

Union Street | St Helier
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Deputy Inna Gardiner
Chair of Common Strategic Policy Review Panel

By email only

5th November 2025

Dear Chair,

Common Strategic Policy (CSP) Review

Further to our brief public hearing last week I thought it would be beneficial to provide a more detailed written update on three of the CSP priorities, in accordance with your terms of reference.

Terms of reference

1. *Examine progress made by the Government of Jersey against the thirteen Common Strategic Policy Priorities. In particular:*
 - *analyse and evaluate the impact of the Proposed Budget 2026–2029 in supporting, or otherwise, their delivery; and*
 - *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.*

I do hope the below is helpful for your review, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Extend nursery and childcare provision

- **Progress made - Positive**

Within the CSP we committed to:

- ✓ **Move towards a universal offer for 2 to 3 year olds**

The additional revenue growth allocations proposed in Budget 2026-2029 ensure that adequate funding is available for the implementation of a universal offer to deliver this CSP priority.

This offer is part of a wider package of investment in early childhood development which includes:

- £1.5 million targeted support for children with additional needs
- £0.7m for Speech and Language Therapy following a successful pilot co-delivered with Every Child Our Future
- £0.6m to continue successful pilot programmes in schools

- ✓ **Extending nursery and childcare provision to children aged 2 to 3 year-olds with additional needs**
- ✓ **Pilot ways to access unused spaces in our primary school nurseries**

Douet Dinkies at Plat Douet Primary School and Play and Learn at D'Auvergne Primary School (operated by JCCT) have delivered on these commitments by creating extra provision for those with additional needs, through utilisation of existing facilities within our primary schools. Both pilots have evidenced improvements for children since baseline measurements were taken.

- ✓ **Review the availability of spaces in St Helier**

Responding to feedback from the financial sector for increased childcare capacity in St Helier, an initial review of existing Government properties in St Helier was completed. No properties were identified as being suitable for a nursery conversion at this stage.

Initial reviews of opportunities for new build / material development were discounted on the basis that capital funding had already been allocated for 2025-2028. The pilot programmes have demonstrated that school sites, with minor investment, can provide opportunities for nursery provision. Opportunities for any potential new locations or extended provisions will continue to be considered in line with current regulatory requirements should they arise.

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

A significant amount of work has been carried out in phase one of a programme to increase recruitment and retention in the sector. Overall, the results were not as positive as hoped for but I am encouraged by the improvement in workforce position in the '24 survey vs '23 survey and keenly interested in any change in position from this year's survey (Q4 2025). The recent provider survey confirms that 93% of settings now paying the living wage.

Officers have been instructed to initiate another round of workforce planning with the wider sector and we will see the first draft plan later this year.

The sector workforce challenges are not unique with the UK and other jurisdictions facing similar if not worse positions. I am committed to working with the sector and other stakeholders to find local solutions that increase recruitment and retention. Recent provider survey confirms that 93% of settings now paying living wage.

○ **Impact of the proposed Budget 2026-2029 - Positive**

The proposed budget includes an expenditure growth allocation of £9.7 million to ensure a universal offer of 15 hours per week for 2-3s, during term time, is budgeted for. This growth is additional to that agreed in Budget 2025-2028 totalling £11.9 million. Combined growth allocated to make a positive impact on this CSP priority is detailed in the table below:

£'000	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total
Budget 2025-2028	1,517	2,358	3,423	4,629	11,927
Budget 2026-2029	3,000	3,000	1,800	1,900	9,700
Combined growth	4,517	5,358	5,223	6,529	21,627

○ **Alignment with long term vision and outcomes - Aligned**

Islanders want Jersey's children to have the best possible start in life and felt there were opportunities to improve the funding of nursery care.

The implementation of the universal offer for 2-3s responds to this feedback and is expected to make a positive impact on the Island Outcome Indicator “Learn and Grow – Development of 2 year olds”

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

- **Progress made - Delivered**

Within the CSP we committed to:

- ✓ **Provide a nutritious school meal for every child in all States primary schools by December 2024**

This target was met with all States Primary schools offering a hot lunch from December 2024.

- **Impact of the proposed Budget 2026-2029 - Positive**

Budget 2025-2028 delivered additional recurring revenue expenditure growth of £1.17 million per year, totalling £4.68 million over the budget. This additional funding remains in base budgets alongside previous funding commitments providing a £2.74 million per annum budget for this completed CSP priority.

- **Alignment with long term vision and outcomes - Aligned**

Islanders were particularly concerned over the growing impact of obesity. The successful delivery of the school meals CSP priority, on time in December 2024, responds to this feedback and is expected to make a positive impact on the Island Outcome Indicator “Healthy Eating”.

Increase the provision of lifelong learning and skills development

- **Progress made: Positive**

Within the CSP we committed to:

- ✓ **A series of targeted skills development schemes**

The approach to allocating funding for skills shortages was redesigned. Drawing on analysis from Skills Jersey and the Economy Department, the Skills Development Panel has identified a shortlist of qualifications and sectors for prioritisation for the next wave of funding allocations.

Opportunities to submit expressions of interest to deliver or enrol in training aligned with skills shortage areas will be announced this year.

- ✓ **Promoting apprenticeships**

A series of stakeholder consultations have taken place to inform development of policy on financial support for apprenticeships to increase enrolments on this pathway. The first wave of consultations has been completed and officers are reviewing the findings.

Additional funding was secured to update programme content for electrical apprenticeships, including the introduction of green technology, and to meet new assessment requirements and rising material costs. This allowed Highlands College to continue delivering valued programmes without increasing fees and passing these costs on to employers.

✓ **Implementing sustainable Higher Education Student Finance**

Inflation-linked adjustments were introduced to income thresholds and the maintenance grant. The maximum tuition fee grant was also increased in line with the increase in tuition fee caps for universities in England and Wales.

○ **Impact of the proposed Budget 2026-2029 - Positive**

Budget 2025-2028 provided for higher grants for distance learning. Since these changes were introduced, we have seen higher participation through this mode of study compared to previous years. The budget forecast included an expectation of increasing enrolments through this mode.

The budget for the Skills Development Scheme is ringfenced. Unspent funds are carried forward to the next year. Additional funding has not been sought however, contributions from philanthropists and 2(1)(e) applications are possible.

○ **Alignment with long term vision and outcomes - Aligned**

Islanders advocated for improvements in university funding and called for greater support to equip young people with the skills and knowledge needed for success. A change in policy to review income thresholds and grant amounts annually, in line with inflation, aims to preserve the value of financial support as economic conditions evolve. Targeted funding for skills shortages will help islanders to develop capabilities needed in the local economy, improving their chances of securing employment.

Summary

I trust the above clearly demonstrates positive progress and delivery of these CSP priorities, supported by appropriate budgets and with strong alignment to the long-term vision and outcomes, set out in the Future Jersey report.

Yours sincerely,



Deputy Rob Ward
Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning