

STATES OF JERSEY



COMMON STRATEGIC POLICY 2024- 2026 (P.21/2024): THIRD AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 7th May 2024
by Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North
Earliest date for debate: 21st May 2024

STATES GREFFE

COMMON STRATEGIC POLICY 2024-2026 (P.21/2024): THIRD AMENDMENT

1 PAGE 2 –

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

“, except that on page 2 of the report, in paragraph 3, after the words “Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce report.”, there should be inserted a new paragraph as follows –

“We will make preparations for our projected demographic changes to ensure the sustainability of our health provisions and to protect economic prosperity into the future”. -

2 PAGE 2 –

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

“, except that on page 8, after the last paragraph, there should be inserted a new paragraph as follows –

“We will enable the design of homes for our ageing population to allow them to remain living independently.””.

3 PAGE 2 –

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

“, except that on page 9, after the last paragraph, should be inserted a new paragraph as follows –

“We will provide adequate provisions and opportunities for lifelong learning, re-training and attractive flexible roles to ensure that age is not a barrier to older workers and to allow our ageing workforce to continue to participate in an evolving job market.””

DEPUTY I. GARDINER OF ST. HELIER NORTH

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

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

in accordance with Article 18(2)(e) of the States of Jersey Law 2005, to approve the statement of the Common Strategic Policy of the Council of Ministers as set out in the report accompanying this Proposition, **except that:**

on page 2 of the report, in paragraph 3, after the words “Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce report.”, there should be inserted a new paragraph as follows

“We will make preparations for our projected demographic changes to ensure the sustainability of our health provisions and to protect economic prosperity into the future.”;

on page 8, after the last paragraph, there should be inserted a new paragraph as follows –

“We will enable the design of homes for our ageing population to allow them to remain living independently.”; and

on page 9, after the last paragraph, should be inserted a new paragraph as follows –

“We will provide adequate provisions and opportunities for lifelong learning, re-training and attractive flexible roles to ensure that age is not a barrier to older workers and to allow our ageing workforce to continue to participate in an evolving job market.”

REPORT

I believe that to secure ongoing prosperity in Jersey every Government has the responsibility to address the inevitable changes in demographics. In my view now is the time to create a long-term framework / plan for the future and it is unwise to postpone planning until the next Common Strategic Policy.

Ageing population is, in a nutshell, the result of the combination of people living longer and a decline in fertility with the most recent published reports clearly demonstrating the extent of this phenomena in Jersey and its serious implications.

The [Population Projections](#) by Statistics Jersey published 20 December 2023 on page 1 states –

“Regardless of the level of net migration experienced, in all scenarios the older aged population is expected to increase rapidly over the next 20-30 years. This is particularly the case for the older (over 75 and over 85) age groups which are expected to increase by around 50% over the next 20-30 years.”

And further states on page 4 -

“The size of the older age population is an important factor in respect of the provision of services in a jurisdiction. This is particularly relevant in respect of planning Government expenditure on old age pension and the provision of health and care services.”

In April 2024 a report on [Births and Breastfeeding Profile](#) provided information from the Superintendent Registrar showing that there were 799 births in 2023 which was the lowest number of births recorded between the period 1955 to 2023 (almost 70 years).

General

Ageing is part of the natural course of demographic development and should be viewed as a challenge rather than a problem. Society needs to adapt to the challenge which has the potential to become a crisis when timely action for societal adaptation is postponed. As the ageing process is predictable, gradual and inevitable, it follows that a gradual adaption is less costly than actions taken in crisis situations as a last resort.

Combining behavioural changes, investing in infrastructure and human capital, reforming policy and institutions, and enabling technological innovation can help Jersey to embrace the challenges and opportunities presented by demographic change.

Consideration perhaps could be given to ‘blueprint’ projects which are these community-wide well-being improvement initiatives designed to make healthy choices easier through changes to physical environment, policy, and social networks.

Housing

The World Health Organisation’s global network of age-friendly cities and communities has identified the crucial role of the physical and social environment on health and wellbeing across the course of life.

Current housing models, and related standards, design codes and associated certification schemes do not readily align with the changing needs of the population. With these insights it is important to not focus solely on developing new technologies that support healthy ageing without simultaneously taking account of the urgent need to re-imagine housing and the built environment. This challenge needs a cross-sector approach, recognising and harnessing the knowledge of the healthcare sector, whilst seeking the inspirational input from the development community.

As people age, it becomes increasingly likely their housing needs will change. Some people will need support to continue living in their own homes. People of all ages may develop disabilities which mean their homes are either unsuitable or need to be adapted.

An example in UK is the development of dementia friendly homes. These dementia friendly homes reduce the medium to long term need for professional care, this reduces the pressure on the more intensive specialised care found at the top end of the spectrum of care and reduces the disruption and disorientation of moving people to institutional care facilities earlier.

This environmental approach generates greater independence and self-reliance, particularly in the early stages of dementia, delaying or even potentially completely avoiding the need to move to institutional care facilities.

Lifelong Learning

“Lifelong learning plays a crucial role in reskilling older adults, bolstering their autonomy, promoting healthy and active aging, and enhancing their quality of life” (Formosa, 2019; UNESCO, 2022; WHO, 2020).” [UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning](#)).

The historic image of older people also needs to be rethought, from depicting idle or dependent people who are a burden to public finances to the idea of those capable actively participating in society and contributing to its development.

As people live longer, older people have an accumulated expertise, knowledge and experience and therefore have the ability to contribute a great deal. I can see how the integration of older people into the policymaking process and the encouragement of those who wish and can stay in their jobs longer serve as good examples.

The aim of this amendment is to ensure that demographic considerations are not shelved and the necessity of preparing for the increase in our ageing population is recognised given that the ageing population has significant implications for the structure of Jersey's economy, our health provision, housing, our population policy and our public finances.

Financial and staffing implications

No additional financial or staffing implications are anticipated as this work should be possible to carry out within the current Cabinet Office policy development budget.

Children's Rights Impact Assessment

A Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) has been prepared in relation to this proposition and is available to read on the States Assembly website.