

19-21 Broad Street | St Helier
Jersey | JE2 4WE

By email

29 November 2022

Dear Chair,

Recommendation on the Covid-19 Response and Recovery

I am writing in relation to the previous Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel's review [Covid-19 Response: March – October 2020 S.R.13/2020](#).

The 2020 review contained a number of recommendations for the government, most of which were completed under the term of the previous Council of Ministers. Having considered the following recommendation which remained outstanding, I can advise that I now consider this recommendation to have been superseded as outlined below:

Recommendation 6. The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture should facilitate the collection of economic data relating to the inequalities emerging as a consequence of the pandemic. This data should be used to inform policy making in relation to the recovery work, and also more widely in relation to the Economic Framework. The Panel should be provided with an update on this work before Q3 2021.

As the report of the Jersey Independent Covid-19 Review and the previous Government Plan for 2022-25 recognised, the differential impact on different communities of the pandemic were not well-understood with some pre-existing social and economic challenges now being magnified. However, the Government needed to act in an agile manner to provide support in the absence of fuller data and evidence. The Government engaged with charities and other civil society organisations and oversaw the formation of the Financial Impact Action Group that aimed to support the most vulnerable in the community.

With Jersey's economic growth (as measured by Gross Value Added) having largely recovered from the pandemic, the Government remains cognisant of the challenges of other economic events, such as inflation, and has set out its plan in addressing the cost of living crisis in the "mini-budget".

Published data on the total number of jobs has largely recovered to above pre-pandemic levels where the total number of jobs in June 2022 was 63,720 compared to 59,780 in June 2020 and 62,470 in June 2019. Other income inequality data are captured in the Living Costs and Household Income Survey, which is usually conducted every five years. The preliminary report of the 2021/2022 survey has been published, providing the Government a more up-to-date and comprehensive data set on a range of indicators by household type. The full report is expected in 2023.

The government will continue to ensure that policies are made on evidence-based decisions with due consideration to its impact on the economy and where appropriate, including distributional analysis that focuses on different income levels.

I trust you this letter provides you with sufficient information to consider this recommendation closed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsten Morel', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Deputy Kirsten Morel

Deputy Chief Minister

Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture

E k.morel2@gov.ie