

STATES OF JERSEY



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

Presented to the States on 6th December 2023
by the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Background

The Proposed Government Plan 2024 – 2027 (the ‘Government Plan’) was lodged on 19th September 2023, providing a 12-week period for review ahead of its debate at the final States Assembly sitting of the year (in the week commencing 11th December 2023). The Government Plan was accompanied by the publication of:

- Annex: this document provided further details about the departmental spending and additional revenue expenditure. It was published as a States Assembly report ([R.141/2023](#)) on the same date as the Government Plan.
- Ministerial Plans 2024: an update on the Ministerial Plans published for 2023. This document provided overarching details about each Minister’s priorities for the year ahead and across the whole Government Programme. It was published as a States Assembly report ([R.143/2023](#)) on the same date as the Government Plan.

The Panel has also noted the publication of a Child Rights Impact Assessment relating to the Government Plan by the Minister for Children and Education ([R.174/2023](#)). This was published on 24th November 2024.

Last year the Panel published a report ([S.R.21/2022](#)) with 37 findings and 18 recommendations for the Government Plan 2023-2026. The Panel has reflected that the review and report process was useful to undertake in 2022 for the first Government Plan of this electoral term. For the output of this review in 2023, the Panel agreed to focus its attention on amendments and to summarise any findings and recommendations in a comments paper.

As further context, the Panel also refers to the overarching recommendations published by the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel in its report on the Government Plan [S.R.4/2023](#).

The Panel’s approach to scrutinising the Government Plan

As per last year, the Scrutiny Liaison Committee agreed that each Panel would review the aspects of the Government Plan that aligned with its remit. A list of the revenue programmes examined by the Panel can be found [here](#).

The Panel’s Terms of Reference for the Review were agreed in line with other Scrutiny Panels. Specifically, the Terms of Reference were:

To review components of the Government Plan 2024-2027 Proposition [P.72/2023] which are relevant to the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel to determine the following:

1. *The impact of the Government Plan proposals on departmental budgets, savings and staffing levels.*
2. *Whether the revenue expenditure growth, capital and other projects are appropriate and likely to have a positive impact on Islanders and Island life.*

3. *How the proposed revenue expenditure growth, capital and other projects align with the Common Strategic Policy to deliver on the priorities, and with the objectives of the Ministerial Plans.*
4. *Whether the resources allocated to revenue expenditure growth and capital and other projects are sufficient, ensure value for money and demonstrate best use of public funds.*
5. *The impact of the Government Plan proposals on the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund.*

The Panel received the following letters from Government Ministers in response to its queries about the content of the Government Plan:

- Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources: responses to queries in relation to the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund (received [23rd October 2023](#))
- Minister for Children and Education: responses to Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES) queries (received [24th October 2023](#))
- Minister for Justice and Home Affairs: responses to Justice and Home Affairs enquiries (received [31st October 2023](#))
- Minister for Justice and Home Affairs: responses to States of Jersey Police enquiries (received [31st October 2023](#))
- Minister for Justice and Home Affairs: follow ups from the public review hearing (received [21st November 2023](#))
- Minister for Infrastructure: responses to queries about the States of Jersey Ambulance Service Station building (received [24th November 2023](#))

The Panel identified approximately 24 external stakeholders and wrote to them as part of the review. The Panel received responses and submissions from the following:

- [Jersey Cares](#)
- [Brighter Futures](#)
- [NEU \(National Education Union\)](#)
- [Acting Children's Commissioner for Jersey](#)
- [Jersey Sport](#)
- [Jersey Probation and After-Care Service](#)
- [Jersey Care Commission](#)
- [Jersey Police Authority](#)

The Panel also held two public hearings with Ministers as part of its Government Plan Review:

- The Minister for Children and Education on [31st October 2023](#)
- The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs on [10th November 2023](#)

The Panel extends its thanks to all those who contributed to its evidence gathering process.

Amendments

The Panel has lodged two amendments to the Government Plan 2024-2027:

- Twenty-first amendment: Le Rocquier School and Community Sports Facilities ([P.72/2023 Amd.21](#)).
- Twenty-fourth amendment: Expanding Early Years Nursery Provision and Childcare support ([P.72/2023 Amd.24](#)).

The reports accompanying the amendments provide further information which the Panel will not repeat in this comments paper.

Main themes and key findings

For ease of reference, the Panel sets out its comments below in an order that reflects the Proposition and Summary Tables in the published Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027 Report:

Table 3 – Transfer of monies between States Funds

Per part (e) of the Proposition, amongst various transfers between States Funds, the States Assembly is asked to approve the transfer of £777,000 from the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund (COCF) to the Consolidated Fund.

The COCF is established under Article 24 of the Proceeds of Crime (Jersey) Law 1999 and is a ‘special fund’ for the purposes of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2005¹. The Panel notes that the balance of the COCF is not provided in the Government Plan. Information about the COCF is grouped with ‘Other Special Funds’ (pages 94-95) and it is not listed in the summary fund balances on page 85 of the document. The Panel queried this and received a response from the Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources which indicated that the 2024 opening balance of the COCF was estimated to be £1.254 million². The Panel is therefore satisfied that there are sufficient funds to make the proposed transfer out of the COCF and notes that the remaining balance of the fund is approximately £476,000.

The Panel has previously made a number of enquiries about the use of the money from the COCF and has asked the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs to clarify the cashflow for various projects where the COCF was the source of funds. The Panel has previously identified that the funding to be transferred from the COCF in 2023 was a lower amount than the projects which it was reported to be funding. The Minister responded to the Panel’s queries to advise that:

The discrepancy noted by the Panel is as a result of the transfers from the COCF and the project budgets themselves being accounted for differently. The amounts for the projects included in the Government Plan for 2023 are the monies required to complete the projects on a cash flow basis. As the projects have developed, they have been subject to reprofiling across the years to better reflect the pattern of planned spend. Monies have been transferred in previous years, according to the previous profiling.³

¹ [Proceeds of Crime \(Jersey\) Law 1999 \(jerseylaw.je\)](#) (accessed 28/11/2023)

² [Letter](#) – Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources – 23rd October 2023

³ [Response of the Minister for Home Affairs to S.R.21/2022](#), February 2023, p. 5

The Panel followed this up as during its quarterly hearings with the Minister and received further details of spending profiles in a letter on 11th May 2023⁴. It is the Panel's understanding that money has been transferred out of the COCF and that, for several projects, there has been a carried forward unspent balance over a number of years in the Consolidated Fund for specific projects. Whilst the funding is still ultimately allocated to the project there is a period of time where the COCF money is not being managed in the 'special fund'. As one example, a transfer of £6.5 million from the COCF to the Community and Constitutional Affairs Revenue Head of Expenditure was approved (by Ministerial decision [MD-T-2018-0007](#)) in January 2018 for the purpose of funding the Prison Phase 6 developments. The funding was not utilised for the project until 2021⁵. The Panel recognises the need for flexibility allowed by the Public Finances Manual to carry forward funding, but queries the length of time between the transfer and usage of money originating from a designated 'special fund', including whether this achieved the best value for money.

The Panel has received assurance from the Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources that there is governance in place for the use of the funds as per the Public Finances Manual:

Funds are transferred from the COCF to the Consolidated Fund in the relevant financial year, and the budget for the project created in the normal manner. If the project does not utilise all its budget in the year, any remaining budget is transferred to the next financial year for the same project via the end of year flexibility process. If the budget is not needed at all it will be returned to the COCF. Governance exists around budgets for projects in the Public Finances Manual to ensure that budgets, including those funded by the COCF, are used for the specific purposes intended.

It is not within the Panel's remit to review the accountability of the States of Jersey's special funds, however, it would like to highlight the queries it has around the carry forward of unspent balance over several years and whether the practical application of governance processes that are in place around the use of the special funds are suitable and ensure the most appropriate management and application of public money.

Table 4 – Major Projects

Per part (g) of the Proposition the States Assembly is asked to approve costs and changes to 'Major Projects', which is defined under Article 1 of the Public Finances Law 2019⁶.

CYPES

The two Major Projects highlighted with CYPES as the sponsoring department are both new Major Projects for 2024, namely: 'Le Squez' (requiring total project approval of £7.5 million) and 'Mont à Labbé Secondary' (requiring total project approval of £23 million).

⁴ [Letter](#) – Minister for Home Affairs – 11th May 2023

⁵ Ibid, cashflow p.8

⁶ [Public Finances \(Jersey\) Law 2019 \(jerseylaw.je\)](#) (accessed 28/11/2023)

The Panel learned that both of these projects had been moved from the grouped Head of Expenditure for ‘New School and Educational Developments’⁷. In the review of the Government Plan last year, the Panel found that funding that had previously been allocated to School Estates Major Projects had been removed and moved into Grouped Heads of Expenditure to assist CYPES with managing and prioritising its estates projects⁸. Last year the Panel made a recommendation about the need for transparency around the prioritisation of the projects (namely Recommendations 12 & 14 of [S.R.21/2022](#)).

Whilst the Panel is pleased to hear of progress to some of the capital projects it comments that its recommendations surrounding the transparency of the decision-making process for capital projects prioritisation remain. The Panel had previously heard about the plans to update youth and community facilities at Le Squez through the Government Plan review process last year. In the Government Plan published this year, it has been categorised as a ‘major project’ and the Minister provided the Panel with an update in a public hearing on 31st October 2023:

*We are also investing in the Youth Centre at Le Squez. It is one of the bigger projects and the project plans are already drawn and it is through the feasibility, which will be a new community hub and a space for young people and also space for speech and language therapy. It is big site that we will make sure it is all connected around the schools.*⁹

The Panel noted that the Minister published the Child Rights Impact Assessment for this project on 24th November which also provided public details about how the project would also “make major alterations to Samarès School to meet the needs of an increasing school population.”¹⁰ The Panel highlights that the project had previously been presented through the ‘Youth Services’ aspect of the ‘Upgrades to CYPES Estates’ and it was not clear from presented information that there would be major school alterations included in the scope of the project.

The Panel requests clarification around the exact scope of the project and the split of any funding between youth services and the school. The Panel is not questioning the worth of the projects but suggests that it is not suitable for there to be ambiguity around the scope of the project as this does not allow effective scrutiny to be undertaken.

Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)

The Panel also reviewed the status of the Major Project for ‘Ambulance, Fire and Rescue (AFR) Headquarters’ (total project approval was unchanged from previous years, in the sum of £24.403 million). The Panel reflected on its review of the previous Government Plan, which had identified that the project was delayed because of a wider estate review including consideration of the town primary school estate. At the time, the Panel had been advised that the decision about the future location of the current Rouge Bouillon School would be confirmed by the Minister for Children and Education in early 2023. No decision about the school has been made public at the time of this report.

⁷ [Letter](#) – Minister for Children and Education – 24th October 2023

⁸ [S.R.21/2022](#), Children Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel, December 2022

⁹ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Education, 31st October 2023, p.26

¹⁰ Child Rights Impact Assessments – Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027 ([R.174/2023](#)), Minister for Children and Education, 24th November 2023, p. 10

The Panel was advised that a joint project board has been created across the three impacted departments (JHA, CYPES and Infrastructure) and that group was hoping to take its recommendations to Ministers at the end of 2023, or in early 2024, to move the project forward.¹¹

Whilst the total funding for the AFR project is unchanged (£24.403 million) the Panel notes that the profile of the funding allocation has changed since last year, which indicates that the project will be delayed further, towards 2027. In the public hearing on 10th November 2023 the Chief Officer of JHA referenced the total funding approved for the major project, but advised that the figure “*routes back to an amount on a design that was originally done in 2019, so it will self-evidently not be the right amount of money.*”¹²

The Panel had recommended in [S.R.21/2022](#) that the Council of Ministers should identify funding for the maintenance of the current States of Jersey Ambulance Service (SoJAS) building and notes that this has been addressed in this Government Plan. During a public hearing with the Panel the Minister for Justice Home Affairs expressed frustration that the SoJAS was required to operate from a site that was not fit for purpose:

*It goes without saying that it is incredibly frustrating that I have an emergency service that needs to operate in a building like that, not fit for purpose, £1.6 million required to just make it safe. This is not a pleasant environment either.*¹³

Table 5i – Revenue Heads of Expenditure (HoE)

Per part (h) of the Proposition the States Assembly is asked to approve the HoE for each Department from the funding available in the Consolidated Fund. The Panel notes that the changes to Net Changes to Revenue HoE can be found on page 5 of the Annex document ([R.141/2023](#)).

The Panel notes the difficulty in scrutinising these high-level numbers in the Heads of Expenditure and makes reference to the overarching recommendation published by the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel:

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.*¹⁴

The Panel focussed some questioning on the targeted Value for Money (VFM) savings proposed by the Government Plan (summarised on page 57) as these impact on each Department’s HoE.

¹¹ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 10th November 2023, p. 32

¹² Ibid, p. 32

¹³ Ibid, p. 18-19

¹⁴ [S.R.4/2023](#), p.24

The Panel compared the VFM allocations from 2023 to the VFM targets for 2024:

Department	2023 VFM savings	2024 VFM savings ¹⁵
CYPES	£688,000	£2,451,000
JHA	£144,000	£512,000
SoJP	£117,000	£375,000

The Panel noted that the 2024 targets were higher than those set for 2023 and queried whether this was achievable with each responsible Minister.

CYPES

The Panel was advised that £112,000 of recurrent savings were identified in 2023 and that non-ringfenced underspends were reallocated to cover the Department's total of £688,000 VFM savings target in 2023.

To achieve the 2024 savings, the Panel has been advised that the following workstreams have been identified:

- a review of establishment / post and vacancy management;
- a review to reduce the use of overtime and agency and variable contingent labour costs;
- improvements in process and systems;
- improved contract assessment; and
- general procurement.¹⁶

The Minister for Children and Education confirmed in a public hearing that the savings target represented approximately 1.19% of the CYPES budget, but confirmed that it would not result in the reduction of front-line staff:

From my direction of travel and it is clear to all officers I am not ready to reduce any front-line staff, so it will not be a reduction in any services and front-line staff and it will be increased because we would invest more in inclusion. We will invest more in C.A.M.H.S. (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) and I am happy to talk about that later. So this is the target. The officers now are working to present to me a more detailed breakdown but I am not going to sign anything that will damage and can affect in a negative way the delivery of services.¹⁷

JHA

The Panel was advised that 2023 VFM savings (£144,000) have been offset using the non-pay inflation allocation. The Panel was advised that the senior leadership team for JHA were reviewing budgets per service to deliver the 2024 savings (£512,000). The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs' written response to the Panel highlighted that

¹⁵ Note: Figures stated as those proposed before Amendment 33 to P.72/2023 was lodged

¹⁶ [Letter](#) – Minister for Children and Education – 24th October 2023

¹⁷ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Education – 31st October 2023, p. 2

the non-pay budget was approximately 22% of the total net budget for JHA and subject to inflationary pressures.¹⁸

The Panel had queried how the target VFM savings figure had been agreed upon and the Chief Officer for JHA confirmed that, for 2024, the £10 million VFM commitment had been pro-rated to departments against their percentage of overall expenditure.¹⁹ In 2023 £7 million of the VFM savings had been held centrally, which accounted for the significant increase in the targets for 2024.

States of Jersey Police

The Panel was advised that the 2023 VFM savings were offset with non-pay allocation²⁰. For SoJP, the VFM target for 2024 (£375,000) was higher than 2023 (£117,000) and the Panel queried how this would be allocated. It was highlighted that the SoJP's Head of Expenditure was approximately 90% staff costs and 10% other operating expenses. In a public hearing the Chief of Police advised that:

Only 10 per cent is non-staff and 1 per cent is income. It is a tiny amount. I see no prospect of increasing that income and that is not ordinarily what we do. So the challenge is always going to be how you can achieve more with less people. Given what has happened in the last 12 months, that is quite a challenge for us. So I cannot say to you, Vice-Chair, that we have a firm plan but ordinarily it is looking at people, whether that is police officers and police staff. So we have started on that work and I will happily update the panel as we progress into the year, but ordinarily it is around things like vacancy factors. As people leave us and we get new people in, there is a lag and that provides us an opportunity for savings, but it is undoubtedly going to be a challenge for us.²¹

The Panel is concerned to hear that the VFM target might impact staffing for SoJP and queries if using vacancy factors is a sustainable way for the Government to achieve savings.

For reference, the Government Plan of 2020-2023 included investment in the SoJP to bring the number of Police Officers up to 215. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs confirmed that the SoJP current (as at 31st October 2023) establishment is 205 Police Officers and 120 Police Staff²². Therefore, the number of Police Officers is below the minimum requirement for Police Officers formally approved by the States Assembly.

The Panel received a submission from the Jersey Police Authority, which can be read in full [here](#). The submission expressed concern about the impact of inadequate funding:

In recent years, SOJP have already made a significant amount of savings to ease the burden of public financing pressures.

¹⁸ [Letter](#) - Minister for Justice and Home Affairs (re JHA remit) – 31st October 2023

¹⁹ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 10th November 2023, p.4

²⁰ [Letter](#) - Minister for Justice and Home Affairs (re SoJP remit) – 31st October 2023

²¹ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 10th November 2023, p.6

²² [Letter](#) – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs (SoJP remit) – 31st October 2023

Inadequate funding can have several consequences, which may affect public safety, police effectiveness, and community well-being. It is important to note that the specific consequences may vary depending on the extent of underfunding and the unique circumstances of Island life.

It is critical to strike a balance between adequately funding SOJP and holding them to account for their performance. However the consequences of underfunding can be detrimental to both our officers and staff as well as the communities they protect.²³

On a related matter, the Panel notes a reference in the Government Plan report to the Government looking for ways to work jointly with Guernsey, as a means to deliver value for money. In response to queries on this in a public hearing the Chief of Police confirmed that there were opportunities to explore joint working but also advised that, in the case of the SoJP, he was of the opinion that it would not generate significant monetary savings²⁴.

Allocation of VFM targets

Reflecting on the evidence noted above, particularly in relation to SoJP, the Panel is concerned about the allocation of VFM targets on a pro-rata basis. Whilst the approach to assigning VFM pro-rata across Government departments appears to be relatively equal at a high level, the Panel is concerned that the approach might not be equitable or in the best interest of the public. The pro-rata of VFM savings targets does not take into account content or context of the services provided by each Department, particularly those providing frontline or essential services.

Further to this, the Panel notes that the proposed [Amendment 33](#) to the Government Plan (lodged 28th November 2023) will further impact the Department's HoE through the VFM targets. The Panel has not had the opportunity to ask Ministers or Departments about how this additional allocation requirement will create impact.

The Panel recommends that the Council of Ministers review its approach to pro-rating VFM savings in future Government Plans, in order to ensure that frontline services are not negatively impacted.

The Panel also references the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel's overarching recommendation in relation to VFM, namely:

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.²⁵

²³ [Submission](#) – Jersey Police Authority – 9th November 2023

²⁴ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 10th November 2023, p.5

²⁵ [S.R.4/2023](#), p.86

Grant funding

The Panel has asked a number of questions around the funding for Grants and Subsidies payments provided by CYPES (£10.827 million estimated budget in 2024), for which high level details are provided on the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for CYPES (page 19 of the [Annex](#)).

The Minister for Children and Education provided a list of all subsidies and grants to the Panel in a letter on 24th October 2023²⁶ and the Panel asked further questions about the process for this in a public hearing on 31st October 2023. The Minister referred to her Ministerial Priorities for 2024, which include “*developing Best Practice models for partnership engagement with the 3rd sector*”²⁷ and explained that a new framework would be in place by 2025:

*What their officers are going to do through 2024, they are going to review that a new framework will be implemented from 2025 because I found some legacy things with question marks and I feel there are new charities that are very active, very positive.*²⁸

The Panel notes a written submission it received from the charity Brighter Futures (see full response [here](#)) which emphasised the value that work by charities and the third sector can provide to the Island, noting that “*Sustainable investment in Brighter Futures will save Jersey money.*”²⁹

During the public hearing on 31st October 2023, as part of discussions around grant funding, the Chief Officer for CYPES reflected that:

*... I think what the charities are really saying is they need to have a long-term plan and they need to understand where there is long-term certainty so they can recruit substantively and that is what we want to work with them around.*³⁰

The Panel was pleased to hear about the development of a Best Practice model / framework for grant and subsidy funding and will request further updates from the Minister for Children and Education on this during 2024 in order to understand the plans for future grant funding allocations and whether there are plans to capture and assess the value of services.

Summary Table 5ii – Capital and Other Projects Heads of Expenditure

Part (h) of the Proposition P.72/2023 asks the States Assembly to approve the amounts to be used for the Capital and Other Projects Heads of Expenditure from the funding available in the Consolidated Fund.

²⁶ [Letter](#) – Minister for Children and Education – 24th October 2023, p. 6

²⁷ Ministerial Plans 2024 ([R.143/2023](#)), Council of Ministers, September 2023, p. 15

²⁸ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Education – 31st October 2023, p.10

²⁹ [Submission](#) – Brighter Futures – 8th November 2023

³⁰ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Education – 31st October 2023, p.12

The Panel will not make a comment about every project in this section (and some have been referenced elsewhere in this paper), please see the Panel's [review page](#) if you wish to look for further information gathered about other particular projects which are not specifically detailed. Some points the Panel wishes to highlight are:

Grouped Head of Expenditure, Upgrades to CYPES Estates

The Panel reiterates its recommendations from [S.R.21/2022](#) regarding the transparency of projects, funding and priorities of projects being developed as part of 'Upgrades to CYPES Estates'. The Government Plan provides a breakdown of the Grouped HoE on page 66 of the Government Plan, but a number of the projects have been listed as in development for some time and it is not clear which aspects are being progressed by CYPES as a priority.

The Panel particularly notes the funding assigned to 'Residential Homes and Secure Settings'. To summarise, this funding was previously an allocated major project under the name 'Redesign of Greenfields' and was moved and renamed as part of the last Government Plan³¹. The Panel recommends that the Minister for Children and Education should provide further details about this project as a priority.

The Panel also notes points in the submission from Brighter Futures who provide services from the Government-owned building The Bridge, Le Geyt Road, St. Saviour (the former St. Mark's School building):

There has been very little investment since the building was changed to a Community Centre in 2007, apart from ongoing projects spending money on offices, for the employees to then move off after varied periods of time. This wasted investment has been ongoing for many years, with little or no investment in the shared areas, structure, or the areas used by Brighter Futures and its families.³²

New School and Educational Developments

The Government Plan does not provide an estimate for funding of this project in 2024 or 2025, and the Panel was advised that this was because the projects in development under this HoE (Le Squez and Mont à Labbé Secondary) have been moved to their own separate HoE as major projects.

There is no other detailed information about the other projects to be progressed as part of this HoE across 2026 – 2027 but the Panel understands that it relates to planned developments of the town primary school estate.

The Panel's proposed amendment to the Government Plan ([number 21](#)) in relation to the Le Rocquier School and Community Sports facilities reflects some of the Panel's comments about the use of the Grouped HoE and the lack of clarity around prioritisation.

The Panel suggests that there could be a wider discussion around the accountability of the Grouped HoE.

³¹ [S.R.21/2022](#), p.73

³² [Submission](#) – Brighter Futures – 8th November 2023

Army and Sea Cadet Headquarters

The Government Plan does not provide an estimate for funding of this project in 2024. In its previous review the Panel had reported that a potential new location for the Army and Sea Cadet Headquarters had been identified and that it was expected to be announced in early 2023.³³ At the time of drafting this report, no location has been publicly announced. As part of this review the Minister provided the following update:

*Ports of Jersey are currently undertaking a full site survey at the relevant site conducted by a specialist engineering supplier. We are expecting that to be completed mid-November, so that will provide all the interested parties with information about that location's viability for anything to be built, including the planned facility and any other function. So that is what we are waiting for, that review by Ports of Jersey.*³⁴

Dewberry House – Sexual Assault Referral Centre

The Government Plan provides a 2024 estimated expenditure of £3.315 million for this project (total project funding detailed as £4.291 million). However, in a letter to the Panel on 21st August 2023 the Minister advised that the total funding for Dewberry House would now likely be in the sum of £5,077,113.27, indicating a funding shortfall of £785,521.27³⁵. The Panel noted that the updated figure was not reflected in the Government Plan and queried this. The Minister responded:

*Provision for £4,291 million for this project is made in the Government Plan. Due to inflation and necessary changes to the design and orientation of the building on the site, the expected costs are likely to be higher than the current provision. Work is ongoing with officers in the Department and also in Treasury and Exchequer to ensure that we can resolve this position and have the full funding we need for this extremely important project.*³⁶

The Panel sought assurance that the project would not be put at risk due to the lack of full funding for the project. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs advised the Panel that:

...the funding required will have increased because building costs have increased from when we initially put in the initial sum. But obviously Dewberry House is my absolute priority in terms of providing services to victims and witnesses, obviously through the Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce report as well, so I am confident that the money will be available to do what needs to be done.

The Panel had previously been advised that the project would be solely funded by the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund and queried where any shortfall of funding would be found. The Minister advised:

³³ [S.R.21/2022](#), p.75

³⁴ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 10th November 2023, p. 36

³⁵ [Letter](#) – Minister for Home Affairs – 21st August 2023

³⁶ [Letter](#) – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs (SoJP remit) – 31st October 2023

The first place that I would like it to come from is the C.O.C.F. (Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund) because that was what was conceived at the beginning. But otherwise, no, we would look for alternative sources of funding.³⁷

The Panel recommends that the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs addresses the shortfall of funding for Dewberry House as part of the Proposed Government Plan 2025 – 2028. The Panel also highlights, that if the funding increases to over £5 million the project should be classified as a ‘Major Project’ per the Public Finances Law.

Revenue Expenditure Growth (Appendix 3: Supplementary Financial Table)

The Panel summarises its key comments about the additional revenue growth funding Government is seeking for the remits below.

CYPES

Total increased revenue expenditure growth of £4.7 million in 2024 and £18.8 million across the 4-year Government Plan period. The Panel asked the Minister for Children and Education about the programmes supported by the 2024 revenue expenditure growth in a public hearing on 31st October 2023 (transcript available [here](#)).

- Children’s Social Care Reform – New Homes (£1.7 million in 2024)

The Panel learned that this funding is to provide longer term funding for two children’s homes which had to be established during 2023 in an emergency situation. In a letter to the Panel, the Minister explained that:

This position has enabled 2023 funding to support the emergency opening of the 2 homes by utilising underspend against investment from the £6.5m already approved. The additional £1.7m investment for 2024 remains a requirement in addition to the £6.5m in order for the department to fulfil the overall ambition of the Care Reform Programme plus the additional 2 homes.³⁸

In a written submission to the Panel, Jersey Cares emphasised that funds for the investment and redesign of children’s social care in line with the recommendations of the Care Inquiry must be protected. They further stated that:

We have concerns that the additional £1.7 million investment specifically ringfenced for two new children’s homes, has not been enough to meet demand.³⁹

- Investment in Young People across CYPES frontline services (£2.615 million in 2024)

Through the published response to [W.Q.371/2023](#) the Panel noted that this revenue expenditure programme included consolidated funding from parts of various

³⁷ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 10th November 2023, p. 29

³⁸ [Letter](#) – Minister for Children and Education – 24th October 2023

³⁹ [Submission](#) – Jersey Cares – 8th November 2023

unapproved funding requests. The Panel asked for further details about how the requested funding would be allocated between CYPES services. The Minister provided the following further detail to the Panel:

I have prioritised investment in frontline services and anticipate the majority of this funding will be invested in the education directorate, however support will be provided to other frontline services in CYPES including the Youth Service and CAMHS.

Establishing an inclusive education system continues to be a very high priority and, whilst we continue to develop the specific plan, I am considering:

- *Increased funding to keep pace with demographic changes, in particular to reflect the continued growth in numbers of children and young people with SEND and those receiving a Record of Need.*
- *Increased investment to support inclusion in our Island's early years provisions, particularly for younger children (2-3).*
- *Further investment in specialist workforce to support some of our most vulnerable children in education.*

In addition, I am also seeking to support additional Youth Workers to our projects in the west of the island and supporting our CAMHS to improve our services.⁴⁰

The Panel suggests that there is still a lack of clarity about how the revenue expenditure growth will be targeted and split between CYPES services. The Minister for Children and Education should provide confirmation of how this will be allocated in the 2024 delivery plans.

- Investment in young people workforce participation (£385,000 in 2024)

The Panel was provided with 'before' and 'after' diagrams of the structure of the service which illustrated the new connections between services.⁴¹ The Panel understands that the investment is to pay for the staff costs (which were previously met by the Fiscal Stimulus funding)⁴².

Infrastructure

Ambulance Station HQ (£423,000 funding sought for 2024, with a total of £1.433 million over the 4-year Government Plan period).

As referenced earlier in this comments paper, the Panel had recommended in [S.R.21/2022](#) that the Council of Ministers should identify funding for the maintenance of the current SoJAS building.

⁴⁰ [Letter](#) – Minister for Children and Education – 24th October 2023

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Education – 31st October 2023, p.50-51

The Panel asked the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs about the new revenue funding in its public hearing on 10th November 2023 (transcript available [here](#)) but were advised that it should redirect queries to the Minister for Infrastructure, which it did in a letter. The Minister for Infrastructure replied to the Panel on 24th November 2023 and explained that the requirement for essential maintenance at the site was identified by an independently commissioned building condition survey (undertaken in 2022). It was explained that there is a risk stratified programme of works:

*These range from urgent health and safety matters to essential works and preventative maintenance, to prevent further deterioration and service disruption. In total, phased over five years, work to the value of £1.4m is required. This will ensure the critical national infrastructure of the Ambulance Station continues to maintain its emergency and routine operational requirements.*⁴³

The Minister for Infrastructure also highlighted that:

*It is not possible to guarantee the final price absolutely so there [is a] risk that the costs of providing an ambulance station could increase beyond the £1.4m identified in this Government Plan.*⁴⁴

The Panel is concerned that £1.4 million is due to be spent on a building that has a remaining lifespan of five to ten years and notes the risks of the extension of the AFR project will have to increasing the maintenance costs on the current Ambulance Station headquarters building.

Furthermore, the Minister for Infrastructure stated that:

*The current approach to management of the estate is very short term and reactive which is primarily a function of limited resources forcing a focus on compliant use of buildings to the detriment of routine and planned maintenance and upkeep. As an example, the value of the maintenance budget has decreased since 2015 by about 38% in real terms and last year was £8.3m. The property team are working with the Treasury to extend the view of the Capital Programme and to use a condition survey of the entire estate to plan a smoother profile for management of the estate with a view to achieving a much longer-term approach.*⁴⁵

Whilst this response was provided in relation to the SoJAS building, the Panel notes the common Corporate Landlord for Government property and suggests that the commentary around management, maintenance and upkeep echoes what it has heard about elements of the CYPES estate (for example, the comments from Brighter Futures about the Bridge quoted earlier in this comments paper).

JHA

Total increased revenue expenditure growth of £1.994 million for 2024 and £8.678 million across the 4-year Government Plan period.

⁴³ [Letter](#) – Minister for Infrastructure – 24th November 2023

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Ibid

The Panel asked the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs about these projects in its public hearing on 10th November 2023 (transcript available [here](#)). At this time the Panel has no further comment to make on this proposed funding.

SoJP

Total increased revenue expenditure of £237,000 for 2024, in relation to funding requested for the Digital Forensics Unit (DFU). The Panel asked the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs about this in its public hearing on 10th November 2023 (transcript available [here](#)).

The Panel was advised that the area of digital forensics was “massively expanding” and it was indicated that the original bid for funding in this area was larger than was approved by the Council of Ministers for inclusion in the Government Plan⁴⁶. The Panel was advised that digital forensics was an area of high importance to investigations and required sufficient expertise.

The Panel notes that the total increased revenue expenditure for the DFU is lower than the SoJP’s VFM target for 2024 (£375,000). The Panel references its concerns noted earlier in this comments paper about the pressure that VFM targets will have on the SoJP budget and its possible impact on staffing levels.

Conclusion

The Panel summarises its findings and recommendations as follows:

Findings:

- The Panel has found that funds paid out of the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund for specific projects have often had balances carried forward for a number of years within the Consolidated Fund rather than the funds remaining in the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund for management. The Panel queries this approach and will be writing to the Public Accounts Committee to highlight this.
- There is a lack of information provided in the Government Plan about the priorities, scope and funding of the CYPES capital projects.
- The Justice and Home Affairs estates projects for the Ambulance, Fire and Rescue Headquarters and Army and Sea Cadet Headquarters all have lengthened timescales in comparison to previous Government Plans.
- The VFM savings commitments had been pro-rated to departments against their percentage of overall expenditure.
- The Minister for Children and Education has advised that the VFM savings targets from CYPES will not be found through a reduction in services or front-line staff.

⁴⁶ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 10th November 2023, p. 24

- The VFM savings targets for Justice and Home Affairs are being reviewed by the senior leadership team, it is advised that only 22 per cent of the budget is non-pay.
- The VFM savings targets for SoJP will impact staff numbers. There are currently 205 Police Officers, however, the States Assembly approved the increase to 215 Police Officers in 2019.
- The Panel notes that the Council of Minister’s proposed Amendment number 33 would further increase the VFM savings targets for each department.
- From 2025 there will be a new Best Practice model framework for grant and subsidy funding provided by CYPES.
- Further clarity is required about the priorities of projects being developed as part of the Grouped Heads of Expenditure for CYPES, namely ‘Upgrades to CYPES Estate’ and ‘New School and Educational Developments’.
- The project for ‘Dewberry House – Sexual Assault Referral Centre’ is likely to cost more than the budget available from the Government Plan (£4.291 million) and a shortfall of £785,521.27 has been identified.
- The revenue growth expenditure for ‘Investment in Young People across CYPES frontline services’ appears to have been amalgamated from a number of different original business cases and it is not yet clear what the target focus of the funding will be.
- £1.4 million will be spent on maintenance of the States of Jersey Ambulance station, which has a future lifespan of five to ten years.
- The current approach to estate management is “short term and reactive” which has resulted in a lack of maintenance for Government buildings. However, the Minister for Infrastructure has advised that the Property Team are working towards a longer-term approach.

Recommendations:

1. The Panel could not ascertain the estimated balance of the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund from the information available in the Government Plan, despite the States Assembly being asked to approve a transfer of money from that Fund. In future, the Council of Ministers should ensure that, where the States Assembly is asked to approve the transfer of money between any States Funds the balance of the Fund that money is coming from should be specifically detailed in the Government Plan.
2. The Minister for Children and Education should provide further details about the scope of the major project for Le Squez, to include details about how this will include “major alterations” to Samarès school.
3. The Council of Ministers should review and reconsider its approach to pro-rata allocation of VFM targets across departments based on their percentage of overall expenditure.
4. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs should address the shortfall of funding for Dewberry House as part of the Proposed Government Plan 2025-2028.

5. The Minister for Children and Education should provide an update about the 'Residential Homes and Secure Settings' funding in the 'Upgrades to CYPES Estates' Head of Expenditure, including plans for the secure accommodation of children and young people in future.
6. The Minister for Children and Education should provide further details about the focus and benefits that will be achieved through the revenue growth expenditure for 'Investment in Young People across CYPES front-line services.'

The Panel would like to thank all parties who have contributed to its review of the Government Plan.