

Chief Minister



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

**Senator Kristina Moore**  
Chair, Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

BY EMAIL

14 April 2022

Dear Chair,

Thank you for taking the time to write to me to set out the position of the Panel in respect of the action Ministers have proposed to support the Island's future economy, make faster progress on environmental and social goals, and strengthen the technology eco-system in Jersey, by establishing a Technology Accelerator Fund. I welcome the confirmation that the Panel are not against the implementation of such a Fund.

As you state, the Panel are aware that funding was assigned, by the States Assembly, for the purpose of a Technology Fund on 14 December 2021, on the approval of the Government Plan 2022-25. That approval was secured following a 12-week lodging period that facilitated extensive scrutiny of all aspects of the Government Plan.

Based on your letter of 7 April, I am pleased that the Panel conclude that the purpose, terms and circumstances in which the Fund may be wound up are proposed in P.75/2022. As such, the Proposition meets the requirements of Article 6 (4) of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019 and provides a sound basis on which the Assembly can determine its position on the creation of the Fund. As Panel members will be aware from the briefing they received on 16 March, many of the provisions made in the Terms of Reference for the Technology Accelerator Fund are entirely consistent with those made in the establishment of other States Funds, which proved acceptable to the States Assembly. Your letter refers to concerns of the Panel. I am unclear if these were raised at the briefing and in any event should be most grateful if these could be expanded upon. Whilst I accept there is a time pressure, I would be most open to understanding those concerns and whether they could be addressed, for example, through a late amendment which we would then have to ask the Assembly for leave to consider as part of the debate.

The Panel request that the proposition be withdrawn 'until the next assembly or until such a time that Scrutiny has had time to undertake its work.' I consider these two timescales to be the same, and that in withdrawing the Proposition Ministers would be deferring both the scrutiny of the Proposition, and its consideration by States Members, to a point during the next States Assembly.

It is worth noting, as the Panel will appreciate, that an open-ended deferral is subject to the priorities of the next Panel. Given the substantial work over the Autumn to consider the next Council of Ministers' Common Strategic Priorities and Government Plan 2023-26, there is a genuine risk that there might not be sufficient attention given to the Technology Accelerator Fund for quite some time. Given the early agenda of a new Assembly and a new Council of Ministers, it is unlikely that this proposition will revert to the Assembly until sometime in 2023. Having sought the views of the Council of Ministers, and taking this into account, withdrawing the Proposition is not, in our view, the right course of action. Islanders are best served by progressing with this area of industry.

I am particularly conscious that P.75/2022 already provides a framework for further detailed engagement with the Panel, both in the development of the Strategic Programme Plan, and in providing on-going scrutiny of the work of Ministers and the Oversight Board. To assuage any residual concerns on the part of the Panel, I am keen to add to these provisions, to explicitly confirm that Digital Jersey will:

- provide drafts of those parts of the Strategic Programme Plan that concern the financial governance and performance management arrangements for the Technology Accelerator Programme at an early stage
- allow time for scrutiny members to conclude any review of these matters that they may wish to undertake, and
- respond fully to recommendations of the Panel, in their preparation of the Strategic Programme Plan.

In advising Ministers on the adoption of the Strategic Programme Plan, the Oversight Board will expect to see that consideration has been fully given to the views of Scrutiny in this way.

Whilst I recognise that Ministers on this occasion have not been able to accommodate the Panel's request, I hope panel members recognise that P.75/2022 already safeguards the further involvement of scrutiny in the design and delivery of this important initiative.

The Government of Jersey is clear about the important economic opportunity presented by the Fund, and the need to push forward in embracing the benefits of technology to support environmental and social outcomes in Jersey. In debating the establishment of the Fund in December 2021, Ministers were clear that it was intended as a strategic intervention to give confidence in Jersey's future direction. The Panel's request for an open-ended period of delay does not inspire this confidence and accordingly we will not be able to accede to this request. It will of course be a matter for Members as to whether or not they will wish to support P.75/2022 and the next sitting.

Yours sincerely,



**Senator John Le Fondré**  
**Chief Minister**