

STATES OF JERSEY



PROPOSED GOVERNMENT PLAN 2024- 2027 (P.72/2023): COMMENTS

Presented to the States on 6th December 2023
by the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Introduction

The [Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027](#) (hereafter “the Plan”) was lodged au Greffe on 19th September 2023 and is scheduled for States’ debate on 12th December 2023. In addition, the [Government Plan 2024-27 Annex](#) (R.141/2023) and [Ministerial Plans 2024](#) (R.143/2023) were also presented to the States Assembly on the same date. This is a welcome improvement to the previous year where the Annex was published more than two weeks after the lodging of the Government Plan 2023-2026 significantly impeding the scrutiny process.

It was agreed by the Scrutiny Liaison Committee that each scrutiny panel would focus on the aspects of the Plan that were specific to its remit and that overarching themes would be led by the Corporate Services Panel. Accordingly, the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel (hereafter “the Panel”) agreed its review [Terms of Reference](#) and began the process of evidence gathering for the areas identified within its remit. Full business cases were provided for each new revenue growth bid and capital project that fell under the responsibility of the Minister for the Environment, Minister for Infrastructure and Minister for Housing and Communities. A list of the new revenue growth and capital projects allocated to the Panel to scrutinise can be found on the Panel’s [review](#) page. In addition to the proposed new revenue growth and capital projects, the Panel has also considered the impact of the proposals on the Climate Emergency Fund.

As part of the evidence gathering process, the Panel held public hearings with the Ministers within its remit and invited written submissions from targeted key stakeholders. Where further questions were generated from either the proposals contained within the Plan, or from the evidence gathered, the Panel posed these questions to Ministers either during the public hearings or by letter as written questions. All the evidence considered by the Panel can be found online, with the exception of the full business cases which were provided to the Panel in confidence.

Main themes and key findings

The purpose of this report is not to provide an exhaustive commentary of all the evidence examined but to instead consider the main themes, findings and concerns which have arisen from the review, and to make ‘SMART’¹ recommendations to Ministers outlining where the Panel feels improvements could be made.

Climate Emergency Fund – Long-term financing strategy

The Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027 provides a list of high-level principles which will be used to deliver a long-term financing plan for the Climate Emergency Fund. Noting that the previous Government Plan 2023-2026 committed to delivering a long-term financing strategy in time for this Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027, the Panel pressed both the Minister and Assistant Minister for the Environment on the pace of delivery for this workstream:

Deputy S.G. Luce:

¹ Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound

...Minister, your plan outlines a very high-level set of principles that are going to undertake the financing strategy for the Climate Emergency Fund. This time last year we were told that you were carrying work out at pace to develop the financing strategy. We wondered where it was and what pace you were working at.

Assistant Minister for the Environment:

The most important thing is that we wanted to get these principles back to the States Assembly to be able to agree on them to then go forward in creating the strategy. That was difficult from the Government Plan 2023. It was too early to be able to produce these principles. We thought that that was important that we, as a States Assembly, agree on those principles before we develop this long-term financing strategy plan. That is why we are taking those the steps. Of course, at the same time as these principles are developing, we are also looking at what that looks like and what the strategies are. It is not that the work has stopped because of these principles. We wanted to get the principles and be aligned with that first.

Deputy S.G. Luce:

Given that we are in the middle of a climate emergency, the statistics coming out of global scientific research shows some absolutely dramatic changes in average temperatures, et cetera. Should we not be going a little bit faster so that we can get on and make some use of this ...?

The Minister for the Environment:

We are spending the money we have.

Deputy S.G. Luce:

To be fair, Minister, the money you have is a drop in the ocean compared to what you need.

The Minister for the Environment:

It is what we can spend at the moment. You can talk about training and all the rest of it, but we need to get build up.

Assistant Minister for the Environment:

We have launched a number of incentive schemes that we have talked to you about in different Scrutiny Panels over the last year. It shows that we are trying to spend the money, but there are systems to be put in place to make sure that that money is being spent in the right way to ensure it is delivering the objectives that we want. Part of that has been making sure that we have contractors that are upskilled in the way that they can deliver and put in the technologies that we have access to, for example the vehicles or to the e-bikes that are being purchased.

Deputy S.G. Luce:

I will go back to my original question: are you happy that you are moving fast enough? I only say that, because governments, and I include myself, over the last decade have been criticised. They approve plans, fund it and then they do not seem to be able to spend the money. We have been criticised by the F.P.P. (Fiscal Policy Panel) year on year on year and here is potentially another case in point.

Assistant Minister for the Environment:

Absolutely and I would like to come to you next year, in 2024, and say: “Yes, these are the plans that we are building up to, to then be able to be more solid in the Government Plan 2025.” As the Minister said, we have money at the moment that we need to be spending as well. We have to balance that long-term view of what that looks like, at the same time as spending the money we have now under the Climate Emergency Fund. Of course, we have put in a number of elements of increases. For example, the Vehicles Emissions Duty has been significantly increased as well. We are starting to put in those polluter-pay principles being more strong on those elements as well.”²

The need for a long-term financing strategy for the Climate Emergency Fund was raised in submissions the Panel received from [Jersey Electricity](#) and [Rubis Channel Islands](#) during its previous review of the Government Plan 2023-2026; and which the Panel highlights again to re-emphasise the importance that traction is not lost in delivering a longer-term funding solution. The Panel is pleased to note from the Carbon Neutral Roadmap Progress Report published in July 2023 that: “*further detailed work to develop the full long-term financing strategy for the decarbonisation of the Island will be a key priority for work over the next 12 months.*”³

RECOMMENDATION 1: The Minister for the Environment should work with the Minister for Treasury and Resources to continue to ensure that priority is given to delivering a long-term financing strategy for the Climate Emergency Fund in time for the lodging of the next Proposed Government Plan 2025-2028 in September 2024. Furthermore, a progress update should be provided to update the States Assembly on progress made on both the delivery of the Carbon Neutral Roadmap and the financing strategy before the end of July 2024.

The Panel notes the progress that has been made in delivering key carbon reduction policies and incentive schemes throughout 2023 and which will continue into 2024 due to the contributions made from fuel duty and vehicle emissions duty revenue into the Climate Emergency Fund. A submission the Corporate Services Panel received from EVie highlighted the importance of a visible correlation between contributions made to the Climate Emergency Fund and the benefits received:

*The escalation in fuel duty, with the explicit commitment to earmark 9p from every litre for the Climate Emergency Fund, is a commendable move. It is imperative that this ring-fenced funding is utilised to directly facilitate islanders' transition to more sustainable mobility solutions. There should be a visible correlation between the contributions made and the benefits received. Priority should be given to funding shared active transport services and the necessary upgrades to routes, positioning these as a public service. This approach could deliver a degree of interconnectedness and accessibility that surpasses what is achievable through traditional public transport systems alone.*⁴

² [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for the Environment – 11th October 2023, p. 55-57

³ [Carbon Neutral Roadmap Progress Report – July 2023](#)

⁴ Written Submission – [EVie](#) – 5th November 2023

The Panel notes that a high-level summary of expenditure has been included on page 93 of the Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027 but considers it important for transparency that Government should publish more detail in the way of estimated expenditure (i.e. detailing each policy expenditure item and other expenditure which is forecast to be spent utilising the Climate Emergency Fund). The same should also apply to the publication of actual expenditure for previous years which should note specific transfers in and out of the Climate Emergency Fund for transparency. Alongside these figures should be a statement of analysis detailing how the Climate Emergency Fund is delivering Value for Money (i.e. how the chosen expenditure is achieving the most effective delivery of carbon emissions reduction). This information is considered important for both public transparency but also for States Members to make informed decisions regarding the approval of expenditure in each Government Plan.

In response to [Written Question 371/2023](#), the Minister for Treasury and Resources provided a list of revenue growth bids that were considered at an early stage but were not included in the Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027. The Panel notes that, of the growth bids under the ministerial remit of the Minister for the Environment, the following **did not** have a business case commissioned:

- Funding for countryside, water and air quality
- Develop one or more strategies for the conservation of biodiversity
- Water Strategy
- Jersey Met – Weather monitoring, warnings and active travel forecast.

The following bid **did** have a business case commissioned but did not result in inclusion in the Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027:

- Biosecurity Team – Operational delivery of biosecurity. Invasive and regulated organisms.

The Panel wrote to the Minister for the Environment to question why each of these individual bids were rejected and was advised that “*it was considered, post drafting and submission, that bids could either be met by the Climate Emergency Fund, funded via in year reprioritisation or that the department (I&E) would have sufficient flex within its overall budget to meet prioritised needs.*”⁵ The Minister’s full response can be read online [here](#).

The above further highlights how, for transparency, it would be useful to provide a more detailed list of expenditure items expected to be funded out of the Climate Emergency Fund.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The Minister for the Environment should, in future Government Plans (or the Annex), provide a more detailed breakdown of proposed expenditure on initiatives to be funded by the Climate Emergency Fund for the following year. In a similar vein, detailed actual expenditure for previous years should also be published each year with a statement provided on how specific expenditure is achieving the most Value for Money.

Water Strategy – longer-term funding solution

The Carbon Neutral Roadmap made a commitment to deliver a Water Strategy by 2025 and it is noted in the July 2023 progress report that initial scoping for this work was

⁵ Minister for the Environment – [Response to Written Questions](#) – 22nd November 2023

underway.⁶ In a public hearing, the Minister for the Environment advised that a longer-term funding solution was required for developing the Water Strategy:

Deputy S.G. Luce:

Funding pressure for what you are going to try to do in the next 12 months is fairly okay?

The Minister for the Environment:

Yes. The water strategy needs a longer-term funding solution. We are funding it from within budgets at the moment, so there are potential pressures there. However, these are not colossal sums of money. When you look at the government spending in the round, we have not done too badly. Some of the loss is technical things. We transferred driver licensing from our department to Infrastructure. It goes from one head of an expenditure to another, so our budget goes down a bit. It is not a loss in functionality.⁷

In a response to written questions the Minister further advised that delivery of the Water Strategy was envisaged to be delayed by a year.⁸ The Panel considers it vitally important that this workstream is delivered within this term of government and so intends to keep pressing the Minister for progress updates throughout 2024 and beyond.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The Minister for the Environment should work with the Minister for Treasury and Resources to prioritise a longer-term funding solution for the Water Strategy for inclusion in the next Proposed Government Plan 2025-2028.

Funding for housing-related priorities: additional revenue growth

The Panel notes the following additional revenue growth bids have been included in the Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027:

- I-SPP-GP24-006 Strategic Housing and Regeneration Team
- I-CLS-GP24-002 Housing Advice Services

I-SPP-GP24-006 Strategic Housing and Regeneration Team

The Annex to the Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027 states that:

The Council of Ministers made a commitment to review the resources allocated to housing, to ensure strong and sustained action to tackle the housing crisis and increase home ownership in Jersey. Additional funding of £300,000 has been allocated to support enhancements to the capacity of the Housing Advice Service (Customer and Local Services) and Strategic Housing and Regeneration Team (Cabinet Office), to accelerate the development and implementation of action to address the housing crisis in Jersey.⁹

⁶ [Carbon Neutral Roadmap Progress Report – July 2023](#)

⁷ [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for the Environment – 11th October 2023, p. 50

⁸ Minister for the Environment – [Response to Written Questions](#) – 22nd November 2023

⁹ [Government Plan 2024-27 Annex](#) (R.141/2023), p.17

In a public hearing with the Minister for Housing and Communities, the Panel queried the funding proposals of £138,000 in 2024 for the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Team and why this funding was projected to reduce to £85,000 from 2025:

Deputy S.G. Luce:

...In 2024 you have got proposals for £138,000 for the Strategic Housing and Regeneration team. That number starts to fall away. In 2025 it is only £85,000. Are you satisfied that the funding for this team is sufficient?

...

Head of Strategic Housing and Regeneration:

...As the Minister suggested the Council of Ministers had to work within quite a constrained financial envelope in order to pull together the proposed Government Plan this year. Housing, you will see in the Government Plan, is allocated a total of £300,000 as additional growth, which is shared between the Strategic Housing and Regeneration team and the Housing Advice Service, which sits in Customer and Local Services. Because we are trying to be as efficient as possible, and recognising where those priority areas are, it was considered that the greatest priority was to make sure that the front line services in the Housing Advice Service had the lion's share of that £300,000 allocation. Because for them that requires some growth of F.T.E. (full-time equivalent) we calculated the amount of money that would not be spent for the first 3 months of next year while they go through their recruitment process, and we have passed that money back over to the Strategic Housing and Regeneration team, which means that for 2024 we can keep up the pace in terms of clearing through the backlog of policy work. Ultimately into 2025 it may be that a small additional amount of budget is sought again through a new business case to close that gap that you have quite rightly identified from 2025, but of course we are focused on making sure that we are operating as efficiently as possible so any efficiencies that we can make over the course of this year we will try to make, to ensure that we do not have a gap in 2025.¹⁰

I-CLS-GP24-002 Housing Advice Services

The Annex to the Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027 states that:

This funding will provide additional resources for the Housing Advice Service in Customer and Local Services to support the expansion of Housing services. This funding supports the Ministerial priority for a relentless focus for housing. The resources allocated will help deliver the actions within the published Roadmap for improved access to social housing in Jersey (published in July 2023).¹¹

The Panel questioned the Minister for Housing and Communities on the funding being sought to increase staffing resources for the Housing Advice Service:

The Minister for Housing and Communities:

...Clearly there is a budget that we have had to work towards. I think in terms of the grand scheme of things our budget is relatively small compared to other

¹⁰ [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Housing and Communities – 1st November 2023, p. 26-27

¹¹ [Government Plan 2024-27 Annex](#) (R.141/2023), p.26

departments that I could mention. We just have to be very targeted in our approach. At this moment in time, one of the areas that we have talked about, the Housing Advice Service, that sort of point of contact with customer and Government and how we deal with that, we are spending quite a lot of money in that area and making sure there is plenty of funding on that front. Clearly in the background we still have to spend money on policy, and policy work. Do we have enough money? We could always do with more money, but we have to work within the means that we have. What we are trying very hard not to do is to grow government numbers, how many people are employed by the government, which is obviously a great concern to the general public out there but it is just all of the areas. It is things such as a roadmap to improving access to social housing. There is plenty of stuff around, so implementation of the Jersey homelessness strategy, so we are doing lots of things with the budget that we have and it is just making sure that we focus and put the money where, in my opinion, we get the biggest bang for our buck, as it were. I think that would be a very simplistic way of putting it.

...

Deputy S.G. Luce:

We can see that as you mentioned, Natasha, Housing Advice £162,000 rose, going up to £215,000 in 2025. Is that just an increase in staff numbers in that sector?

Head of Strategic Housing and Regeneration:

It is principally an increase in staff. It is a relatively new team that ultimately had a skeleton workforce attached to it. It was one F.T.E. and they have been able to grow that out slightly. As the Minister mentioned, the downstream pressure from the more policy work we do the more pressure that puts on the front line service to implement those policies, so the implementation of the homelessness strategy and the very much improved access to social housing are 2 key policy areas that put pressure on that service. We cannot do more policy unless we have got the capacity there to implement those policies at the front line.¹²

To better gauge the value and impact of the Housing Advice Service to date the Panel requested the figures of how many Islanders had accessed the service so far to date in 2023 and was advised as follows:

The Minister for Housing and Communities:

...total number of enquiries involved at customer contacts, Q1 of 2023 we had 314, Q2 214, and Q3 284. So quite a steady demand is being created or going through there. I think it just proves that the Housing Advice Service as a concept, which came in just before I came onboard, was a great idea and I think it is proving its worth.

...

The Minister for Housing and Communities:

I would just add that I know it [The Housing Advice Service] has been in existence for maybe a couple of years now but it is surprising how many people still do not know that it exists. We still have to tell people about the service.

¹² [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Housing and Communities – 1st November 2023, p.27-28

Deputy S.G. Luce:

So maybe a bit more publicity, and it is clear from the title that it is not particularly specific - Housing Advice - so let us hope that more people go to it for whatever housing advice they need.

The Minister for Housing and Communities:

I agree.¹³

RECOMMENDATION 4: The Minister for Housing and Communities should work with the Government of Jersey communications unit to establish a public awareness campaign throughout 2024 and beyond to ensure that Islanders are better informed about the Housing Advice Service.

Housing data – addressing critical data gaps

In the response to [Written Question 371/2023](#), the Minister for Treasury and Resources confirmed that two additional revenue growth bids under the ministerial remit of the Minister for Housing and Communities were not included in the final Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027:

- Housing data
- Vacant Homes – Reprofiling investment

The Panel was keen to further understand whether the lack of funding in these areas would impact negatively on progressing housing related priorities throughout 2024. The Panel was advised in the public hearing that housing is considered a “relentless focus” of Government but that it is up against other major budgets such as Health and Education. The Minister for Housing and Communities advised:

The Minister for Housing and Communities:

...We need to be getting better data. There are areas where we really do need to spend some money but we are given what we are given. We have to cut our cloth to fit what we can do and get on with it but, as I said, the problem for Government as a whole is it is not a bottomless pit of money, as much as a few people think it is.

Deputy S.G. Luce:

I would agree with you certainly on the bit about housing data because data is everything and without it you could be moving in the dark and not really sure.

The Minister for Housing and Communities:

I think we have highlighted that with the planning issue, a 30-year-old system. I talk about bang for buck, but these are areas where we really do need to focus some serious money into, if we are going to come up with very good policy decisions as far as our long-term housing strategy is concerned.

Deputy S.G. Luce:

Because you cannot make good decisions without good data.

¹³ [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Housing and Communities – 1st November 2023, p.28-30

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

But would you not say when you say about the big departments that you are competing with, Health and Education, does housing not come as a priority? Without good accommodation then there is a risk to health and without good accommodation there is also a risk to education.

The Minister for Housing and Communities:

I agree with you.¹⁴

The Panel was advised that work would continue into 2024 with the Chief Statistician and Economics Unit to identify where other critical data gaps existed and to start to formulate solutions to addressing these gaps.

The Panel was further advised that one area where it would be useful to have access to more data was in relation to housing permissions, starts and completions. However, the current software system in place for managing these records was around thirty years old and with software updates no longer available the site had become unstable. The Panel was, however, reassured that money would be invested in upgrading to new planning application software in 2024 which would help to address this specific data gap.¹⁵

The Panel is therefore satisfied that work is able to progress without additional funding at this stage, although will be keeping a watching brief on progress in this area and whether further funding should be prioritised in future Government Plans. The Panel considers it vital that housing policy initiatives should not be hampered or slowed down by a lack of data and is therefore keen to monitor progress in this area throughout the course of 2024.

Infrastructure priorities and funding pressures

The Panel was advised in a public hearing with the Minister for Infrastructure that the main areas of pressure under his ministerial remit consisted of investment in infrastructure and property:

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

I think from our perspective, what the Government Plan highlights clearly, we work as positively as we can with Treasury to show what pressures we have in the department. A lot of our pressures relate to infrastructure and property investment. We run a lot of infrastructure and a lot of property, so we try to get as much as we can reflected in the Government Plan to invest back in infrastructure. So liquid waste is a good example. We have had some additional funds added for next year and the year after. We need to have a conversation about how much further that goes beyond 2025. But the need for funding in our physical assets is not stopping, so we have over £2 billion worth of assets and they need maintaining and improving. So that pressure is going to continue.¹⁶

¹⁴ [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Housing and Communities – 1st November 2023, p.30-31

¹⁵ [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Housing and Communities – 1st November 2023, p.25

¹⁶ [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Infrastructure – 22nd November 2023, p. 14

Jersey Property Holdings – property maintenance and investment

The Panel questioned the Minister for Infrastructure on whether he considered that the lack of investment in the maintenance of the public estate was a false economy and was advised that a longer-term view of managing the public estate was required:

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

But can I just ask something? In relation to Property Holdings, would you say that the lack of investment in maintenance of property is a false economy?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes, I would, I would. I think we have started to make those points known and I think people are starting to listen but it is going to take a while to break down. You cannot instantly go from where you are to where you need to be. But I think we are really making a very good case for pointing those things out. I know Tim is bursting to pass something ...

Director, Jersey Property Holdings:

The Property Department is working very closely with the Treasury in order to try and get a much longer-term view of our estate and to be able to manage it. This year we have just completed a condition survey so that, again, we will have a much more focused understanding of where the issues are. We can then go through a prioritisation process with the tenants or the organisations, Government organisations that work in those buildings, use those buildings, so that we can then start to come up with a list that is not 3 or 4 years long, as the current Government Plan. But we can work with Treasury to look to push a capital programme that looks maybe 20, 25 years hence, so that we know that, say, Quennevais School recently completed, the roof life on that is 30 years. In 25 years' time we can start to look at what we need to do and we can then work out does the roof need replacement, does it need work? As I say, we can get a much smoother profile, a less sort of spiky profile which it also means that when we go to the Treasury and say: "We need this amount of cash", it is not just a general we need it for maintenance. We can give the specifics that it is for this roof, this mechanical and electrical system. But that is the first time that that has been done and it is a detailed process that we are working through.¹⁷

RECOMMENDATION 5: The Minister for Infrastructure should work with Jersey Property Holdings and the Minister for Treasury and Resources to prioritise a longer-term funding solution for ongoing maintenance and future investment in the Public Estate for inclusion in the Proposed Government Plan 2025-2028.

Decarbonising Government Vehicle Fleet

The Panel found that one of the growth bids which was initially put forward by the Department, but which did not receive approval for inclusion in the Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027 was for 'Renewable Diesel Funding Uplift – Decarbonising Government'. The Panel therefore questioned the Minister for Infrastructure on how decarbonising the Government of Jersey vehicle fleet could be achieved without this funding. The Chief Officer advised as follows:

¹⁷ [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Infrastructure – 22nd November 2023, p. 16-17

The Connétable of St. Mary:

I think it was a reply on an earlier question that one of the matters put in the Government Plan without a business case was the renewable diesel funding uplift and if that has not been approved, how can you achieve your aims without necessary growth funding or are you getting growth funding from other sources?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

I think there is a conversation then about we have got to keep an eye on what the market is doing in that fuel. At the moment it is more expensive than traditional fuels. There is an expectation, as more of it gets used and produced, that price will come down. At the moment we are going to see a financial pressure there, so if we cannot meet that financial pressure we will probably have to revert more to a cheaper fuel again, which is the traditional fuel. But that is the current balance we have got, whether we can find funds from elsewhere within the department reprioritising or are there any other carbon-reduction funds available to carry that work on?¹⁸

The Panel therefore notes that if the Infrastructure and Environment Department cannot find funding from elsewhere within the Department, or by other means, there is risk that Government will not be able to reach its decarbonisation aims for 2024. The Panel intends to monitor progress in its quarterly hearings with the Minister throughout 2024.

Liquid Waste – waste charging

The Proposed Government Plan 2024-27 requests funding for an initial investment of £15.6m for 2024 and 2025 in ‘Liquid Waste Key Infrastructure.’ The Panel asked the Minister for Infrastructure how this funding would be allocated and prioritised:

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Thank you. Yes, it does, yes. My final question in this area, it goes back to liquid waste, which we have touched on already. The plan requests funding for an initial investment of £15.6 million I think for 2024 and 2025 in liquid waste key infrastructure. Can you elaborate please on what precisely this initial funding will cover in terms of key priorities which have been identified?

...

Group Director, Operations and Transport:

It is a mix of projects, so the £15 million will be spent on doing some rising main replacement, particularly Le Dicq because we are looking at that. We are also going to be looking at storage works, so starting the design work and into construction. Initially it was St. Peter’s and airport strategic storage and getting design work done for that, West Hill that we have spoken about, I think, in the last meeting and also the Maufant strategic storage area. A lot of work is going on design, looking at suitable sites, how that could possibly work with further construction in future years. Another drainage project that is within there is also the West Park Service Water Outfall and, again, looking at how we split the found surface for that area, so it is another project.

...

¹⁸ [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Infrastructure – 22nd November 2023, p. 20

Group Director, Operations and Transport:

Maufant would be sooner, so we would be hoping to start at the end of 2024 with Maufant and that will be one of the ones that we bring forward sooner than later on that side. West Hill, start again some of the construction in 2025, move them on again into 2026, subject to us getting the funding. Our challenge is as much as we have got funding for 2024, 2025 is we cannot sign off on the contracts until you know that you have got the money longer term. Again, we will soon be having further conversations about how we are going to get that money, I think, in future years.¹⁹

The Panel is aware that the initial funding sought of £15.6m is in advance of a sustainable funding mechanism which is intended to be explored further with a view to this being agreed in the next Proposed Government Plan 2025-2028:

The scale of investment needed for this critical work requires a suitable funding mechanism, and in 2024 the Minister for Infrastructure will develop proposals for the use of waste charges to meet these costs, to be debated in a future Government Plan. In line with the proposition 'Medium term financial plan addition for 2017-2019 (as amended)' (P.68/201618), the States are asked to approve the application of resources for work on the development of 'user pays' charges in relation to all aspects of waste charges, including commercial and domestic liquid and solid waste.²⁰

The Panel wishes to stress the importance of the prioritisation of this work throughout 2024 and that stakeholder engagement, both at a domestic and commercial level, should be facilitated from the outset of scoping any future funding proposals.

RECOMMENDATION 6: The Minister for Infrastructure should work with the Minister for Treasury and Resources to prioritise a long-term funding model for waste charging. Key stakeholders, the public and Scrutiny should be engaged with from an early stage and before any final proposals are brought to the States Assembly in time for the Proposed Government Plan 2025-2028.

Shoreline Management Plan – Adaptive Management: long-term financing

Noting that funding of £542,000 for a Shoreline Management Plan feasibility study regarding a coastal adaptation project to protect Havre des Pas from future flooding was not earmarked for funding until 2025, the Panel questioned the Minister for Infrastructure on the timeline for this and why funding was not being brought forward sooner:

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Yes. We are now on to Shoreline Management Plan feasibility for Havre des Pas. Minister, we note that feasibility during funding of £542,000 will be sought in the next 2025 Government Plan for Havre des Pas Shoreline Management Scheme; the first of the shoreline plans identified protecting that area of St. Helier from flooding. What was the rationale for not seeking approval for this feasibility study to be done sooner, as in 2024?

¹⁹ [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Infrastructure – 22nd November 2023, p. 23-25

²⁰ [Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027, p. 44](#)

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do not know whether that is work pressure partly and partly due to the fact that you know that you are only going to get so much money and you have got to prioritise your requests. I do not know if you want to elaborate a little bit more on that, Tristan, but ...

Head, Transport, Highways and Infrastructure:

I cannot answer the exact part of your question about seeking approval but we have put together a strategic outline case which was submitted to Treasury, which sets out the funding profile we need. That is going to be funded from 2025, although we are looking to support that with some internal funding, so we are continuing work in 2024. This is a large and strategic project which will protect the most vulnerable part of the Island in terms of households from flooding, particularly from the one-in-200-year storm, which could cause significant property damage and also disruption to the Island's hotels, businesses, et cetera and having to accommodate people, et cetera, who will be displaced by a flooding event like that.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Okay, so there is money going in 2024.

Head, Transport, Highways and Infrastructure:

Yes, we are spending some of the department's money to ensure that the work that we have undertaken already keeps moving and we do not lose momentum.²¹

In consideration that multiple coastal adaptation projects will need to be funded between now and 2040 (and beyond), the Panel was keen to understand to what extent a long-term strategic approach to financing these works was being prioritised:

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Okay. We spoke at our last quarterly hearing about the issues with funding such large and expensive projects such as coastal adaption works, as well as competing priorities with other important projects to the capital programme. Are you any further forward with talks as to how to manage funding of these projects outside of sort of multiple other competing priorities?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I am not quite sure how to answer that one. Other than the fact that I think you can probably gather from all the work that is being done and the fact that we are getting a steady increase, firstly, in our budget and, secondly, in the flexibility in the way in which we can work, it is a steady progress and we are ramping it up. You cannot go from A to Z overnight. I think we are making a good case for what we do and we are continually putting pressure on and try and find innovative ways of doing some self-funding in terms of property sales

²¹ [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Infrastructure – 22nd November 2023, p. 26-27

*and so on and sort of tweaking the Treasury to recognise that systematically they have got to keep providing a little bit more money.*²²

RECOMMENDATION 7: The Minister for Infrastructure should work with the Minister for Treasury and Resources to explore longer-term funding solution(s) for the numerous coastal adaptation projects identified in the Shoreline Management Plan. Noting that several defence projects have been identified in the first epoch of the Plan as needing to be constructed by 2040, a long-term funding solution should be brought forward that enables work to start on these projects in sufficient time for these to be completed by that date.

Conclusion

A recurring theme throughout our review has been the need for longer-term financing for a number of key priority workstreams and projects. Namely, the Climate Emergency Fund; liquid waste charging; Shoreline Management Plan coastal adaptation projects; maintenance and investment in the Public Estate; and the water strategy.

It is understandable that there will always be numerous competing funding priorities across Government. However, a key underlying concern for the Panel is the lack of progress to date in moving forward with longer-term financing strategies. The Panel intends to keep a watching brief throughout 2024 and would hope to see further progress made and some longer-term plans presented to the States Assembly in time for the Proposed Government Plan 2025-2028.

The Panel further notes that the Jersey Fiscal Policy Panel Annual Report 2023 has also reiterated the need for a long-term financing plan for the Climate Emergency Fund and recommends that consideration be given by Government to the funding strategy of major capital projects over the medium and long-term.²³

Whilst each scrutiny panel has undertaken its own review, several overarching recommendations have become apparent during the review process and have been made within the Corporate Service Panel's report (see Appendix 1). The Panel fully supports these recommendations, and it is hoped these will serve as useful, constructive feedback to Ministers to consider when preparing the next Government Plan.

In relation to the recommendations made within this report, the Panel requests a formal response in writing from Ministers acknowledging the recommendations and to confirm its acceptance, or otherwise. If not accepted, the Panel requests a full explanation be provided in the written response.

²² [Transcript](#) – Public Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Infrastructure – 22nd November 2023, p. 29

²³ [Jersey Fiscal Policy Panel – Annual Report – November 2023](#)

Appendix 1 – Overarching scrutiny recommendations

The following overarching recommendations are based on observations made across all panels during the review process across and have been presented in the Corporate Services Panel's main report which will require a formal Ministerial Response. N.B. Recommendations included below are only overarching ones and therefore do not follow in sequential number order.

RECOMMENDATION 1 (OVERARCHING): The Council of Ministers must ensure that in all future Government Plans, all tables include the figures of the preceding year to improve budget comparison, transparency and accountability. Consideration should be given to how narrative for ongoing expenditure and business-as-usual workstreams can be demonstrated within the Government Plan to provide further clarity.

RECOMMENDATION 2 (OVERARCHING): The Council of Ministers should in the Delivery Plans for 2024 and all future Delivery Plans, include narrative of the workstreams of departments, including detail of ongoing expenditure and business-as-usual, so that the Government can transparently demonstrate how taxpayers' money is spent for delivering services and projects.

RECOMMENDATION 3 (OVERARCHING): The Council of Ministers must publish a mid-year progress report in future years prior to the lodging of the Government Plan by the deadline of 31st August each year. The report must include progress updates on all projects and programmes, detail on how the funding has been allocated to date, whether the delivery is on track and to be delivered by the identified timescale and within the budget allocated.

RECOMMENDATION 4 (OVERARCHING): The Council of Ministers must publish within the public domain the annual progress reports provided to Scrutiny Panels by Ministers by the deadline of 31st December of each year to improve transparency and accountability of the Government Plan process for the delivery of projects within the approved funding allocations.

RECOMMENDATION 5 (OVERARCHING): The Council of Ministers must consider how the accessibility of future Government Plans can be further enhanced for members of the public. Consideration should be given to the terminology used (including for the title) and how to improve the comprehension of it and its purpose.

RECOMMENDATION 6 (OVERARCHING): The Council of Ministers must engage with Jersey's Youth Parliament in their capacity as a link between Jersey's young people and Government on the Government Plan process and the purpose of the Government Plan. This should be done as soon as possible after the lodging of future Government Plans so that young people's views can be heard and used to inform any amendment process to the Government Plan.

RECOMMENDATION 7 (OVERARCHING): The Council of Minister must ensure that the child-friendly version of the Government Plan is published alongside the Government Plan and Ministerial Plans for future Government

Plans and that appropriate measures are taken to communicate and promote it to children and young people.

RECOMMENDATION 9 (OVERARCHING): The Council of Ministers must for future Government Plans consider how Children's Rights Impact Assessments can be completed on the proposals for which CRIAs should be completed due to their impact on children and young people. This will strengthen the commitment of the Council of Ministers and States Assembly by ensuring that the best interests of children and young people remain integral to the Government decision making process.

RECOMMENDATION 21 (OVERARCHING): All future Government Plans must distinguish the specific areas and projects to which Value for Money savings are attached, include reporting on all Value for Money savings which were made during the duration of the Government Plan and identify and provide full details of the monitoring process that has been undertaken on the Value for Money Programme during the duration of the previous Government Plan.

RECOMMENDATION 22 (OVERARCHING): The Council of Ministers must consider how to improve transparency of the Revenue Growth Allocations by including more detail on the proposals in the Government Plan and by publishing the business cases within the public domain, in a transparent manner, albeit, in a redacted form to maintain confidentiality when required.

RECOMMENDATION 23 (OVERARCHING): The Council of Ministers must provide to Scrutiny a list of the Revenue Growth bids that were presented to the Treasury and Exchequer, however, were not successful for either business case commissioning and/or inclusion within the Government Plan. This information should be provided to Scrutiny each year at the time of lodging of the Government Plan.