreed?	Agreed People Services are already working to improve Recruitment processes and compliance to policy and procedure as part of their business as usual activity. Processes will be implemented to improve policy compliance and record keeping
Improvement theme	Recruitment - Guidance, templates and checklists will be provided to hiring managers / recruiters, to improve consistency of process and compliance with recruitment policy and collation and retention of required paperwork. A process to improve record keeping will be developed and implemented.

The PAC notes the commitment in place in respect of this recommendation and that People Services are already working to improve processes and compliance in this area.

However, questions remain in relation to records being maintained by the Talent and Resourcing Team in respect of senior posts as defined by the Jersey Appointments Commission (JAC). The PAC notes that there has been a lot of activity undertaken in this area, and this was identified by the C&AG during the fieldwork of the report. As such, the PAC would like further clarification and assurance over what has been implemented to date in terms of guidance, templates and checklists and whether the new central record facility includes HCS. It shall be writing to the Chief People Officer to ascertain this information.

Recommendation Six

Recommendation	R6 Review and clarify the requirement to involve the JAC in senior appointments, including senior appointments at Arm's Length Bodies.
Risk of Non-Implementation	Failure to implement this recommendation could reduce the robustness of process which could lead to less impartial processes and/or inappropriate appointments to senior roles.
Risk Profile	Low
Other Considerations in prioritisation	The Jersey Appointments Commission have clear guidelines and checklists published here - Guidelines for the recruitment of Senior States Employees, appointees and members of independent bodies . This includes a list of independent bodies that fall within the direct remit of the Commission. Templates are available and published.
Is the recommendation agreed?	Agreed in part. Clarification of the requirement to involve the Jersey Appointments Commission will improve understanding by Government of Jersey Leaders and the appointment to Arm's Length Bodies.
Improvement theme	Recruitment - Review current recruitment training and ensure information regarding the Jersey Appointments Commission guidance is included and correct.

Once again, the PAC notes that the risk profile for this recommendation has been set as low. It would suggest that ensuring the guidelines are followed and clarified if there is any doubt is vitally important to ensure the robustness of processes. The PAC will follow up on this point further to gather evidence and assurance of the review of training being undertaken and information regarding the JAC guidance is included and correct.

Recommendation Seven

Recommendation	R7 Ensure that interim appointments are made for defined periods and are reviewed sufficiently early within the defined period. Maintain a central record of such appointments to ensure that review procedures take place on a timely basis.
-----------------------	--

Risk of Non-Implementation	Failure to implement this action could mean interim appointments become prolonged and postholders gain employment rights and this subsequently impacts the States Employment Boards' ability regarding permanent appointments.
Risk Profile	Low
Other Considerations in prioritisation	All interim appointments are time based, and the dates are already captured centrally in Connect People. Managers receive notification through Connect People advising them of contract end dates.
Is the recommendation agreed?	Agreed In place. A record is already maintained through Connect People system, which records defined appointment periods and provides alerts to the line manager in good time for the end of contract date.
Improvement theme	No action required.

The PAC notes that the recommendation is agreed and is stated as already being in place, which the PAC will follow up on to ascertain what that constitutes in practice. The PAC has recalled the previous report by the C&AG 'Use of Consultants' which established that there were numerous examples of interims who had been in post for long periods with limited evidence of reviews having taken place. The PAC is of the view that this recommendation calls for further rigour to be put into the review of interims and for there to be a better line of sight for the Executive Leadership Team and States Employment Board (SEB) on interim appointments. The PAC will be addressing this in further follow up work.

Recommendation Eight

Recommendation	R8 Document formally the factors taken into account when making recruitment decisions that go outside of stated policies so that it is clear how risks have been balanced and policies prioritised.
Risk of Non-Implementation	If this recommendation is not implemented, it may be more difficult to demonstrate how decisions have been made and what disclosures were made as part of any recruitment process.
Risk Profile	Medium
Other Considerations in prioritisation	Decisions made outside of policy are required to be fully documented.
Is the recommendation agreed?	Agreed. This must form part of the recruitment pack provided by the hiring manager when closing the recruitment process.
Improvement theme	Recruitment - Review current process, update and publish guidance and ensure included in relevant training.

	Develop a process to support compliance, ensuring records are saved appropriately and securely.
--	---

The PAC welcomes the acceptance of this recommendation and the improvement actions that are intended to be undertaken to achieve implementation. It would reiterate its comments in respect of recommendation seven and that this recommendation applies as much to the SEB as it does to the departments and Chief Officers.

Recommendation Nine

Recommendation	R9 Ensure that a robust strategy is documented and actioned sufficiently early to mitigate risks to the successful appointment of a permanent Chief Executive.
Risk of Non-Implementation	If recommendation is not implemented, it may be difficult to secure a timely appointment to the post of Chief Executive.
Risk Profile	Low
Other Considerations in prioritisation	Strategy for appointment to the post of Chief Executive is the decision of the Chief Minister with advice from the Jersey Appointments Commission, and the Chief People Officer.
Is the recommendation agreed?	Agreed No action is required at this time. Planning for the recruitment of a new Chief Executive will start early at the appropriate time to mitigate risks outlined. The Chief People Officer will hold this recommendation.
Improvement theme	No action required at this time.

The PAC notes this recommendation is agreed; however, it does not agree with the rationale presented, the risk profile assigned, or the fact that no action is required at this time. It is well documented that the Government of Jersey has had numerous Chief Executive appointments since 2018. The PAC would draw attention to the following information provided within the C&AG's report about the costs incurred by Government in relation to the recruitment of a Chief Executive Officer since 2017.²

Noting that over £360,000 has been spent since 2017 on recruitment costs associated with the Chief Executive Officer position (excluding severance payments), the PAC is concerned that assigning a low risk profile to this recommendation significantly underestimates the risks to the organisation in terms of cost and value for money. The Government of Jersey will need to ensure that it gets the appointment of a permanent Chief Executive correct and, given the current Chief Executive is on a fixed term contract until the end of 2026, there is limited time remaining to ensure a process is undertaken that mitigates the risks effectively. The PAC would like to understand what the timescale is for starting recruitment and what advice has been provided by the Jersey Appointments Commission and Chief People Officer in this regard.

² [Staff-Recruitment-and-Retention.pdf](#)

Exhibit 3: Additional costs associated with the Chief Executive position

Year	Nature of cost	£000
2017	Recruitment costs for permanent Chief Executive	50
2021	Severance payment	500
2021	Recruitment costs for interim Chief Executive	95
2021	Recruitment costs for permanent Chief Executive	67
2023	Recruitment costs for interim secondment arrangement	95
2023-2024	Recruitment costs for permanent Chief Executive prior to the pausing of the process	60

Source: Jersey Audit Office analysis based on information provided by Government

84. In total over £360,000 has been spent since 2017 on recruitment costs associated with the Chief Executive position, with more than £310,000 spent since 2021 without a successful permanent appointment (lasting more than two years) being made. The cost and impact of not having stability in the Chief Executive position however goes beyond just the costs of recruitment.

It was noted in a recent hearing between the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel (CSSP) and Chief Minister on recruitment and retention (which the Chair of PAC was co-opted for given the crossover between this report and the work of CSSP) that the following comments were made by the Chief Minister in relation to appointing a new permanent Chief Executive:

Deputy J. Renouf:

What I wanted to ask is, Chief Minister, can you confirm whether there is a strategy for the permanent position of permanent Chief Executive Officer, the appointment of a permanent Chief Executive Officer?

The Chief Minister:

Shortly, I think, Andrew will become our longest-serving Chief Officer for the last 3 or 4 and we are very keen to get some stability and continuity in the role. That is at the heart of the work on succession planning that the Chief Executive is currently leading on at the moment. That is after a good study of the internal talent. Because one thing I think we have omitted to do in the past is look closely at who we have got in the system and bring them through. To reiterate the Chief Exec's point earlier, we are working on that now, on the Chief Executive's succession planning scheme. We will leave for the next Government a succession plan in place for them to decide upon.³

The PAC notes the work is being undertaken; however, it would state there is still no clarity over the timescale for undertaking this work, and it would expect to have further evidence of the proposed plan for appointing a permanent Chief Executive. Without this, the PAC is concerned that considerable risk remains in appointing a permanent

³ Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel – Public Hearing with the Chief Minister – 27th May 2025

Chief Executive. As such, the PAC will be requesting the succession plans that are being developed to gain further assurance over this area.

Recommendation Ten

Recommendation	R10 Ensure that all departments are advertising and applying the policy regarding relocation expenses on a consistent basis.
Risk of Non-Implementation	If the recommendation is not implemented, inconsistent decisions may lead to inequity in how new appointees are treated.
Risk Profile	Low
Other Considerations in prioritisation	New policy is already published on gov.je.
Is the recommendation agreed?	Agreed In place
Improvement theme	Recruitment Information on the HCJ websites will be updated by the end of Q2 2025.

The PAC notes that this recommendation is agreed and that it is already in place. Within the improvement theme, it is noted that the HCJ website will be updated by the end of quarter two 2025 with this information. The PAC notes that this information is now on the website, however, it would like further assurance over why this required additional time to be uploaded when it had already been in place for other departments.

Recommendation Eleven

Recommendation	R11 Ensure that a consistent policy is applied for the provision of Government accommodation for employees.
Risk of Non-Implementation	There is a risk that there could be inequity amongst keyworkers and their colleagues, resulting in reduced morale and potential grievances
Risk Profile	Low
Other Considerations in prioritisation	A keyworker accommodation policy is already in place.
Is the recommendation agreed?	Not agreed On the balance of risk and administrative effort to ensure a consistent process is in place. However, departments will be reminded of their obligation to work in line with the policy. In addition, Chief Officers, or their delegates, can make exceptions, these must be in line with the PFM and an exemption to policy should be disclosed.
Improvement theme	N/A

It is the view of the PAC that not agreeing this recommendation highlights an acceptance on the part of Government that an inconsistency in the application of this policy is a tolerable risk. The provision of accommodation for key workers requires a robust and fair approach to mitigate against the very concerns raised by Government over the non-implementation of this recommendation. The PAC understands from the work done by the C&AG that this issue was a particular matter of contention, with the current policy creating a perception of favorable treatment. Noting that Chief Officers can make exemptions creates further concerns around the equitable administration of the policy. The PAC requires evidence of where these exemptions are agreed and moderated to ensure fairness and affordability. The principle made within the recommendation is incredibly important, and the PAC would urge Government to revisit this response and review the level of risk associated with not taking forward this recommendation.

During the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel public hearing (which Deputy Gardiner was co-opted for) on staff recruitment and retention, the Chief Minister gave the following commitment to reviewing the arrangement:

Deputy I. Gardiner:

But if somebody does receive, somebody does not receive, we are talking about inconsistency with allocation. The recommendation interestingly enough ... this is kind of: what is your view, Chief Minister? Recommendation 11 from the C. & A.G. is to ensure that consistent policy applies for Government provision of accommodation and this recommendation was not agreed. I mean I am not entirely sure why this recommendation does not seem to be important that consistent policy applies to accommodation provision for new recruits.

The Chief Minister:

I think one of the things we are looking at and we are recognising when we look at regeneration plans for the future is the need for better quality, more consistency among our state of providing staff accommodation. That is something we are going to have to address into the future. Without the recommendation and seeing the rationale and the context, I cannot explain.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Would you review the executive response to C. & A.G. report regarding the accommodation? It is recommendation 11.

The Chief Minister:

Recommendation 11. We will have a look at that.⁴

The PAC notes the commitment of the Chief Minister to review the Executive Response and would expect to see an updated response in due course following this review.

Recommendation Sixteen

Recommendation	R16 Undertake a review to identify opportunities for multi-disciplinary training.
-----------------------	--

⁴ Public Hearing – Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel – Chief Minister – 27th May 2025

Risk of Non-Implementation	Failure to implement may lead to inconsistent methodologies being used across multiple services and could result in increased training costs.
Risk Profile	Low
Other Considerations in prioritisation	People Services learning and development team manage a Forum where all departments come together and opportunities to share resources and work together are encouraged and facilitated.
Is the recommendation agreed?	Agreed Whilst the potential of the recommendation is acknowledged there is insufficient resource to prioritise action at this time.
Improvement theme	Training and Development – People Services will continue to facilitate joint working where they are aware of opportunities.

The PAC notes that this recommendation is agreed, however, there is insufficient resource to prioritise action at this time. It would suggest that, by not prioritising action at this time, there is a risk that joined-up delivery may not be happening in practice. Cross fertilisation of training and development would benefit Government (especially within services such as HCJ) and this response could be taken to imply that savings and benefits cannot be found from a joined-up approach. Government should reconsider the priority of this recommendation and examine further ways that it can create joined-up training and development opportunities across the organisation. This in turn will help to drive savings, efficiencies, and value for money.

Recommendation Eighteen

Recommendation	R18 Require managers and leaders to collect 360 degree feedback as part of their performance appraisal data
Risk of Non-Implementation	Failure to implement this recommendation may mean our leaders may not understand how they are perceived by others.
Risk Profile	Low
Other Considerations in prioritisation	Although initially proposed as part of the leadership programme the cost of offering 360 on a widescale basis prohibited implementation. There is no budget for the provision of 360 feedback. There is existing functionality in Connect People which allows all colleagues to request feedback from any other member of staff as part of the performance review process. They also receive anonymous feedback on their impact, through the Be Heard employee engagement survey.
Is the recommendation agreed?	Not agreed The risk of non- implementation of the recommendation is largely mitigated through existing provision and the financial requirements to

	implement is not assessed as being proportionate to the risk at this time.
Improvement theme	N/A

The rationale for not implementing this recommendation is that it is largely mitigated through existing provision and the financial requirements to implement it are assessed as not being proportionate to the risk currently. Whilst this is understood by the PAC, it would suggest that there are several cost-effective ways in which to do this through current systems that could be undertaken without incurring additional expenditure. The PAC would like to have further assurance from Government over the intention to implement this recommendation. The PAC shall, therefore, be questioning further the assessment that was undertaken in response to this recommendation and whether further avenues can be explored within existing resources.

Recommendation Twenty

Recommendation	R20 Develop and implement a standard policy and procedure for exit interviews. In doing so, ensure that leavers are encouraged to share their reasons for leaving.
Risk of Non-Implementation	Failure to implement could lead to missed opportunities to identify and tackle organisation or team issues and concerns.
Risk Profile	Low
Other Considerations in prioritisation	A standard process for exit interviews has been implemented as of February 2025. Findings from exit surveys are collated and analysed regularly.
Is the recommendation agreed?	Agreed In place
Improvement theme	No action required

The PAC notes that the implementation of the standard policy and procedure for exit interviews was done after the fieldwork had been undertaken by the C&AG for this review. Whilst it is positive that a standard process has been implemented, the PAC would note that the point made within the recommendation is two-fold. Firstly, it is important to ensure that exit interviews are undertaken, but secondly it is worth noting that many employees wanted to take part in them out of fear of reprisal or future opportunities being affected. The PAC will seek further assurance over the implementation of the exit interview process and that this is being done as a matter of course and that it truly encourages leavers to share the reasons that they have for leaving the organisation or department.

Conclusion

Overall, the PAC has concerns arising from this Executive Response which it believes the Government should either revisit or provide further assurance over. The key points raised by the PAC are as follows:

- A low-risk rating has been assigned to several recommendations which the PAC believes warrant a higher risk rating given their importance to the overall

effectiveness of the organisation. It will be questioning the Government further about the risk levels and requesting further assurance as to how they will be implemented in practice to ensure risks are mitigated.

- It appears that many of the recommendations do not have any actions assigned to them at this time, despite Government agreeing with the recommendations themselves. This does not provide certainty over timescales for implementation and creates further concern as to how the recommendations will be implemented in practice. These responses should be revisited by the Government of Jersey and updated where required.
- Recruitment to the position of Chief Executives has incurred costs of over £360,000 (excluding severance packages) since 2017. Given this considerable sum spent on numerous recruitments, it is concerning to the PAC that the Government does not have a firm recruitment strategy in place given the current Chief Executive is on a fixed term contract until the end of 2026. The Government of Jersey must ensure without fail that a strategy is drawn up immediately to mitigate against the risk of further spending in this area.

There appears to be a view from Government that many of the recommendations of the C&AG have been implemented through subsequent actions since the publication of the report. Whilst this may be the case, the PAC will seek additional assurance as to the effectiveness of the implementation of these recommendations. It shall, therefore, be conducting further work to question officials on these developments during 2025. Furthermore, the actions agreed to within the action plan range up to July 2026 for implementation, which does not appear to be ambitious.