Delivery of the Common Strategic Policy

Common Strategic Policy Review Panel

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1. Chair's Foreword

When we began this review, we expected to see steady and consistent progress across the Government's thirteen priorities. Ministers had intentionally narrowed their focus to make the workload realistic for a short 28-month term, and many believed this approach would produce clearer results. What we found was a mixed picture: some notable achievements, but also a number of areas where progress has been slower, uneven, or dependent on future decisions.

There have been several important steps forward. Islanders now have access to nutritious school meals in every States primary school, increasing Government subsidies to GP practices and reductions in GP fees for Health Access Scheme users, and the start of the transition to a living wage, supported by business funding measures.

However, in most of the priority areas the Panel examined, progress remains partial. This includes implementing the Violence Against Women and Girls recommendations, improving St Helier, reducing red tape, modernising the planning system, and delivering environmental commitments. In each case, some work is underway, but key milestones have been delayed or rely on future budgets.

A recurring theme in the evidence was the Government's description of the Proposed Budget 2026–2029 as a "bridging budget," designed to maintain stability in the short term but deferring major decisions. As a result, long-term financial choices—such as strengthening strategic reserves, restoring contributions to the Social Security Fund, planning for increasing health and care costs and a workforce action plan to address economic and demographic pressures —have been left for the next Government to resolve.

The impact of demographic change emerged as one of the most significant long-term issues. Jersey's population is ageing, birth rates are declining, and care needs are increasing. While these trends are recognised by Ministers across all departments, the Panel found no single coordinated plan, no lead Minister responsible for delivery, and no cross-government strategy for managing the social and financial implications. Similar gaps were identified in other cross-cutting areas, including digital transformation, environmental sustainability, skills, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

To help different departments work better together, the Panel suggests clearer coordination across Government. One option is for the Deputy Chief Minister to take the lead on major shared issues, with regular working groups bringing departments together to agree actions and track progress to avoid working in silos. This clearer structure, along with straightforward public updates and long-term planning, would help ensure priorities are delivered more consistently.

I thank Ministers, officials, and stakeholders for their engagement with this review, and the Panel members and officers for their careful work throughout. This report aims to provide a balanced and constructive assessment of progress to date. It highlights the areas where delivery has been achieved, but also the significant work that remains. We hope it will support the next Government in establishing a clearer, more coordinated, and financially sustainable framework for Jersey's long-term strategic direction.

Deputy Inna Gardiner
Chair, Common Strategic Policy Review Panel

2. Executive Summary

The Review Panel has examined the Government's progress in delivering the thirteen priorities set out in the Common Strategic Policy (CSP) 2024–2026 and assessed how the Proposed Budget 2026–2029 supports their implementation. The review also considered cross-cutting issues and alignment with the Future Jersey Vision.

The Panel found that Ministers were broadly supportive of narrowing the CSP to a focused set of priorities, noting that this approach provided clarity, improved accountability, and reduced the risk of spreading resources too thin during the 28-month term. The Panel agrees that this focus has enabled measurable progress in several areas.

Delivery of Common Strategic Policy Priorities

Overall, the Government has delivered several key commitments, including the provision of nutritious school meals in all States primary schools (priority 2), and the commencement of the transition to a living wage, although support to businesses is ongoing (priority 7).

Progress has been made in areas such as lifelong learning and skills development (priority 3), reduction in GP Fees (priority 5), affordable housing measures (priority 8), construction of a new hospital at Overdale (priority 4) and planning reform (priority 12). However, some priorities remain only partially delivered, including the implementation of recommendations from the Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce (priority 6), town revitalisation (priority 11), and reducing red tape (priority 10).

Delivery of nursery and childcare expansion (priority 1) is largely dependent on the approval of the Proposed Budget. Progress on meeting climate emergency commitments (priority 13) has been limited, with delays to environmental projects and the absence of a clear financial strategy.

Alignment with the Proposed Budget 2026 - 2029

The Proposed Budget maintains CSP related funding, increasing from £5.8 million in 2025 to £8.3 million in 2026, and continues allocations for priority projects. While Ministers broadly welcomed this support, some concerns were raised about the dominance of health and education growth bids. The decision to reduce the States Grant to the Social Security Fund provides short-term flexibility but also raises questions about long-term sustainability, particularly in light of demographic pressures and rising health costs.

The Budget has been described as a "bridging budget," intended to maintain short-term financial stability until the next Government takes office. Decisions on medium and long-term financial sustainability, including restoring contributions to the Social Security Fund and funding ongoing commitments, will need to be addressed by the incoming Government.

Cross-cutting issues

The review identified several cross-cutting issues that require stronger coordination. These include the ageing population, digital infrastructure, environmental priorities, diversity and inclusion, and workforce training and skills. While Ministers acknowledged these challenges, the Panel found limited evidence of integrated strategies or governance frameworks to address them. For example, despite significant planned investment in digital infrastructure, concerns remain about the effectiveness of past expenditure and the lack of clear oversight. Similarly, environmental objectives have struggled to compete for funding against short-term priorities, and the Panel has seen little evidence that equity and inclusion principles are fully embedded in policy development.

Future Jersey Vision

Finally, while the Future Jersey Vision and the associated ten Island Outcomes provide a comprehensive framework for guiding Government priorities and measuring quality of life, delivery has been lacking in some areas. In particular, there are examples where environmental and community well-being outcomes have not been fully realised, either due to siloed departmental approaches or funding constraints. The Panel considers that greater cross-departmental coordination, sustained investment, and a focus on overall outcomes will be necessary to ensure that the Future Jersey Vision can be fully implemented across all three areas of well-being.

3. Key Findings

Overall Approach

→ Ministers generally agreed that narrowing the Common Strategic Policy priorities was appropriate and beneficial, particularly given the 28-month term. A focused set of priorities was seen as improving delivery and reducing the risk of spreading resources too thin (Key Finding 1).

Delivery of CSP Priorities

→ Progress has been made in expanding nursery and childcare provision for children aged 2 to 3 years, including through pilot programmes supporting children with additional needs and increased funding in the proposed Budget 2026–2029, if approved. However, challenges remain in workforce recruitment and retention, and in identifying suitable sites to expand provision further (Key Finding 2).

→ While progress has been made in lifelong learning and skills development, the Government has not yet implemented the NASEN recommendation to extend educational provision for young people with special educational needs up to age 25. This gap limits the inclusivity and continuity of lifelong learning opportunities, despite being directly aligned with the CSP's stated priorities for skills development and inclusion (Key Finding 3).

→ Preparatory works for the new hospital at Overdale are underway, with initial site clearance completed and further work scheduled for late 2025. While procurement of the main delivery partner was delayed, this is not expected to affect the overall timeline (Key Finding 4).

→ Implementing the Violence Against Women and Girls related legislation will require additional resources for the Police and other departments, which are already under increased demand. While financial implications will be addressed in the 2027 Budget, the first annual VAWG Taskforce progress report shows that 27 recommendations have been completed, 42 are in progress, and the remainder are pending or not yet started (Key Finding 5).

→ While the Government has generally sought to limit increases in fees and charges, the Proposed Budget introduces two new Health and Social Services fees aimed at encouraging behavioural change and improving service efficiency. The introduction of new charges during a period of ongoing cost of living pressures may be perceived as inconsistent with the CSP priority to minimise additional costs for Islanders (Key Finding 6).

→ While progress has been made in reducing regulatory burdens and improving access to business support, challenges remain in areas such as cybersecurity and broader digital transformation, which will require continued focus to fully deliver on CSP priorities (Key Finding 7).

→ While progress has been made in public realm improvements, and cycling and walking infrastructure, there is no single, integrated plan for St Helier's revitalisation. Governance and collaboration between departments exists but could be strengthened, particularly with sustainability and accessibility considerations, which are not consistently embedded in project design. (Key Finding 8).

→ Progress on modernising the planning service has been achieved through internal reprioritisation rather than additional funding. Measures such as clearing backlogs, introducing structured pre-application advice, and consulting on amendments to permitted development rights are important preparatory steps in reforming the planning service (Key Finding 9).

→ The consultancy freeze has led to delays in progressing some business-as-usual work, including the development of a water strategy (Key Finding 10).

Overall delivery

→ Progress has been made in delivering a number of CSP priorities across education, health, economic, and housing areas. This includes the provision of nutritious school meals in all States primary schools, reductions in GP fees for Health Access Scheme users, the commencement of the transition towards a living wage with associated employer support, and the introduction of measures to increase affordable housing and strengthen tenancy protections (Key Finding 11).

Budgetary Support and Sustainability

→ While Ministers broadly supported the allocation of funding in the Proposed Budget 2026 - 2029 within their areas, there remain concerns regarding the overall balance of investment across government priorities with health and education dominating the growth bids (Key Finding 12).

→ The Proposed Budget 2026–2029 has been presented as a “bridging budget,” intended to maintain short-term financial stability until the next Government, at which point decisions will need to be made regarding medium and longer-term funding (Key Finding 13).

→ Ministers generally supported short-term reduction of the grant to the Social Security Fund but raised concerns about long-term sustainability. Some advocated for using the Fund for capital investment with returns, rather than revenue spending. There is no shared strategy for future use or replenishment of the Fund (Key Finding 14).

Cross-Cutting Issues

→ While some age-friendly measures are being addressed through routine regulatory processes, there is no clear governance structure or coordinated plan to ensure delivery. The absence of a defined lead Minister and delivery plan raises concerns about meeting the July 2026 deadline for the Age-Friendly Infrastructure Framework (Key Finding 15).

→ Significant investment is planned in digital infrastructure over the 2026–2029 budget period, including upgrades to core systems, digital health initiatives, and the development of government digital platforms. The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development raised concerns over the effectiveness of past expenditure, which suggests that digital transformation may continue to be a high-cost but underperforming area without clearer oversight, measurable outcomes, and cross-government alignment (Key Finding 16).

→ While Diversity, Equity and Inclusion principles are acknowledged in the CSP and some mechanisms exist, they are not yet fully embedded in policy development or budgetary decision-making (Key Finding 17).

→ While Ministers recognise the urgency of tackling skills shortages, efforts remain fragmented. The overlapping responsibilities between the Education and Economy Departments demand stronger cross-ministerial coordination, yet current collaboration on upskilling and lifelong learning appears limited (Key Finding 18).

→ Cross-ministerial collaboration exists in principle but is inconsistent in practice. Several Ministers reported limited engagement with others on shared priorities, particularly around skills, childcare, and digital transformation. Ministerial groups (e.g. determinants of health, sports, cost of living) are in place but lack formalised delivery plans (Key Finding 19).

→ There have been successful examples of cross-departmental collaboration which has resulted in increased community use of school facilities and practical improvements to public spaces, such as Broad Street, to incorporate accessibility and age-friendly design principles (Key Finding 20).

Alignment with Future Jersey Vision

→ The Future Jersey Vision and the associated ten Island Outcomes provide a comprehensive framework for guiding Government priorities and measuring quality of life. However, delivery has been lacking in some areas, in particular environmental and community well-being outcomes (Key Finding 21).

4. Recommendations

Recommendations are grouped thematically rather than in numerical order.

CSP Priorities

→ In relation to the nursery and childcare pilot programmes, cross-departmental work should be strengthened to address workforce and site availability challenges, ensuring the sustainable delivery of the universal nursery offer for 2 to 3 year olds (Recommendation 1).

→ The Council of Ministers should ensure that an integrated revitalisation plan for St Helier is mapped out as part of end-of-term planning, with clear governance arrangements, including cross-departmental representation on the Regeneration Steering Group. The plan should embed environmental and accessibility standards in all projects and include measurable milestones to track progress (Recommendation 2).

Monitoring, Evaluation and Governance

→ In terms of monitoring and evaluation, the Council of Ministers should introduce outcome-based performance metrics for all CSP priorities, with annual public reporting moving forward. An update on the current CSP priorities delivery should be published in Q1 2026, prior to the next election (Recommendation 3).

→ The Council of Ministers should, before the end of Q1 2026, review the impact of the consultancy freeze on departmental capacity, identifying all critical business-as-usual work that has been delayed. The aim being to equip the incoming government post-election with a clear understanding of outstanding priorities, enabling it to take an informed view and swift establishment of the new CSP priorities (Recommendation 4).

→ The Council of Ministers should formalise cross-Ministerial working groups with clear terms of reference, delivery plans, and reporting mechanisms. To consider if roles such as Deputy Chief Minister, as with other jurisdictions, could be appointed to coordinate certain cross-cutting priorities on behalf of the Chief Minister. This should form part of a formal governance structure established before the election and designed to span political cycles, ensuring continuity and accountability (Recommendation 11).

Financial Sustainability

→ The Council of Ministers should develop a long-term sustainability plan for the Social Security Fund, including modelling of demographic pressures and future service needs (Recommendation 5).

→ For any future proposals to reduce the States Grant to the Social Security Fund, the Minister for Social Security should establish criteria, by Q3 2026, for using the reduction in funds for capital investment where a return can be generated, with appropriate safeguards against revenue use (Recommendation 6).

→ The Council of Ministers should publish annual reports on the impact of reduced grants to the Social Security Fund on both the solvency of the Fund versus the gains in CSP deliverables and outcomes (Recommendation 7).

Demographic and Social Policy

→ The Council of Ministers should, in recognition of Jersey's ageing population, present a report by the end of Q1 2026 detailing actions taken to how demographic changes will affect policies across the board in areas such as pensions, workforce, care, education, housing and other relevant areas. The report should include an assessment of progress to date, identify gaps, and set out clear recommendations to equip the incoming government post-election with a coherent framework for managing the long-term social and economic impacts of demographic change (Recommendation 8).

→ By February 2026, the Council of Ministers should publish a progress update on delivering the Age-Friendly Infrastructure Framework by July 2026, including detail on how consistent standards across Government, parishes, and third parties will be incorporated to the Framework (Recommendation 9).

→ The Chief Minister should include in his legacy report that responsibility for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion oversight should be assigned to a dedicated Ministerial portfolio or cross-government steering group (Recommendation 10).

5. Introduction

Background

In April 2024 the Council of Ministers published its Proposed Common Strategic Policy 2024 - 2026. This originally set out 12 priorities for delivery over a two year period. A 13th priority, implementation of the Carbon Neutral Roadmap, was added by the States Assembly[1] when it approved the CSP in May 2024. The thirteen strategic priorities are set out below:

Priority 1	Extend nursery and childcare provision
Priority 2	Provide nutritious school meals in all States primary schools
Priority 3	Increase lifelong learning and skills development
Priority 4	Start building a new hospital at Overdale
Priority 5	Reduce GP fees
Priority 6	Implement Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce recommendations
Priority 7	Transition to a living wage
Priority 8	Provide more affordable homes and confidence for the rented sector
Priority 9	Keep fees, duties, and charges low to ease cost of living
Priority 10	Reduce red tape, support business and strengthen reputation
Priority 11	Deliver a plan to revitalise Town
Priority 12	Reform planning service for sustainable development
Priority 13	Meet climate emergency commitments

During the debate on the CSP, the Chief Minister, having come to office mid-term, said that the plan was designed to meet the immediate needs of Islanders within a tight timeframe stating that it is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and deliverable within two years[2].

Purpose of the review

In July 2025, the Review Panel was established to assess the delivery of the Common Strategic Policy (CSP) and examine how the Proposed Budget 2026–2029 supports the implementation of its thirteen priorities. The review focused on identifying gaps and risks affecting delivery, with particular attention to cross-cutting issues spanning multiple ministerial portfolios.

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[1] Amendment by the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel - P-21-2024-Amd-Amd.pdf
[2] Chief Minister's opening speech - States Assembly approves key Government priorities

Standing panels provided valuable insights into these cross-cutting matters, which included:

- The ageing population
- Digital infrastructure
- Environmental priorities
- Diversity, Inclusion and Equity
- Workforce training and skills

This report offers a snapshot of progress against CSP priorities. While the Panel concentrated on cross-cutting issues and budget implications, individual Scrutiny Panels have conducted detailed reviews on both the budget and specific CSP priorities under their remits. Together, this collective scrutiny provides a fuller picture of delivery and challenges across Government.

Methodology

The Panel held public hearings with the following Ministers to question them on delivery and implementation of the CSP priorities under their remits, including the identified cross-cutting matters and associated funding models aligned with their strategic aims:

- Minister for Health and Social Services
- Minister for Social Security
- Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning
- Minister for the Environment
- Minister for Infrastructure
- Minister for Sustainable Economic Development
- Minister for Treasury and Resources

After gathering evidence from Ministers, the Panel held one final public hearing with the Chief Minister to question him on the overall strategic co-ordination and leadership of the CSP.

The Panel acknowledges that it did not hold public hearings with all Ministers. This was a deliberate decision based on the Panel's focus on cross-cutting matters within the CSP. As such, a targeted selection of Ministers were invited to provide insight into how the ministerial team was working collaboratively to deliver on shared priorities. The culminating hearing for the Panel was with the Chief Minister, which provided an opportunity to assess overall strategic leadership and coordination across government.

6. Progress Against the Thirteen Common Strategic Priorities

Summary of progress

Overall, the Government has made measurable progress in delivering some initiatives under the CSP priorities. Several key commitments have been delivered or are on track to being delivered including school meals, and progress towards the transition to a living wage, among others.

The table below shows the Panel's assessment of progress against each CSP priority. The sections following the table set out the evidence gathered to support these assessments:

CSP Priority	Progress
Extend nursery and childcare provision	Partial progress Budget dependent
Provide a nutritious school meal for every child in all States primary schools	Delivered
Increase the provision of lifelong learning and skills development	Partial progress
Start building a new hospital at Overdale	Partial progress
Reduce GP fees	Partial progress[3]
Implement the recommendations from the Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce report	Partial progress
Transition to a living wage	Delivered, transition support ongoing
Provide more affordable homes for islanders and more confidence for the rented sector	Partial progress ongoing
Keep Government fees, duties and charges as low as possible to help Islanders with the cost of living in 2025	Partial progress
Reduce red tape, enhance opportunities for business and strengthen Jersey's international reputation	Partial progress
Deliver a plan to revitalise Town	Partial progress
Reform the planning service to enable sustainable development in Jersey	Limited progress

[3] While additional subsidies have been provided to GP practices, it remains unclear whether these measures have translated into a tangible benefit for Islanders. This uncertainty arises because GP surgeries retain autonomy over their charging structures, resulting in a wide variation in appointment costs across the island - from £0 to £45 as at the time of writing. Consequently, there is no mechanism to determine whether the intended reduction is reaching all patients. It is therefore difficult to assess whether this strategic priority has been effectively delivered. https://www.gov.je/health/doctordentist/doctors/pages/healthcard.aspx

Meet the Islands commitments to address the climate emergency of the Carbon Neutral Roadmap	Limited progress

The next sections in this chapter provide further information on each of the CSP priorities and the Panel's findings in relation to implementation and delivery.

Departmental delivery and challenges

Narrowing the focus to 13 priorities

The Panel asked all Ministers for their views on whether narrowing the focus to a limited set of priorities worked. Most Ministers agreed that narrowing the CSP priorities was appropriate and effective, particularly given the 28-month term. Several Ministers emphasised that fewer priorities allow for clearer accountability and measurable outcomes. However, some noted caveats: the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development highlighted the tension between "Government doing less" and meeting public expectations, while the Minister for Education observed that narrowing priorities does not eliminate the need for ongoing "business as usual" work. Overall, the consensus was that a limited set of priorities provided clarity and achievable targets.

KEY FINDING 1: Ministers generally agreed that narrowing the Common Strategic Policy priorities was appropriate and beneficial, particularly given the 28-month term. A focused set of priorities was seen as improving delivery and reducing the risk of spreading resources too thin.

Delivery of the priorities

The Panel also asked each Minister about delivery of their specific CSP priorities and whether there had been any challenges. Ministers have provided the Panel with mixed accounts of delivery which the Panel summarised below against each of the relevant 13 priorities:

Priority 1 - Extend nursery care provision

→ *Extend nursery and childcare provision to children aged 2 to 3 years with additional needs.*

→ *Pilot ways to access unused spaces in our primary school nurseries.*

→ *Review the availability of spaces in St Helier - where the demand is highest - and also across the Island.*

→ *Work with the sector to improve recruitment and retention and incentivise training and development.*

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning provided an update on initiatives to expand and improve nursery and childcare provision, particularly for children aged 2 to 3 years, including those with additional needs. The Minister explained that pilot programmes at Plat Douet Primary School (Douet Dinkies) and D'Auvergne Primary School (Play and Learn, operated by the Jersey Child Care Trust) have created additional spaces for children with additional needs, utilising existing school facilities. The Minister explained that these pilots have demonstrated measurable improvements for children compared to baseline assessments, including progress in language, communication, physical skills, and relationships. Furthermore, independent research has corroborated these positive outcomes, highlighting benefits such as early identification of additional needs and extended hours provision.

The Minister in answer to WQ420/2025 confirmed that the pilots involved modest one-off costs for building works and resources (approximately £39,000 across Plat Douet pilots and £37,000 for D'Auvergne), alongside ongoing workforce costs. Staffing ratios were maintained at one adult per four children, and evaluation used tools such as Cherry Garden and Tapestry, supported by qualitative feedback from parents and professionals. For example, Jersey Child Care Trust's Play and Learn pilot delivered 15 hours per week term-time, serving up to 16 children per term, while Douet Dinkies provided 12 hours per week for 11 children over 35 weeks.[4]

In response to feedback from the financial sector regarding increased childcare capacity in St Helier, an initial review of Government properties found no suitable sites for nursery conversion, and potential new builds were discounted due to existing capital allocations for 2025–2028. The Minister explained that pilots have shown that school sites, with minor investment, can provide additional nursery provision, and opportunities for new or extended sites will continue to be considered in line with regulatory requirements. [5]

The Minister also reported on workforce recruitment, retention, and training. Phase one of a programme to improve recruitment and retention has been implemented; although outcomes were below expectations, there was an improvement in workforce survey results from 2023 to 2024.

The Minister highlighted that the Proposed Budget 2026–2029 includes an additional £9.7 million over the four-year period to support a universal offer of 15 hours per week of nursery provision for 2 to 3 year olds during term time, in addition to the £11.9 million allocated in the Budget 2025–2028. Of the £3 million growth allocation referenced in the Budget, 100% will be directed to funding childcare hours, with an agreed hourly rate of £11 for all registered early years providers and childminders. Population forecasts indicate that 813 children will be eligible to benefit from January to July 2026, and 748 from September to December 2026. Additional targeted funding includes £1.5 million for children with additional needs, £0.7 million for Speech and Language Therapy, and £0.6 million to continue successful school-based pilots.

The Panel notes the progress made in expanding nursery provision for children aged 2 to 3 years, including pilot programmes for children with additional needs and the additional funding proposed in the Budget 2026–2029. While positive outcomes have been observed, the Minister has acknowledged that challenges remain in workforce recruitment and site availability. The Panel encourages the continued monitoring and evaluation of these initiatives to ensure that the objectives of the CSP are effectively implemented and that lessons learned from the pilots are used to inform future planning and delivery.

KEY FINDING 2: Progress has been made in expanding nursery and childcare provision for children aged 2 to 3 years, including through pilot programmes supporting children with additional needs and increased funding in the proposed Budget 2026–2029, if approved. However, challenges remain in workforce recruitment and retention, and in identifying suitable sites to expand provision further.

[4] WQ-420-2025.pdf
[5] WQ-425-2025.pdf

RECOMMENDATION 1: In relation to the nursery and childcare pilot programmes, cross-departmental work should be strengthened to address workforce and site availability challenges, ensuring the sustainable delivery of the universal nursery offer for 2 to 3 year olds.

Priority 2 – The Panel examines this priority in the *Examples of successful implementation* section

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Priority 3 - Increase the provision of lifelong learning and skills development

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→ *Promote apprenticeships, a series of targeted skills development schemes, and implementing sustainable Higher Education Student Finance.*

→ *Support the ambitions of the Future Economy Programme, and provide targeted support to ensure our young Islanders are able to access higher education.*

→ *Provide adequate provisions and opportunities for lifelong learning, re-training and attractive flexible roles to ensure that age and disabilities are not barriers to work.*

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning provided the Panel with an update on progress of lifelong learning and skills development. The Minister explained that funding allocations for skills shortages have been redesigned, with the Skills Development Panel identifying priority qualifications and sectors, and opportunities to participate in training aligned with these areas are expected later this year. He also said that stakeholder consultations have informed policy on financial support for apprenticeships, and additional funding has updated electrical apprenticeship programmes, including green technology, without increasing fees for students or costs for employers.

The Minister explained that Sustainable Higher Education Student Finance measures have been introduced, including inflation-linked adjustments to income thresholds and maintenance grants, and an increase in the maximum tuition fee grant in line with university fee caps in England and Wales. The Minister expects that the Proposed Budget 2026–2029 will have a positive impact, maintaining ringfenced funding for the Skills Development Scheme, supporting increased participation in distance learning, and allowing unspent funds to be carried forward to the following year.

The Panel was particularly interested in the aim to provide adequate provisions and opportunities for lifelong learning, re-training and flexible roles to ensure that age and disabilities are not barriers to work. In this context, the Panel notes that, during 2021, the National Association for Special Educational Needs (NASEN) undertook an Independent Review of Inclusive Education and Early Years on behalf of the Government. Recommendation 13 of the NASEN review was to extend educational provision up to 25 years of age for people with special educational needs, ensuring that the transition from child to adult learning is part of a Jersey-wide plan for lifelong learning and support.

When questioned on the recommendation, the Minister highlighted a need to extend support for young people with special needs up to age 25 but acknowledged this could not be achieved within the current government term. Although the Minister did not give a reason as to why this could not be achieved, the Panel assumes it is due to timing and/or resource constraints.

The Panel welcomes the Minister's recognition of the importance of extending educational support for young people with special educational needs up to the age of 25, in line with the recommendation made by the NASEN review. While progress has been made in delivering broader lifelong learning and skills development initiatives, the Panel is concerned that this particular commitment has not yet been implemented. Given that this measure aligns directly with the Government's stated priorities for lifelong learning and inclusion under the CSP and priority 3, the Panel considers that progress in this area should have been accelerated.

KEY FINDING 3: While progress has been made in lifelong learning and skills development, the Government has not yet implemented the NASEN recommendation to extend educational provision for young people with special educational needs up to age 25. This gap limits the inclusivity and continuity of lifelong learning opportunities, despite being directly aligned with the CSP's stated priorities for skills development and inclusion.

Priority 4 - Start building a new hospital at Overdale

→ *Start building a new hospital at Overdale.*

→ *Continue to develop longer-term plans for replacing other healthcare facilities, which will include outpatient and day care services, mental health, and therapies provision.*

The Panel notes that while construction of the new hospital has not yet commenced, preparatory work is underway and key financial and procurement steps have been taken to support future delivery of the new hospital.

The Proposed Budget 2026-2029 explains that the £710 million allocated in the Budget 2025 for the New Healthcare Facilities programme at Overdale will be maintained, with no change to the previously established cashflow requirements.

Progress on the Overdale site includes the completion of initial works to clear the area. Further site preparation is scheduled for the second half of 2025, which will involve additional clearance activities, utility infrastructure works, the installation of site hoardings, and the commencement of excavation works.

During the public hearing, the Minister for Health and Social Services acknowledged that the process of securing a main delivery partner for the hospital project had experienced delays. He stated: "*It is a little bit delayed but I do not think it is going to have an overall effect on the final completion date of the hospital itself."* The Programme Director further clarified that the delay was due to the procurement process: "*We are taking a little bit longer over the decision for the main works delivery partner… we wanted to make sure that we receive the information that we needed in order to make a decision."*

Since the public hearing, the Government has announced that Bouygues UK, a subsidiary of Bouygues Construction, has been appointed as the Preferred Tenderer for the Main Works Delivery Partner role. Bouygues UK will enter into a Professional Services Agreement to refine proposals, confirm its supply chain and pricing, and prepare for the commencement of main works in early 2026. The Government has also identified a Reserved Tenderer to ensure resilience and maintain commercial leverage should final contract terms not be agreed with the Preferred Tenderer.

From 2026, the budget introduces a revised financial reporting structure. This replaces the previous approach in which financing costs were met through the Strategic Reserve.

The Panel acknowledges that while there had been a slight delay in securing the main delivery partner, initial site clearance works at Overdale have been completed and further preparatory works are scheduled for the latter half of 2025. Whilst the Panel hopes that the delay will not impact the overall completion timeline for the hospital, it recognises the importance of ensuring a robust procurement process to support the programme.

KEY FINDING 4: Preparatory works for the new hospital at Overdale are underway, with initial site clearance completed and further work scheduled for late 2025. While procurement of the main delivery partner was delayed, this is not expected to affect the overall timeline.

Priority 5 – Reduce GP fees

→ *GP fees for people on the Health Access Scheme have been reduced and Government plan to increase the subsidy for GP visits.*

The Panel notes that progress has been made towards this CSP commitment. In May 2024, the cost of GP visits was reduced by a further £10 following an increase in Government support. The reduction applies to all face-to-face appointments, surgery consultations, and home visits. Islanders now receive an overall subsidy of £50.28 towards GP appointments, funded through the Health Insurance Fund.

The Panel welcomes the delivery of this priority as it is expected to improve affordability and access to GP services for Islanders. However, the Panel note that appointment costs and other charges including for repeat prescriptions, vary considerably between providers, ranging from free appointments to £45 per visit at the time of writing. The impact will therefore vary according to which surgery an individual is enrolled with.

Priority 6 – Implement the recommendations from the Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce report

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→ *Implement the Government-facing recommendations of the VAWG Taskforce report.*

→ *Includes new commitments to law changes, improvements to data collection, and instigating new reviews of key services.*

The Proposed Budget 2026-2029 explains that the successful implementation of the Violence Against Women and Girls legislation will require additional resources for the Police and other departments, which are already experiencing increased demand. While the financial implications are not included in the current Budget, they are expected to be considered as part of the legislative proposition and incorporated into the 2027 Budget. The Panel notes the publication of the first annual progress report on the VAWG Taskforce recommendations, which indicates that 27 recommendations have been completed, 42 are in progress, and the remainder are either awaiting reporting or not yet started.

KEY FINDING 5: Implementing the Violence Against Women and Girls related legislation will require additional resources for the Police and other departments, which are already under increased demand. While financial implications will be addressed in the 2027 Budget, the first annual VAWG Taskforce progress report shows that 27 recommendations have been completed, 42 are in progress, and the remainder are pending or not yet started.

Priority 7 – The Panel examines this priority in the *Examples of successful implementation* section

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Priority 8 – The Panel examines this priority in the *Examples* of successful implementation section

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Priority 9 – Keep Government fees, duties, and charges as low as possible to help Islanders with the cost of living in 2025

→ *Keep Government fees, duties, and charges as low as possible to help Islanders with the cost of living in 2025. More detail on the specific measures provided in the Government Plan.*

→ *Reduce the current financial burden felt by many Islanders, especially those on lower incomes.*

The Panel notes that while the Government has maintained a general commitment to limiting increases in fees and charges, the Proposed Budget introduces two new fees. During the public hearing, the Minister for Treasury and Resources stated: "*All Ministers are aware of that CSP priority, that we are trying not to increase charges*." She explained that while departments may propose new or increased charges, Treasury is involved in reviewing these proposals, particularly where increases exceed the standard 2.5% threshold. The Minister added: "*If a Minister was proposing a new charge, then yes, we would be involved in that discussion… they should discuss this with me first.*"

The two new charges proposed are under the Minister for Health and Social Services: a fee for inappropriate use of the Emergency Department and a non-attendance fee for repeated missed outpatient appointments.

During the public hearing, the Minister for Health and Social Services stated that "*neither of them are intending to be revenue raisers… This is about driving behavioural change*." He explained that missed appointments significantly impact service efficiency and contribute to extended waiting lists, adding: *"I do not have any problem at all in suggesting that if people do that, on the second occasion… they should be charged."*

Regarding the Emergency Department fee, the Minister expressed some reservations: "*The A. and E. charges I am a little bit less comfortable about because what we will not do is introduce them if we think there is going to be any harm to anybody.*" He emphasised that the intention is to encourage patients to seek care from the most appropriate provider, such as a GP or pharmacist, rather than using emergency services for routine care.

The Panel acknowledges that these charges are intended to promote behavioural change and reduce inefficiencies, rather than generate income, and that exemptions and safeguards have been proposed. However, the introduction of new fees during a period of ongoing cost of living pressures may be viewed as inconsistent with the stated CSP priority.

In addition to these proposed fees, the Panel notes that the Budget includes measures aimed at supporting Islanders with the cost of living through adjustments to the tax system. Specifically, the Government proposes to uprate the main tax allowances by 2.6% in 2026 to £21,250, providing an estimated £9 million in extra tax relief for 90% of taxpayers. The Budget also introduces increased duties on tobacco and new duties on vaping products, which the Government states are intended to discourage behaviours that risk public health and support a healthier community over the long term.

KEY FINDING 6: While the Government has generally sought to limit increases in fees and charges, the Proposed Budget introduces two new Health and Social Services fees aimed at encouraging behavioural change and improving service efficiency. The introduction of new charges during a period of ongoing cost of living pressures may be perceived as inconsistent with the CSP priority to minimise additional costs for Islanders.

Priority 10 – Reduce red tape, enhance opportunities for business and strengthen Jersey's international reputation

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→ *Work with businesses to tackle private sector labour shortages where they are made worse by government policies or processes.*

→ *Ensure a secure digital ecosystem with a new Cyber Security Law and strategy to attract investment and facilitate innovation.*

→ *Provide incentives for businesses to be based here, following changes to the international tax regime.*

→ *Ensure that government interactions are simple and efficient for new and existing businesses, entrepreneurs, social enterprises and the third sector.*

The Panel notes that the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development identified two priorities directly linked to his remit: the transition to a living wage and reducing red tape to enhance business opportunities. He confirmed that work on these priorities has continued, stating: *"Reducing red tape has continued and pieces of legislation which are important to that, such as the Draft Liquor Licensing Law, have managed to carry on as well."*

The Minister also highlighted progress on legislative changes aimed at simplifying regulation (red tape) which include the Draft Liquor Licensing Law and the Public Entertainments Law. The Minister said that these were ongoing projects but there had been no delays to them. In terms of delivered projects, the Minister explained: *"We have done things such as changing the Tourism Order. We have done that once; we are going to do that again. The fact that we did it once and took away some of the regulations there was very good. We have now identified further regulations that we would like to remove or reduce and so we have put in for law drafting time in that area as well. We are planning to rescind the Shops Law. That will be just an entire rescindment of the law; that is about working hours, that is carrying on. Amendments to the Competition Law are to be debated shortly in the States, so they have carried on."*

The Panel also heard that work on cybersecurity, another element of this CSP priority, is ongoing but has faced challenges due to law drafting constraints. The Minister stated: *"Cybersecurity is mentioned in the CSP… That would be the one that I would say would be most at risk."* Nevertheless, despite these constraints, the Panel notes that the Minister has recently lodged the Draft Cyber Security (Jersey) Law 201- (P.107/2025) which is scheduled for debate in January 2026.

In relation to improving Government interactions with businesses, the Minister acknowledged progress through initiatives such as the Better Business Support Package, which included a streamlined digital interface delivered by Jersey Business: *"It has been really successful; 95% of people are using that system really well and happily."*

The Panel notes that while progress has been made in reducing regulatory burdens and improving access to business support, challenges remain in areas such as cybersecurity and broader digital transformation within Government, which will require continued focus to fully deliver on this CSP priority.

KEY FINDING 7: While progress has been made in reducing regulatory burdens and improving access to business support, challenges remain in areas such as cybersecurity and broader digital transformation, which will require continued focus to fully deliver on CSP priorities.

Priority 11 – Deliver a plan to revitalise Town

→ *Ensure Islanders benefit from the delivery of new homes.*

→ *Delivery of improvements to the Central Market and the Fish Market.*

→ *Enhancements to public spaces that support cycling and walking.*

→ *A new plan for public parking.*

→ *Protect and enhance St Helier's unique character.*

The Panel notes that revitalising St Helier aims to create a vibrant, accessible, and sustainable town centre that meets the Island's future development needs. The plan seeks to deliver improvements to public spaces, enhance cycling and walking infrastructure, refresh the Central and Fish Markets, and provide a clear approach to public parking, while protecting St Helier's unique character.

The Minister for Infrastructure emphasised the link between town improvements and housing objectives, stating: *"If we want to provide affordable homes, particularly in St. Helier where the Island Plan really targets increased residence, then we have to make St. Helier a more pleasant place to live and work and visit."* He highlighted successful public realm projects such as Halkett Street and the New Street area, noting: *"We have seen great success in the New Cut, New Street area where we have had at least five applications for additional al fresco licences."*

The Minister confirmed that enhancements to cycling and walking infrastructure have progressed, with *"70 new bike parking spaces introduced in St. Helier in the last nine months"* and plans for safer routes to school, including proposals to create cycle corridors by restricting through-traffic on certain roads. Improvements to the Central Market and Fish Market have focused on maintenance and lease renewals rather than full redevelopment: *"I do not think we need to spend £12 million on redeveloping the markets. I think we have got to refresh the markets; the floor needs to be fixed."* Funding has been allocated for these works in 2026.

The Panel also heard that car parking policy has been adapted to support town revitalisation, with changes to evening parking hours at Charles Street following feedback from hospitality businesses: *"We listened to the feedback and we amended that to 8.00 p.m.… We are seeing that there is capacity there, and therefore, the hospitality industry in particular in the evenings, and hopefully retail, have benefited."*

The Minister for the Environment described his role as primarily focused on planning guidance rather than detailed design, noting: *"We can set some general guidance about what we would like to see, but when it comes to the very specifics it is up to the applicant."* He confirmed that environmental considerations such as walking, cycling, and green spaces are discussed at a high level, but acknowledged: *"I am not conscious that there is anything that is sustainability, revitalisation."* Accessibility and safety are considered in new public realm schemes, with road safety audits applied to all users, though there is no specific child-focused design plan. The Minister stressed that pedestrianisation is key to improving safety: *"The more pedestrianisation we can get… the more we can link up areas where people can feel much safer from not having to share roads with vehicles."*

The Panel notes that governance for town revitalisation sits with the Regeneration Steering Group, which the Minister for the Environment does not attend. He also highlighted challenges in achieving joined-up planning for areas such as the harbour and waterfront: *"If we could go back and start again with a lot more collaboration between Ports and S.o.J.D.C. and Government… we might have had more joined-up thinking."*

The Panel notes that while progress has been made in delivering public realm improvements, enhancing cycling and walking infrastructure, and refreshing market facilities, there is no single, integrated plan for revitalising town. Collaboration between departments and stakeholders is evident; however, the Panel considers that environmental and energy input should be formally represented within the Regeneration Steering Group to ensure sustainability is embedded in decision-making. It also appears that sustainability considerations are not consistently embedded in project design. The Panel considers that a clear, coordinated strategy with defined environmental and accessibility standards will be essential to fully deliver on this CSP priority.

KEY FINDING 8: While progress has been made in public realm improvements, and cycling and walking infrastructure, there is no single, integrated plan for St Helier's revitalisation. Governance and collaboration between departments exists but could be strengthened, particularly with sustainability and accessibility considerations, which are not consistently embedded in project design.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The Council of Ministers should ensure that an integrated revitalisation plan for St Helier is mapped out as part of end of term planning, with clear governance arrangements, including cross-departmental representation on the Regeneration Steering Group. The plan should embed environmental and accessibility standards in all projects and include measurable milestones to track progress.

Priority 12 – Reform the planning service to enable sustainable development in Jersey

- → *Reform the planning service to enable sustainable development in Jersey and the frictionless use of existing laws and policies contained within the Bridging Island Plan.*
- → *Develop and introduce a fast-track service process for minor applications and improving customer service.*

→ *Deliver improved planning guidance and explore the relaxation of planning control to enable Islanders to undertake more work without the need for planning permission.*

In terms of modernising the planning service the Minister for the Environment confirmed that planning reform has been delivered through internal reprioritisation rather than additional funding: *"Reforming the planning service was a change in emphasis inside the department. We did not engage any new people to do that… We just said: 'Right, we are going to all knuckle down, we are going to work really hard, try to clear the backlog. We are going to improve our service by offering a proper pre-application advice service.'"*

The Minister also highlighted efforts to streamline minor applications: "*The staff are going to work really hard to clear the number of applications in-house. We are going to all talk to each other and see if we cannot get some consistency and coherency going."* This work underpins the development of a fast-track service for minor applications, reducing delays and improving customer experience.

Work is also underway to expand permitted development rights: *"We are doing some work on planning reform and we are out to consultation at the moment for the first stage of changes to the permitted development, the G.D.O. (General Development Order) and I expect to make some changes this side of Christmas on some very straightforward and easy stuff."*

The Panel notes that progress on Priority 12 has been made through internal reprioritisation rather than additional funding. Improvements such as clearing backlogs, introducing structured pre-application advice, and consulting on changes to permitted development are important preparatory steps in delivering planning reforms. However, while these steps lay the groundwork for faster processes and greater flexibility, the Minister acknowledged that broader ambitions for sustainable development remain dependent on economic conditions and future policy decisions. The Minister confirmed that the first stage of consultation on amendments to the General Development Order has been completed, but these changes have not yet been finalised or presented to the States for approval.

KEY FINDING 9: Progress on modernising the planning service has been achieved through internal reprioritisation rather than additional funding. Measures such as clearing backlogs, introducing structured pre-application advice, and consulting on amendments to permitted development rights are important preparatory steps in reforming the planning service.

Priority 13 – Meet the Island's commitments to address the climate emergency through the implementation of the Carbon Neutral Roadmap

→ *Commitment to an emissions reduction pathway in line with the Paris Agreement and net-zero by 2050.*

→ *Recognise that delivery of the actions in the Carbon Neutral Roadmap must remain a priority for Government.*

The Panel notes that this priority was added to the CSP following an amendment by the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel and was not included in the original set of priorities proposed by the Council of Ministers. This context is relevant when considering the extent to which environmental objectives have been delivered.

While the Roadmap sets out a clear emissions reduction pathway aligned with the Paris Agreement and net-zero by 2050, the Panel is concerned by the absence of a defined financial strategy to support carbon reduction initiatives. During the public hearing, the Minister for the Environment told the Panel: *"The financial strategy that we will need to fund carbon is still to be done, and that is a piece of work we have not got round to yet, but we will need to do that soon."*

The Panel acknowledges that the Climate Emergency Fund (CEF) provides some funding for projects; however, the long-term financing strategy remains outstanding. The Proposed Budget states that the Net Zero Financing Strategy (NZFS) will set out how the Government expects to raise the money needed to achieve Jersey's net-zero transition. The first phase of this strategy will address the projected expenditure profile for the second Carbon Neutral Roadmap (CNR) delivery period from 2027–2030.

The Panel also notes delays to key environmental projects, such as the Island's water strategy, which have been attributed to budget constraints and the consultancy freeze. The Minister acknowledged that this was partly due to a misunderstanding of the CSP framework, stating*: "I think I was a little bit naive at the time and maybe needed a greater understanding of what the CSP priorities meant… I presumed I would be carrying on with it as business as usual."*

These comments suggest that wider environmental policy, separate from climate change and net-zero commitments, was not fully reflected in the CSP. The priority was included as a result of a Scrutiny amendment, and the Panel understands that net zero was included largely because it had a clear roadmap and funding attached to it, whereas broader environmental priorities did not. This indicates a wider challenge in aligning departmental priorities with the CSP and ensuring that environmental objectives are sufficiently defined and resourced. The Panel therefore considers that the next iteration of the CSP should set out clearer environmental priorities and embed robust financial planning to ensure these commitments are realistically funded and delivered.

KEY FINDING 10: The consultancy freeze has led to delays in progressing some business-as-usual work, including the development of a water strategy.

RECOMMENDATION 3: In terms of monitoring and evaluation, the Council of Ministers should introduce outcome-based performance metrics for all CSP priorities, with annual public reporting moving forward. An update on the current CSP priorities delivery should be published in Q1 2026, prior to the next election.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The Council of Ministers should, before the end of Q1 2026, review the impact of the consultancy freeze on departmental capacity, identifying all critical business-as-usual work that has been delayed. The aim being to equip the incoming government post-election with a clear understanding of outstanding priorities, enabling it to take an informed view and swift establishment of the new CSP priorities.

Examples of successful implementation

Priority 2 - Provide a nutritious school meal for every child in all States primary schools

→ *Provide a nutritious school meal for every child in all States primary schools by December 2024, building on the pilot programme already under way in ten schools across the Island.*

The Panel notes that this CSP commitment has been delivered since December 2024. Since that date, all States primary schools have been offering a hot lunch to pupils. In a letter to the Panel, the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning highlighted that Budget 2025–2028 provided additional recurring revenue expenditure of £1.17 million per year, totalling £4.68 million over the budget period, which remains in base budgets alongside previous funding commitments. This ensures an ongoing annual budget of £2.74 million to support the provision of nutritious meals across all States primary schools.

The Panel welcomes the delivery of this priority and notes the continued funding in place to sustain nutritious school meals across all States primary schools. The Panel considers that maintaining this provision supports the Government's broader objectives for child health and wellbeing and encourages ongoing monitoring to ensure that the quality and accessibility of meals continue to meet children's needs.

Priority 7 – Transition to a living wage

→ *Commit to implementing the States Assembly decision to bring the minimum wage to two-thirds of the median wage by the end of this term of office.*

→ *Provide a range of support to employers and employees, as needed, during this transition.*

In February 2025, the Government began the transition towards implementing a living wage. The transition is being supported by measures in the Proposed Budget, which continues the Better Business Support package, providing a further £10 million in 2026 to assist employers during the implementation period. This funding aims to mitigate the impact on businesses while ensuring that workers benefit from fairer pay.

The move towards a living wage reflects the Government's broader objectives of promoting sustainable well-being and economic security for Islanders. It is expected to improve quality of life for lower-income households and contribute to reducing inequality.

The Panel notes that this CSP priority has been delivered, with the transition process underway and financial support allocated to assist businesses.

Priority 8 – Provide more affordable homes for Islanders and more confidence for the rented sector

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→ *Implement the new Rented Dwellings Licensing Scheme.*

→ *Introduce a new Residential Tenancy Law.*

→ *Focus the Government's development and planning resources on encouraging the building of more affordable homes for Islanders to buy or rent.*

→ *Enable the design of homes for our ageing population to allow them to remain living independently.*

In relation to this priority, the Panel notes that several measures have been delivered, including the introduction of the Rented Dwellings Licensing Scheme and the Residential Tenancy (Jersey) Amendment Law. The Rented Dwellings Licensing Scheme is intended to ensure that rental properties are maintained to a decent and safe standard, while the Residential Tenancy (Jersey) Amendment Law aims to strengthen Jersey's legal framework for residential tenancies.

With regard to the commitment to increase the supply of affordable homes, the Panel notes that progress has been made following the approval of the Bridging Island Plan, which identified specific sites under Policy H5 – Provision of Affordable Homes. Several planning applications have since been approved, demonstrating delivery against this aspect of the CSP.

Notably, the Planning Committee approved a scheme for 37 affordable homes in St Ouen, prioritised for Islanders over 55 wishing to downsize. The development includes a mix of three-bedroom homes, cottages, and apartments, with provision for both social rental and assisted purchase.

Further approvals include:

- 128 homes in St Peter's Village, and 16 homes off La Grande Route de St Jean, totalling 144 affordable units. These include a range of one- to four-bedroom properties, with 45% allocated for social rental and 55% for discounted purchase.

- 16 affordable homes in Trinity, comprising a mix of two-, three-, and four-bedroom houses, also split between social rental and assisted purchase.

These developments are expected to contribute to housing supply and support broader objectives such as enabling downsizing and improving access to affordable housing for Islanders. The Panel recognises that while challenges remain in addressing Jersey's housing needs, the recent approvals for affordable housing developments demonstrate meaningful progress towards delivering on the Government's commitment under CSP Priority 8.

KEY FINDING 11: Progress has been made in delivering a number of CSP priorities across education, health, economic, and housing areas. This includes the provision of nutritious school meals in all States primary schools, reductions in GP fees for Health Access Scheme users, the commencement of the transition towards a living wage with associated employer support, and the introduction of measures to increase affordable housing and strengthen tenancy protections.

7. Impact of the Proposed Budget 2026-2029

Alignment with CSP Priorities

Although the review was not focused on the Proposed Budget, the Panel has examined the proposals in order to assess how proposed funding will support the delivery of the thirteen CSP priorities.

The Panel notes that the Proposed Budget maintains the increased expenditure introduced in the Budget 2025 to support the delivery of the CSP, rising from £5.8 million in 2025 to £8.3 million in 2026. The Panel also understands that, where possible, existing allocations have been reprioritised to deliver CSP objectives, with additional funding provided to accelerate priority projects, implement existing States decisions, mitigate principal risks, and strengthen key services, including health.

Budgetary support and constraints

When the Panel asked Ministers about funding proposals, there were mixed views on the adequacy of budget support.

The Minister for Health and Social Services

The Minister for Health and Social Services commented on a lack of investment in areas such as public realm and sports facilities: *"I would really like to have seen some raw commitment right at this stage to start investing in public realm and sports facilities more immediately. That is slightly disappointing."* Although he welcomed the funding allocated to health: *". I have to say and I do not mind saying publicly I am grateful to other Ministers for eventually settling into accepting that they were not going to have the extra money that they wanted because a lot of the money was going to Health."*

The Minister for the Environment

The Minister for the Environment confirmed that the delivery of the CSP priorities within his portfolio has largely relied on existing departmental resources rather than additional funding. He stated: *"I think the budget was not particularly affected by the C.S.P.… We obviously did a lot of work on affordable housing… We did not have a specific fund for either of those. When it came to energy strategy, yes, we had some money from the C.E.F. (Climate Emergency Fund) for wind, but the energy strategy… will be in-house and business as usual. I do not envisage at this point in time asking for additional money."*

The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development

The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development explained that the transition towards a living wage is being supported through the Better Business Support Package, which continues into 2026: *"Transition to living wage is still going on. The money for that in terms of the £10 million a year is still there… The Better Business Support Package has been a really successful scheme."*

He highlighted that while the scheme has been effective overall, uptake for skills funding was lower than expected, prompting adjustments: "*The one area which… has not performed to the extent that perhaps we would have liked is the money for skills. We have £1.5 million in the skills pot… Because there was a lack of demand in the skills side we were able to move £500,000 of that £1.5 million into the productivity side."*

The Minister also noted that no growth bids were submitted for his department, despite areas where additional funding could have supported economic development: *"From my perspective, we have not asked for any growth… The main area where I could have asked for money… would be in marketing/tourism. The budget for Visit Jersey has remained at approximately £5 million for the last 10 years… A couple more million pounds would have helped Visit Jersey with the reach that it needs."*

He expressed concern that the Proposed Budget prioritises health and education at the expense of economic investment, warning of long-term risks: *"If we just continue to put money into Health and Education, and only Health and Education, then the Island as a whole will not be able to afford that in a few years' time. To be able to put more money into Health and Education you need a larger economy. It is that simple."*

The Minister for Infrastructure

The Minister for Infrastructure emphasised the importance of capital investment for major projects and the need for certainty beyond annual budget cycles: *"The Investing in Jersey programme is essential for us to give surety for some of these projects which are going to outsee Governments… Think of the coastal protection; that is a significant project and it is not a 'nice to have.' If you look at the maps and our risk register, flooding is one of our highest risks on the Island."*

He confirmed that the Proposed Budget includes funding for key infrastructure priorities such as sewage networks and public realm improvements, which support CSP objectives on housing and revitalising town: *"In terms of St. Helier, we are investing in public realm initiatives which fit in with both the retail and the visitor strategies; we see that as vital work."*

In relation to the Fort Regent redevelopment, the Minister explained that the Proposed Budget provides initial funding to make the building safe and weather-tight, with full design and costings to follow: *"What we have done with this Budget is we have put in a sum of money, £43 million I think it is, to enable us to do works next year and in 2027, by which time we will have a full design and we will be able to come up with detailed pricing."*

He also noted that while health and education dominate growth bids, infrastructure investment remains critical for the Island's resilience and economic sustainability: *"We can talk about health, we can talk about education, but if you cannot have sewers working, then neither of those are going to work either."*

The Minister for Social Security

The Minister for Social Security highlighted that her department's work contributes directly to CSP priorities on affordability, cost of living, and demographic preparedness. She explained: *"In relation to the budget, we have obviously got the reduction of G.P. fees, which is funded through the Health Insurance Fund… Again, the transition to the living wage, we have the money from the Better Business Support Package… What we are doing in this budget this year in relation to the childcare provision, which is coming from that reduction in the States grants, so that the work that we have done around the reduction in the States grant to free up money so that they are available for other C.S.P. priorities is, I think, a really important piece of work that I have been able to support other Ministers with."*

She confirmed that the Proposed Budget includes measures to extend Pension Plus eligibility, improving access to health benefits for older Islanders: *"Where I am focusing is the additional money to extend Pension Plus to pensioners… This is about smoothing that cut-off out. What that will also* *do is enable those pensioners that become eligible for Pension Plus to also access the health access scheme which will lead to cheaper G.P. fees for them."*

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning confirmed that delivering the CSP priorities under his remit (early years provision, school meals, and lifelong learning) were dependent on approval of the Proposed Budget: *"As long as the Government Plan is agreed and the money comes forward, the three priorities that I have… extending nursery and childcare provision, the money is budgeted for and that is the right amount of money… The school meals are in place and the money is for there. There is an increase in the provision."*

KEY FINDING 12: While Ministers broadly supported the allocation of funding in the Budget 2026 - 2029 within their areas, there remain concerns regarding the overall balance of investment across government priorities with health and education dominating the growth bids.

Long-term sustainability

The Panel explored the Proposed Budget and the Island's long-term financial sustainability. In particular, it notes the decision to reduce the States grant to the Social Security Fund.

Bridging Budget

The Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources described the 2026 Budget as a "bridging budget", intended to maintain financial stability ahead of the next Government. He acknowledged that decisions about long-term funding would need to be revisited in future years: "*This is clearly, to my mind, a bridging Budget. It starts to address some of the long-term issues that you have been questioning the Minister about, but it is not sustainable. You could just look at the numbers. You cannot use your reserve for your everyday spending. It was clear from F.P.P. (Fiscal Policy Panel), it is clear to Ministers, it is clear to the public that it is only going to bridge to the next government, who will have to think hard and consult with the public about what is going to happen into the future."*

The Minister for Treasury and Resources also acknowledged structural challenges in linking financial planning to CSP delivery and indicated a preference for returning to multi-year budgeting: *"I think we would like to go back to a multi-year Budget cycle, because the yearly cycle is very time-consuming for everybody… If we can come back to multi-year, that would help us and it would give departments better flexibility to use their money more wisely within the 3-year period."*

KEY FINDING 13: The Proposed Budget 2026–2029 has been presented as a "bridging budget," intended to maintain financial stability until the next Government, at which point decisions will need to be made regarding longer-term funding.

States grant to the Social Security Fund

The Proposed Budget seeks approval to reduce the States Grant to the Social Security Fund. This includes a one-off additional adjustment of £50 million in 2025 to enable the Government to maintain essential public services, followed by a rebase of the grant to £50 million in 2026, with a further one-off reduction of £17.6 million to fund capital projects. The previously agreed £10 million reduction to support the transition to a Living Wage remains in place. From 2027 to 2029, the grant will be uprated in line with Average Earnings.

The Government's justification for these changes is that the Social Security (Reserve) Fund, valued at around £2.5 billion, continues to generate substantial investment income (£273 million in 2024) and has achieved strong average returns (9.3% over five years; 7.3% over ten). These returns, combined with current contribution rates, are expected to sustain pension payments and allow the Fund to continue growing, even with a temporary reduction in States funding.

The Minister for Social Security will commission an independent actuarial review of the scheme's funding framework, established in the late 1990s. This will include international comparisons and an assessment of prudent reserve levels, alongside options for the future role of States contributions. Findings are due to be presented to the next Government in early 2027.

While these reviews are underway, the Council of Ministers considers there to be scope to temporarily reduce grant funding to ease current budgetary pressures and avoid additional taxation. The underlying funding formula of the scheme will remain in place, reverting automatically from 2030 unless further Assembly decisions are made.

The Panel questioned Ministers on this proposal and asked for their thoughts on long-term financial sustainability. The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning supported the decision as it enabled investment in childcare: *"If it was said to me: 'Okay, so how are you going to fund this?' One way is to reduce, not to remove, but reduce the amount of money going into an incredibly healthy fund this year, which will have a direct impact for families on this Island… That is a sensible use of that money longer term."*

The Panel asked the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development whether reducing the grant as an ongoing mechanism is sustainable. The Minister said: *"It is certainly in the short term. I think obviously the longer that goes on the less sustainable it becomes. What I would say is something I have been really clear about for many years now, which is I think there is a place for the Social Security Fund to be used investing in capital projects in Jersey, capital projects where the Social Security Fund can get a return."* The Minister for Infrastructure had similar views and said: "*My preference would be that it was used on capital funding rather than revenue projects, but we have to get on and do some of the things that we have not done."*

The Minister for Social Security said that one of the biggest risks to the Social Security Fund is not having a working age population on the island paying into the fund: *"…. this is one of the things that we need to balance. ….intergenerational fairness as well, and ensuring that we are thinking about the future generations in addition to current pensioners. I cannot reiterate enough, current pensioners have nothing to fear from the proposals in this budget. But what we do need to do is ensure that we are planning in the best way possible for future generations."*

The Panel welcomes the Minister for Social Security's acknowledgement of the need to consider intergenerational fairness and long-term planning for the Social Security Fund. While the Minister emphasised that current pensioners are protected and that further actuarial reviews will inform future decisions, the Panel remains concerned about what will happen after the four-year period covered by the Proposed Budget. The reduction of the States Grant provides short-term flexibility but does not resolve the question of how essential initiatives such as free nursery provision, childcare support, and rising health costs will be sustainably financed in the longer term. The Panel also notes the risks highlighted during discussions that, without a growing working-age population and clear funding strategy, pressure on the Social Security and Health Insurance Funds will increase over time.

The Minister for Treasury and Resources stressed that it would be for future governments to address long-term funding sustainability: *"We are anticipating… the forecast is that we will have more income over that period. It is not a decision that will be taken in 4 years' time. I would expect the next government in 2027 to be looking at this very closely and how we then fund will be a combination of trying to limit spend, limit the size of the public service and look to increasing income."*

The Panel remains concerned about the balance between short-term affordability and long-term fiscal resilience. While the current Budget provides stability for the remainder of the Government term, it does not set out a clear path for funding ongoing commitments in subsequent years which will be the responsibility of the next Government. The next Government will need to consider how to restore contributions to the Social Security Fund and ensure that essential services and policy priorities remain financially sustainable.

KEY FINDING 14: Ministers generally supported short-term reduction of the grant to the Social Security Fund but raised concerns about long-term sustainability. Some advocated for using the Fund for capital investment with returns, rather than revenue spending. There is no shared strategy for future use or replenishment of the Fund.

RECOMMENDATION 5: The Council of Ministers should develop a long-term sustainability plan for the Social Security Fund, including modelling of demographic pressures and future service needs.

RECOMMENDATION 6: For future proposals to reduce the States Grant to the Social Security Fund, the Minister for Social Security should establish criteria, by Q3 2026 for using the reduction in funds for capital investment where a return can be generated, with appropriate safeguards against revenue use.

RECOMMENDATION 7: The Council of Ministers should publish annual reports on the impact of reduced grants to the Social Security Fund on both the solvency of the Fund versus the gains in CSP deliverables and outcomes.

8. Cross-Cutting Issues

A key focus for the review was the extent to which the Government is addressing cross-cutting issues that span multiple ministerial portfolios. The cross-cutting matters explored by the Panel are:

- → The ageing population and demographic change
- → Digital infrastructure
- → Environmental priorities
- → Diversity, Inclusion and Equity (DEI)
- → Workforce training and skills

Cross-cutting matters and silo working

The evidence illustrated below suggests that these important cross-cutting matters are not always being managed as effectively as they could be, due to a lack of strategic leadership and coordination across departments. The Panel also observed that other areas, beyond the formal list, demonstrate similar challenges. For example: early years provision and town revitalisation.

Ageing Population and demographic change

The Panel notes that the Impacts of an Ageing Population report (2021) highlighted significant demographic shifts in Jersey over the past century. The proportion of islanders aged 65 and over has risen from 8% in 1891 to 12% in 1951 and 17% by 2021. The report also projected that the ageing of Jersey's population is likely to accelerate, driven by fertility rates falling below the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman, alongside rising life expectancy.

Jersey faces a growing old-age dependency challenge. Between 2010 and 2019, the old-age dependency ratio increased from 21% to nearly 26%, and it is expected to exceed 40% by 2050. Population ageing is also expected to reduce the size of the labour force, as analysis indicates that older islanders work fewer hours, earn lower salaries, and participate less in the workforce.

The CSP recognises these challenges, stating that the Government will prepare for projected demographic changes, including an ageing population, declining birth rates, and rising levels of disability, to ensure the sustainability of health services and protect economic prosperity. While all Ministers acknowledged the significance of demographic change and the ageing population, few presented clear strategies to address its long-term implications.

The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development identified demographic change as a critical economic risk for Jersey, stating: *"Future economic growth of Jersey not meeting needs of Government revenue or Islander living standards, so effectively the ageing population and the impact of the ageing population on Jersey's economic performance. That has become the number one".*

The Minister for Health and Social Services flagged ageing population as a major driver of future health costs: *"…I think that the whole programme of works, health prevention, if we can use that £4 million a year to good effect we are going to take away some of the excesses of things that go wrong in older age. So I think the direction of travel everywhere within the health service is fully cognisant of the fact that we have a major problem coming forward with an ageing population…* He also said: "*If we do not address some of the problems with Health and do more preventative work and get* *digitally connected and become more efficient, the health service will eat the whole of our budget within 20 years."*

The Panel notes that while Ministers recognise the ageing population as a significant challenge, there is currently no clear, integrated funding strategy to address its long-term implications. The Minister for Treasury and Resources acknowledged that setting aside a dedicated pot of money for ageing population needs would be difficult, emphasising instead the importance of having a strategy: *"I think what is more important is the strategy and what it is going to be and what each policy is, what each policy area is going to be."*

During the public hearings with Ministers there was also no mention of a dedicated governance framework or lead department coordinating ageing population policy. Instead, responsibilities appear to be spread across multiple departments, with limited clarity on leadership or accountability.

The Panel questioned the Chief Minister on the overall co-ordination of an ageing population policy. The Chief Minister acknowledged that ageing population is a strategic priority, noting future governments may need greater ministerial focus on this area: "*We perhaps need to put more Ministerial focus on infrastructure and ageing population."* He also highlighted significant economic challenges arising from demographic change, including a shrinking workforce, falling birth rate, and reduced tax revenues.

The Panel was informed by the Chief Minister that current workstreams are primarily linked to the Investing in Jersey strategy, healthcare spending, and the Ageing Well Roadmap. The Panel is concerned that these focus on specific aspects rather than a fully integrated approach.

While cross-government coordination exists through the Housing and Work Advisory Group (H.A.W.A.G.-plus), the Chief Minister admitted that workstreams are often considered in isolation, and greater synergy is needed. *"We tend to look at them in isolation at the moment. I think there is a blending of that."*

The Panel considers that a coordinated, cross-government approach is essential to meet these demographic challenges.

Age-Friendly Infrastructure Framework

The Panel notes that P.50/2025 (as amended) calls on the Chief Minister, working with the Ministers for Environment and Infrastructure, to develop and introduce an Age-Friendly Infrastructure Framework by 31 July 2026. This Framework is to be aligned with the existing Delivering Investment into the Public Realm programme and must include inclusive design standards, improvements to public transport, support for "liveable neighbourhoods" with essential services within a 10-minute travel radius, and accessible public toilets and shaded seating in key areas. The proposition also mandates that political oversight for the Framework be assigned to a single Minister or Assistant Minister to ensure coordination and continuity across departments.

The Minister for the Environment acknowledged involvement in early discussions on the Age-Friendly Infrastructure Framework but noted that progress has been limited: *"I think the decision was we were going to move forward and it was going to go back to the Council of Ministers. I cannot recollect it going back, and inasmuch as I think the decision is yet to be decided as to whether it is going to be myself or the Minister for Infrastructure who will take this work forward."*

He suggested that responsibility for delivery would likely sit with the Minister for Infrastructure because most of the proposed changes are physical in nature: *"It would appear to me that a lot of* *the changes we spoke about during that proposition are infrastructure changes to do with levels and step-frees and bus stops and access and such."*

The Minister confirmed that there is currently no specific delivery plan for the framework, although this work would likely commence in earnest during the purdah period. The Chief Officer explained that some considerations are embedded within existing planning and building standards: *"Certainly with the strategy coming, scheduled next year, there is a lot of just our business as usual within the Environment portfolio which contribute to dealing with an ageing population… building and design standards, rented dwellings safety, slips, trips and falls."*

KEY FINDING 15: While some age-friendly measures are being addressed through routine regulatory processes, there is no clear governance structure or coordinated plan to ensure delivery. The absence of a defined lead Minister and delivery plan raises concerns about meeting the July 2026 deadline for the Age-Friendly Infrastructure Framework.

RECOMMENDATION 8: The Council of Ministers should, in recognition of Jersey's ageing population, present a report by the end of Q1 2026 detailing actions taken to how demographic changes will affect policies across the board in areas such as pensions, workforce, care, education, housing and other relevant areas. The report should include an assessment of progress to date, identify gaps, and set out clear recommendations to equip the incoming government post-election with a coherent framework for managing the long-term social and economic impacts of demographic change

RECOMMENDATION 9: By February 2026, the Council of Ministers should publish a progress update on delivering the Age-Friendly Infrastructure Framework by July 2026, including detail on how consistent standards across Government, parishes, and third parties will be incorporated to the Framework.

Digital Infrastructure

Significant investment is planned on Jersey's digital infrastructure over the budget period. In 2026, total capital expenditure is projected at £308 million, of which £25.2 million is allocated to Information Technology and Digital Services. Across the full budget period (2026–2029), total investment in IT is expected to reach £41 million.

A key component of this investment is the IT Infrastructure Improvement Programme, with £6 million allocated in 2026 to upgrade core Government digital systems. This funding will support the replacement of essential equipment and systems, aiming to ensure that public services are underpinned by reliable and secure technology.

The Digital Health Initiative represents another major strand of investment, with £8 million per year dedicated to transforming healthcare delivery through technology.

In addition, the Digital Services Department is projected to receive £35 million per annum over the plan period to maintain and develop digital platforms that support Government operations and service delivery.

The Panel notes that digital infrastructure will be a key enabler for delivering CSP priorities such as reducing red tape and improving public service delivery. The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development said that he was concerned about the Government's digital expenditure and that millions of pounds have been wasted over the years: "*I do not think there have been many discussions. I mean, I always worry about Government's digital expenditure because - and I think most of the panel would agree with me on this - we have seen many millions of pounds wasted over the years on Government's digital initiatives. So at the moment, is it being spent appropriately? I genuinely do not know*." He also said that, to his knowledge, there had been no cross-ministerial discussion on digital priorities.

He also expressed concerns about Government's ability to deliver effective digital transformation, despite significant investment over many years. He stated that *"Government still has a very, very long way to go before it is properly digitally enabled. We have spent tens of millions of pounds not getting it right so far."* He highlighted that Islanders' expectations are shaped by private sector standards, such as seamless online services and automation, and warned that Government is failing to keep pace: *"The technology world is setting a standard which Government struggles to keep up with."*

The Minister also emphasised the potential role of artificial intelligence in improving efficiency, noting: *"Government should be using [artificial intelligence] for a lot of its admin tasks, for a lot of its research tasks. Government should be using these tools but I do not believe it is at the moment."*

When questioned by the Panel, the Chief Minister emphasised that improving digital capability is "*absolutely essential*" for Jersey's future, noting that most activities are now digitally based. He outlined a two-pronged approach: internal transformation through AI and automation to improve public sector productivity, and external support for businesses via collaboration with Digital Jersey. He confirmed that the proposed budget includes investment in core digital infrastructure and innovation projects, and announced plans for a Digital Skills Academy initiative within Government to reduce reliance on external contractors. The Chief Minister also stressed the need for lifelong learning and digital upskilling as part of the broader economic strategy.

The evidence suggests that there is a disconnect between strategic ambition and operational delivery of digital transformation. The Chief Minister's commitment to AI adoption and skills development is positive, but the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development's remarks point to weaknesses in governance, coordination, and the effectiveness of past investment. The Panel considers that without clear accountability, joined up working and measurable outcomes, digital transformation risks continuing as a costly but underperforming area of Government activity.

KEY FINDING 16: Significant investment is planned in digital infrastructure over the 2026–2029 budget period, including upgrades to core systems, digital health initiatives, and the development of government digital platforms. The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development raised concerns over the effectiveness of past expenditure, which suggests that digital transformation may continue to be a high-cost but underperforming area without clearer oversight, measurable outcomes, and cross-government alignment.

Environmental priorities

Despite the inclusion of the Carbon Neutral Roadmap as the 13th CSP priority, the Minister for the Environment described difficulties in gaining support for environmental initiatives: "*Sometimes people have to make a choice between funding and the environment or health or education and stuff like that. It is tough trying to push the environmental agenda. I do not know that there is very much more I can say other than that. In some cases I will be putting forward an environmental case and people will say: "Yes, we agree with you, and that is right and you should be doing it." But there is always a "but" at the end of the sentence. You know it is coming and it is: "But I think in this instance we need to think about our determination not to increase the cost of living, or our determination to* *not increase the amount of money the States are spending, or reduce expenditure here."* The Minister's comments highlight that there may be a disconnect between environmental ambition and affordability of objectives within the CSP.

The Panel also heard concerns about structural and operational constraints within the Environment Department. While the Minister for Treasury and Resources noted that the department's budget had grown significantly: *"from just over £5 million in 2020 to £11.7 million in 2025"* the Panel notes that much of this increase was driven by statutory obligations arising from Brexit-related matters and new laws initiated by other departments (the Residential Tenancy Law, for example).

The Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources highlighted a deeper governance issue: *"There is a conflict between what Government and the States are asking the Environment Department to do… The regulatory bit of that department is struggling."* He explained that the department faces contradictory mandates: on one hand, the CSP priority to keep fees and charges low; on the other, an expectation of cost recovery for regulatory functions.

The Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources also said that there are competing CSP priorities for the Minister for the Environment, in addition to cost-of-living considerations which is creating a structural strain for the Department. "*I think if we look at that now from a structural perspective, it seems that potentially the priority that regulation needs in our modern world, where people are asking more of them, the media is filled with people who want the regulatory department to do more things, and we have got to balance that with business growth, the question I think we have to ask is: is it really sitting in the right place anymore or would it be much better having the full influence of the Chief Minister's office".*

The Panel questions whether these structural and fiscal challenges have significantly limited the department's capacity for environmental leadership.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Under Delivering the Best Outcomes for Islanders, the CSP commits to "*being a Government that works in an inclusive way for all Islanders.*" Furthermore, "*Vibrant and Inclusive Community*" is identified as one of the ten Island Outcomes in the Future Jersey Vision under the Sustainable Wellbeing theme. Despite these commitments, the Panel has seen little evidence from the hearings that Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is fully embedded across Government priorities.

The Panel asked about the government structure and cross-working to make sure inclusion and equity is thought about at the earliest point. The Chief Minister acknowledged the challenge: *"I do not know what that looks like, if I am honest. I really do not know. The will is there from all of us to make sure we get to the right, the most equitable position we possibly can."* This suggests that while the intention exists, practical implementation remains unclear. While he referenced tools such as the Ministerial submission template and highlighted collaboration with external partners like the Institute of Directors and Mind the Gap on initiatives such as the gender pay gap toolkit, there was no clear evidence of a comprehensive DEI strategy or governance framework.

The Chief Minister indicated that greater political representation may be needed: *"I think we could put more focus in a Ministerial portfolio. I do not know if it warrants an individual Minister but certainly we need to look at how that is politically represented."*

KEY FINDING 17: While Diversity, Equity and Inclusion principles are acknowledged in the CSP and some mechanisms exist, they are not yet fully embedded in policy development or budgetary decision-making.

RECOMMENDATION 10: The Chief Minister should include in his legacy report that responsibility for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion oversight should be assigned to a dedicated Ministerial portfolio or cross-government steering group.

Workforce training and skills

The CSP commits to increasing lifelong learning and skills development to address workforce shortages. However, the Panel found no unified strategy for lifelong learning or upskilling across departments. This gap is particularly concerning given that the most recent Business Tendency Survey shows 54% of businesses identify staff or skills shortages as one of their main constraints.

The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development acknowledged the ongoing mismatch between skills supply and demand: *"I still have concerns that the needs of the economy and the skills coming through, or the way Government funds skills development, do not necessarily match. It is not an easy job because it is future gazing and that is really difficult."*

He stressed the importance of an employer-led approach: *"We need to be in a much more decentralised situation where employers who are on the front line of the economy are the ones who will know what skills they need… By empowering them to get the skills they need, that to me is a much better situation."*

Despite this emphasis, uptake of the Better Business Support Package's skills funding was low, with £500,000 subsequently reallocated to productivity grants. The Minister admitted: *"The one area which… has not performed to the extent that perhaps we would have liked is the money for skills."*

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning highlighted the need for flexibility and mid-career support: "*More than ever, skills training and education need to be incredibly adaptable precisely because the future is so unclear… We are looking at making apprenticeships a statutory right."*

He also acknowledged cultural and structural barriers, particularly in the early years and care sectors: "*Childcare and looking after children early years has not been something we valued enough as a job in our society… It is a very skilled and valued part of our workforce."*

However, the Panel has found that collaboration across departments remains limited. The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development conceded that engagement with CYPES on upskilling has been minimal: *"I would say with CYPES, I think there has been less direct interaction between the two… There has been less cross-Ministerial speaking."*

When asked whether the Council of Ministers had discussed coordinating skills delivery, he replied: *"At the risk of being wrong, I do not remember having those discussions."* He also confirmed there had been no direct meeting with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning on skills requirements or the Skills Barometer: *"I do not believe so."*

Reflecting on departmental responsibilities, the Minister also questioned where ownership of skills policy should sit: *"Even recently I was thinking along these lines: I do question whether skills and lifelong learning should be in the Education Department or whether it should be more in the Economy Department and I often have that debate with myself."*

Both Ministers recognised challenges in targeting training effectively and supporting transitions. The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development cited the success of the Back to Work Scheme after the 2008 financial crash but noted the absence of current programmes offering on-the-job development or retraining for workers in physically demanding roles as they age. The Chief Officer for Employment, Social Security and Housing also advised that targeted training for parents returning to work includes employer engagement and peer support.

KEY FINDING 18: While Ministers recognise the urgency of tackling skills shortages, efforts remain fragmented. The overlapping responsibilities between the Education and Economy Departments demand stronger cross-ministerial coordination, yet current collaboration on upskilling and lifelong learning appears limited.

Other examples

Implementation of early years policy

While the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning has prioritised the delivery of 15 free nursery hours, broader engagement with employment related issues such as part time work opportunities for parents seems to have been limited. The Minister for Social Security confirmed during the hearing that initial conversations had only recently taken place between departments – however there is no evidence to suggest that these types of conversations took place during policy development. The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development also highlighted that most part-time jobs offer around 20 hours, creating a conflict with the proposed 15 hour nursery provision.

The Ministers clarified that the payment of nursery fees under this policy will not negatively affect parents' income support: the costs covered by the policy are not treated as income, and due to the earnings disregard, the Minister for Social Security confirmed that parents will generally be better off working while receiving income support. This example demonstrates the need for joined-up thinking across the education, social security, and economic development portfolios during policy development to ensure that initiatives such as the 15-hour nursery scheme align with employment opportunities and maximise outcomes for families.

Revitalising Town

The Minister for the Environment confirmed that he does not sit on the Regeneration Steering Group which oversees major infrastructure projects in St. Helier, despite his department's role in planning and environmental standards. The Minister also said that he had not been overly included in the plans to revitalise town.

KEY FINDING 19: Cross-ministerial collaboration exists in principle but is inconsistent in practice. Several Ministers reported limited engagement with others on shared priorities, particularly around skills, childcare, and digital transformation. Ministerial groups (e.g. determinants of health, sports, cost of living) are in place but lack formalised delivery plans.

RECOMMENDATION 11: The Council of Ministers should formalise cross-Ministerial working groups with clear terms of reference, delivery plans, and reporting mechanisms. To consider if roles such as Deputy Chief Minister, as with other jurisdictions, could be appointed to coordinate certain cross-cutting priorities on behalf of the Chief Minister. This should form part of a formal governance structure established before the election and designed to span political cycles, ensuring continuity and accountability

Examples of positive collaboration

The Minister for Infrastructure highlighted the Sports Ministerial Group as a successful example of cross-departmental working: "*We have got a Sports Ministerial Group where I work with the Ministers for Health and Social Services, Education and Lifelong Learning, and Children and Families. We meet quarterly in that forum, and that has really helped us to finally gain access to the schools estate. I would say it has taken us a long time to get there, but we are there now, and I am really excited about the opportunities*."

The Panel notes that this collaboration has enabled greater community use of school facilities outside school hours, supporting health, education, and wellbeing objectives.

The Minister also described joint work with Customer and Local Services' diversity and inclusion group: *"That work has also been done with the diversity and inclusion group in C.L.S.; so, there are some practical things there. Broad Street, the work we are doing is designed to ensure there is enough seating so people can stop and rest. We have invested in the last 12 months significantly in toilets at Bel Royal and at West Park, bringing them up to a much better standard than they were before we started those works."* This collaboration works towards the aim of ensuring that infrastructure projects incorporate accessibility and age-friendly design principles.

KEY FINDING 20: There have been successful examples of cross-departmental collaboration which has resulted in increased community use of school facilities and practical improvements to public spaces, such as Broad Street, to incorporate accessibility and age-friendly design principles.

9. Alignment with Future Jersey Vision

Future Jersey Vision

The long-term vision for Jersey, developed through the Future Jersey consultation, sets out the following vision statement:

"An Island loved for its beautiful coast and countryside, rich heritage, diverse wildlife and clean air, land and water. An Island where a sense of community really matters - a safe place to grow up and enjoy life. An Island that offers everyone the opportunity to contribute to, and share in, the success of a strong, sustainable economy.

The vision is structured around three areas of wellbeing: community wellbeing, economic wellbeing, and environmental wellbeing. These are expressed through ten Island Outcomes, which cover children having the best start in life, Islanders' health and safety, inclusive communities, affordable living, business growth, rewarding employment opportunities, and the protection of Jersey's built, natural, and resource environments. Collectively, these outcomes provide a framework for measuring quality of life on the Island.

The CSP was developed following a review of the Island Outcome Indicators, and the priority actions within it are explicitly linked to these outcomes. The CSP states that Ministers and their departments should be guided by the Island Outcomes in both their priority programmes and their day-to-day activities[6].

Gaps and opportunities

Environmental wellbeing

The Future Jersey Vision sets out sustainable well-being as a balance of community, economic, and environmental well-being. However, the Minister for the Environment acknowledged that this balance has not always been fully achieved. While some progress has been made such as town revitalisation projects contributing to environmental well-being Ministers tend to focus on their departmental priorities rather than the holistic vision: "*In some aspects, I think we are making some progress. We have spoken about the revitalisation of town and some of that work is getting done. That is environmental well-being, if you like. But I think Ministers all have their own priorities within their own departments, and how much sustainable well-being or environmental well-being, ageing population well-being, it is a lot to think about, and I think Ministers will probably tend to concentrate on their specific bits, if you like, rather than the whole thing*"

The Panel is concerned that this siloed approach risks environmental well-being being overshadowed by short-term economic and social pressures. The Minister noted that environmental initiatives often struggle to compete for funding and attention against health, education, and cost-of-living priorities, which makes the Panel question whether there is a risk that long-term sustainability goals may be deprioritised.

[6] Common Strategic Policy 2024-2026

Community well-being

The Future Jersey Vision identifies health and wellbeing and a vibrant and inclusive community as core outcomes, yet evidence from the Health and Social Services hearing suggests that progress in identifying health inequalities has been constrained by funding limitations.

The Minister's team confirmed that ambitions for digital health such as creating a single patient record and advanced analytics have been scaled back due to reduced budgets. These tools were intended to provide a clearer picture of health inequalities and underserved communities, enabling targeted interventions to improve equity in health outcomes. As the Director of Digital Health explained: *"One of the things that we wanted to do… through creating the single patient record will allow us to have a much better understanding of where health inequalities sit and the communities that are underserved… That work is potentially slightly hampered by the reduction in funding but it is definitely an ambition."*

The Panel recognises the importance of addressing health inequalities to achieve the community well-being outcomes set out in the Future Jersey Vision. While progress in relation to digital health initiatives such as the single patient record has been constrained by funding limitations, the Panel encourages continued prioritisation of these tools. Strengthening data and analytics capabilities will be essential to identifying underserved communities and targeting interventions effectively, ensuring that ambitions under the community well-being theme are realised.

The Panel notes that, while the Future Jersey Vision and the associated ten Island Outcomes provide a comprehensive framework for guiding Government priorities and measuring quality of life, the evidence reviewed shows that delivery has been lacking in some areas. In particular, the Panel has seen examples where environmental and community well-being outcomes have not been fully realised, either due to siloed departmental approaches or funding constraints. The Panel considers that greater cross-departmental coordination, sustained investment, and a focus on holistic outcomes will be necessary to ensure that the Future Jersey Vision can be fully implemented across all three areas of well-being.

KEY FINDING 21: The Future Jersey Vision and the associated ten Island Outcomes provide a comprehensive framework for guiding Government priorities and measuring quality of life. However, delivery has been lacking in some areas, in particular environmental and community well-being outcomes.

10. Conclusion

Examining the delivery of the CSP has been a valuable exercise, providing important insights into what has worked well and where challenges remain. The Panel remains concerned that short-term measures, while necessary to maintain stability, risk overshadowing the need for sustainable funding strategies to meet demographic, environmental, and economic challenges in the years ahead.

The Panel hopes that the findings of this review will inform future learnings for Government whilst also setting a precedent for ongoing scrutiny of future Common Strategic Policies, ensuring that progress is monitored transparently and that lessons learned are embedded into policy development.

11. Appendix 1

Review Panel Membership

- Deputy Inna Gardiner (Chair)
- Deputy Helen Miles
- Deputy Louise Doublet
- Deputy Catherine Curtis
- Deputy Montfort Tadier
- Deputy Hilary Jeune

To represent the Chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel, Deputy Alex Curtis attended the public hearings on 27th October.

To represent the Chair of the Corporate Services Panel, Deputy Lucy Stephenson attended the public hearing on 6th November.

Terms of Reference

1. Examine progress made by the Government of Jersey against the thirteen Common Strategic Policy Priorities. In particular:

   a) analyse and evaluate the impact of the Proposed Budget 2026–2029 in supporting, or otherwise, their delivery; and

   b) in undertaking the above, ensure particular focus is provided to complex and/or cross-cutting matters that might span multiple ministerial portfolios

2. Evaluate how the Common Strategic Policy is aligned by the Government with the long-term vision and outcomes set out in the Future Jersey report, and how this alignment has influenced the development of the Budget 2026–2029.

Evidence Considered

Public Hearings

Minister	Date
Minister for Health and Social Services	27th October
Minister for Social Security and Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning	27th October
Minister for the Environment	27th October
Minister for Infrastructure	27th October
Minister for Sustainable Economic Development	27th October
Minister for Treasury and Resources	6th November
Chief Minister	6th November

The transcripts from the Public Hearings can be viewed here.

Review Costs

The costs of this review totalled £1,259.37