

STATES OF JERSEY



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

INCREASE GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY, OPENNESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

**Lodged au Greffe on 26th October 2026
by Select proposer.
Earliest date for debate: 10th November 2026**

STATES GREFFE

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

1 PAGE 2 –

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

“, except that, on Page 5, after Priority 11 there should be inserted the following new Priority within the summary table of priorities –

Priorities	Pillars	Sustainable Wellbeing	Island Outcomes
12. Increase Government transparency, openness and accountability, proactively support civic and democratic engagement and participation, and strengthen public trust in Jersey’s democratic institutions.	Invest in Jersey	Community Wellbeing	Vibrant and Inclusive Community

2 PAGE 2 –

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

“, except that, on Page 19, after Priority 11, there should be inserted the following Priority –

“12. Increase Government transparency, openness and accountability, proactively support civic and democratic engagement and participation, and strengthen public trust in Jersey’s democratic institutions

Actions:

12.1 Improve transparency of decision-making across Government departments, including through the publication of clearer and more accessible information on policy development, delivery and performance data.

12.2 Make Government processes, consultations and public information easier to access and understand, allowing Islanders to engage more confidently with decisions that affect their lives, and monitor public trust through regular surveys to help drive continuous improvement in transparency, accountability and public engagement.

12.3 Commit to the sustained integration of democratic and political education throughout the school curriculum, and support and promote the work of the States Greffe in enhancing and expanding democratic and political education, outreach, public engagement, and civic participation programs and initiatives along with relevant departments and stakeholders, including the Parishes.

12.4 Ensure the long-term support, technical upkeep, and funding of the Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) system, working collaboratively with the Parishes, the Judicial Greffe, and relevant departments to maintain accurate, secure, and modern electoral data.

A healthy democracy depends on people understanding how decisions are made, feeling able to participate, and having confidence that Government is acting openly and responsibly.

While trust in public services has increased in the last year, many Islanders still feel disconnected from democratic and political processes or are unsure about how to engage with them. Members of the public can often be left frustrated by complex, unclear communication or a lack of accessible information. If we want people to have confidence in our institutions, we must ensure Government is transparent, approachable and accountable.

We will improve the way Government communicates by providing clearer information about how policies are developed, how decisions are taken and what outcomes are being achieved. Islanders should not have to navigate complicated systems to understand what Government is doing or how decisions affect them. Information should be accessible, timely and easy to find.

We also recognise the importance of listening. Regular surveys and feedback mechanisms will help us understand public perceptions, identify areas for improvement and ensure Government remains responsive to the communities it serves.

We will continue to support democratic, civic, and political education and engagement initiatives, working with the States Greffe and partner organisations to help people better understand how Jersey's democratic system operates and how they can get involved. Greater awareness leads to greater participation, and stronger participation strengthens our democracy.

Sustaining a modern electoral infrastructure is vital to enhancing civil participation. Following the successful delivery of the Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) system, the Government remains committed to its long-term viability and technical support. We will work in close partnership with the Parishes, the Judicial Greffe, and data-holding departments to ensure that voter data remains accurate, secure, and seamless, safeguarding an inclusive democratic process for all Islanders.

By improving Government transparency and access to information, we can strengthen accountability and ensure Islanders feel informed, empowered and connected to the decisions that shape Jersey's future.””.

DEPUTY C.S. ALVES OF ST. HELIER CENTRAL

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 5, after Priority 11 there should be inserted the following new Priority within the summary table of priorities –

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REPORT

“Islanders rightly expect Government to be efficient, responsive and transparent.”

The words of our Chief Minister in his [candidate statement](#). And words with which I don’t think anyone in the States Assembly would disagree.

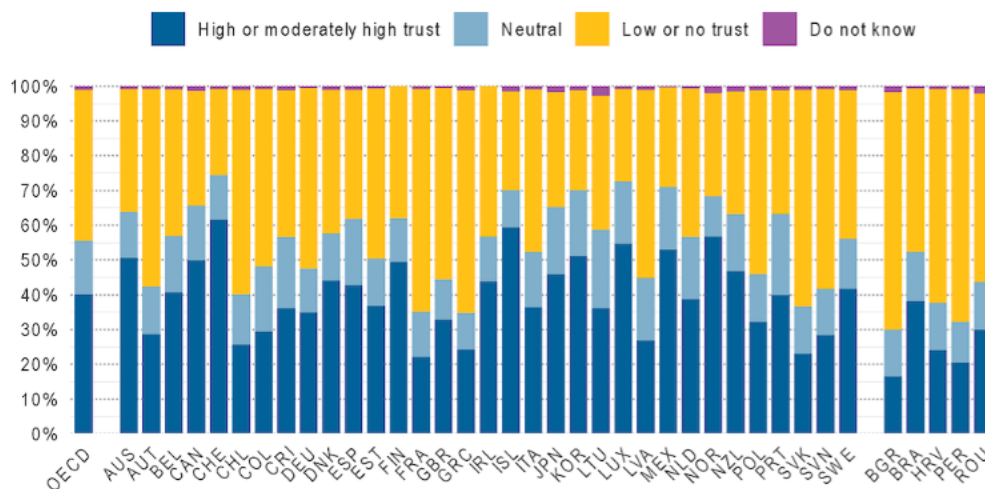
Strong democratic systems rely upon an informed public, transparent institutions and accessible mechanisms for participation. This is summed up clearly in the OECD commentary on [Open government and citizen participation –](#)

“Open government policies and practices are widely recognised as important avenues to reinforcing democracy and strengthening trust in public institutions. OECD Trust Survey data confirms that open government is a key driver of citizens’ confidence in their government. People who have a feel that they have a say in what the government does report higher trust in government. This highlights that governments must do better in both giving and responding to the voice of people to meet evolving expectations.”

OECD figures show the low levels of trust in national governments worldwide –

Figure 1.2. About four in ten people across the OECD have high or moderately high trust in the national government

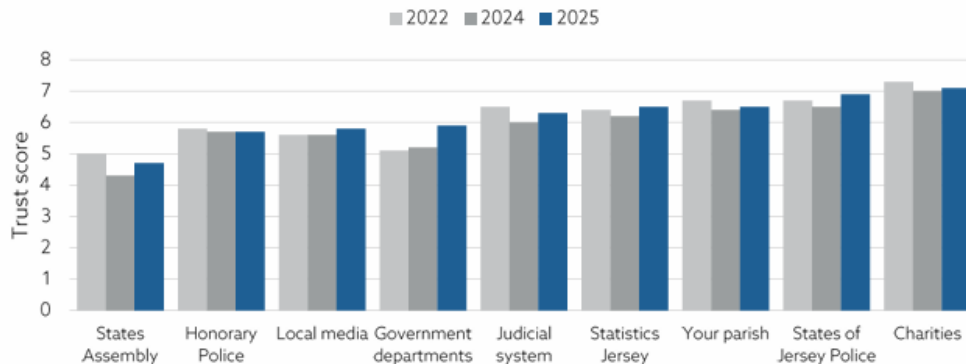
Share of population who indicate different levels of trust in their national government, 2025



Source: [Drivers of trust over time: Lessons from the third wave of the OECD Trust Survey: OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions 2026 Results | OECD](#)

Jersey is not an exception to low public trust. Whilst trust in the Assembly and Government departments have increased since 2024, this trust remains at worryingly low levels

Figure 22: Average trust has gone up for nearly all institutions since 2024
Average trust in institutions (1 to 10), over time



Priority 12

What this Amendment seeks to achieve through the implementation of Priority 12 is two part, the first of which is to fundamentally embed the principal of transparency in the priorities of Government. Transparency, openness and accountability should underpin all actions of Government in order to maintain and build public trust and participation.

The second part of the Amendment is fundamentally linked to the first. The Assembly needs to increase public trust in Jersey's democratic institutions – equally there needs to be a commitment from Government to democracy and to supporting civic participation, in order to regain the faith and democratic engagement of Islanders.

Priorities 12.1 and 12.2

Public trust

Jersey's [review of Freedom of Information arrangements](#) concluded that greater proactive publication of information could reduce unnecessary requests and strengthen transparency and accountability, stating that –

“The Government of Jersey aims to reduce the administrative and financial burden of responding to Freedom of Information requests by taking a more proactive approach to transparency...”

The overarching goal is to shift from a reactive to a proactive model of information release improving efficiency, reducing duplication, and ultimately enhancing public confidence in open government.”

These are aims that tie in directly to the proposed Amendment – which merely seeks to focus the attention of Government on following through with oft cited proposals and intent.

For example, the Government's commitment to the Open Data programme went live in 2015, following the UK's example of best practise. However, there is a need to be mindful of not only access, but audience, and accessibility.

Here I am reminded of my former colleague Deputy Southern's ongoing frustration at trying to access Social Security information in the same format it had previously been provided in their full annual report ([last published in 2017](#)). The information is all now published in Open Data – however it is available in large excel files which are not easily accessible and can lead to difficulties in extracting the relevant data.

Whilst Open Data is important, my amendment also asks Government to commit to “*publication of clearer and more accessible information*”, allowing us to build public trust through clarity and openness.

It should also be noted that the Comptroller and Auditor General has [highlighted](#) that effective public reporting enables citizens to understand government priorities, expenditure and performance, whilst providing the information necessary to hold decision-makers accountable.

Consultations

Government consultation is an important process for building public trust but also for developing policy in a way that includes the public voice. Consultations are most effective when the public can easily understand proposals and see how their views influence decisions.

The Government of Jersey's [Consultation Code](#) emphasises that consultations should enable Islanders to contribute to policy development and improve decision-making. It also highlights the importance of providing information in accessible formats.

The amendment seeks to maintain the terms of the Code, but also to improve the accessibility and reach of consultations, with the potential to expand deliberative engagement mechanisms, for example through community engagement forums and consultation events.

It also seeks Government to take the next step forward in monitoring and surveying consultation engagement, in order to improve accountability and democratic engagement.

Priorities 12.3 and 12.4

Democracy functions most effectively when citizens understand political institutions and feel empowered to participate.

Education

The States Greffe has invested significantly in education and outreach resources, with democratic and political education as one of its strategic priorities. This work includes dedicated Education and Outreach Officers, youth engagement programmes and curriculum support. In this way the Greffe provides learning opportunities for students ranging from primary education through post-16 learning, helping young people understand parliamentary processes and democratic participation

However, when it comes to the mainstream curriculum, despite the inclusion of [Citizenship with PSHE classes](#), Island politics remain a very small part of school

learning. Including the priority requested within this amendment is not necessarily asking the Education Department to make wholesale changes to the curriculum, but to take steps to ensure democratic and political education remains an important and integral part of learning.

Political Outreach

During the election period the Government was silent in relation to election activities. This was a choice and not an obligation – the Government eventually agreeing to put out some ‘very basic’ information on their channels at the last election. In fact as the Chief Minister stated during [question time for his nomination as Chief Minister delegate](#), as ‘the world did not end, we can get better at it for the next election’.

The reach of Government in the Island is extensive and could have been used to positively reinforce the democratic and electoral process by actively supporting the work undertaken by the States Greffe and Vote.je. Whilst it is important for the Government to stay neutral in the election, it is equally important for them to utilise their platform to promote democracy and public information.

Support of Automatic Voter Registration

Automatic Voter Registration (‘AVR’) represents one of the most significant democratic reforms undertaken in Jersey in recent years.

Introduced in March 2026, AVR automatically registers eligible voters using Government-held data, reducing administrative burdens and removing barriers to electoral participation. The reform was designed to improve accessibility, modernise electoral administration and reduce costs.

The system operates collaboratively between Government Departments, the Parishes and electoral administrators, while allowing members of the public to verify and update their electoral information.

The concern here arises if Government decide that their part is done. The system relies on financial support and maintenance of accurate data – notwithstanding any system upgrades or technical maintenance. It must remain a priority not only for the Jersey Electoral Authority and the Parishes, but for Government, to ensure that democratic accessibility is maintained.

The intention here is to maintain accurate electoral registers, to reduce voting barriers and to improve confidence in the electoral process.

Conclusion

The inclusion of Priority 12 presents an opportunity to strengthen Jersey's democratic infrastructure by embedding transparency, accountability, participation and civic education at the heart of public administration.

Existing initiatives, including enhanced States Greffe outreach programmes, consultation frameworks, and the introduction of Automatic Voter Registration, provide a strong foundation. However, long-term success will require sustained investment, institutional commitment and continuous evaluation.

Priority 12 complements the other 11 priorities by reaffirming that strengthening democratic and political engagement requires a long-term commitment. Achieving this ambition will depend on collaborative working, supported by evidence-based research.

This policy direction is also strongly supported by recent research and evidence examining youth engagement, hard-to-reach segments, and voter journeys in Jersey and wider jurisdictions ([Pich, 2023](#); [Pich et al., 2025](#); [Pich, 2026](#)). Integrating Priority 12 ensures that future policy actions remain grounded in rigorous, context-specific research.

By improving transparency, making public information more accessible, expanding civic education and safeguarding electoral modernisation, Jersey can build a more informed, engaged and confident public and strengthen trust in its democratic institutions for future generations.

Financial and staffing implications

The additional work required to support this priority should be minimal. Priority 12 seeks to embed best practise and prioritise transparency within processes – there should be no further costs to releasing information than to not doing so.

Ongoing costs in relation to support and maintenance of AVR should already be factored into the budget for Digital Services.

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.