

Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic by the Government of Jersey

Public Accounts Committee

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P.A.C.3/2022



States of Jersey
States Assembly



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Section 1 - Chair's and Vice-Chair's Foreword

Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, Deputy Inna Gardiner

The Scrutiny function of the States Assembly has undertaken a number of reviews focusing on specific areas of the Government's response to the Covid pandemic.

This review has focused on the implementation of the pandemic response, the decision-making processes involved and what structures and designations were in place to ensure clarity of jurisdiction, accountability, and responsibility for the oversight of decisions made. The review is the first that has been undertaken by the PAC in relation to the pandemic response and as suggested later in this report, we would recommend to our successors that further reviews be established on elements not covered in this response.

This review was led by the PAC Vice-Chair Constable Karen Shenton Stone.

I am grateful to the Constable for leading this challenging review and I would also like to thank the Covid review sub-group and the officers for their hard work and dedication. We received extensive stakeholder engagement and I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this report.

Covid-19 caused a once-in-a-lifetime emergency event and as such the stresses it placed upon our emergency response team and the wider civil service, exposed duplications and weaknesses in our procedures which can be improved and updated to enhance Jersey's response to future emergencies.

Whilst it is appreciated the nature of such exceptional events means that our practical response cannot be predicted or rehearsed, the system we use to tailor those solutions can and should be improved following each and every emergency as a matter of routine. In this way we can identify areas in which streamlined decision-making could improve our future response.

For instance, this review has highlighted that there are a number of similarities of areas of responsibility, potential membership and function overlaps between the Emergencies Council, the Competent Authority Ministers, and the Council of Ministers.

It is also the case that Jersey's 32-year-old Emergency Powers and Planning (Jersey) Law 1990 was drafted prior to the introduction of the Ministerial Government and was not designed for our current structures and practices.

There are other laws currently in use which are incompatible with our current government structure and practices. A concerted effort must be made to update these laws now so that they reflect the world we live in today and are in place before they are needed so that the Island is a stronger position to react quickly and with confidence to future emergencies.

Vice Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, Connétable Karen Shenton Stone

The COVID-19 pandemic represented one of the greatest challenges to the States of Jersey and the community in modern times. Such an unprecedented public health emergency required a significant transformation in the internal governance and decision-making of the Government of Jersey, its approach to public finances, and how it supported the lives of everyday Islanders.

It is, therefore, vital that we seek to understand how and why these transformations took place, what their effects were, and what we can learn from the response to the pandemic. The government has never been required to undertake an emergency response of this scale before.

The changes to governance and decision-making saw the emergence of a range of new Ministerial and Non-Ministerial bodies in order to respond. Whilst it was good to see a flexible approach to coordinating its response, it is also clear, as we come out of the crisis, that it is time to review the structure of governance and seek to embed improvements that reflect current structures and best practices.

It is appropriate that this committee acknowledges the significant time and effort given by those in the public sector during the pandemic and the impact that it has had on many employees. I am grateful for the incredible service that they have provided in safeguarding Islanders. The significant changes in working patterns and culture have been considered as part of this review and we have sought to understand what practical administration and governance was in place to mitigate the additional pressure on staff. We have listened to the concerns expressed regarding wellbeing and have recommended actions to ensure that staff wellbeing and related concerns are addressed.

In examining working practices in the wake of this pandemic it is our hope that Government will examine ways to ensure, in future crises, that the volume of crisis-related work has a reduced impact on provision of other equally crucial services. An example in this report highlighted the impact on the production of statistical analysis. While we recognise that recruitment of expert staff is a challenge in this area, we also believe that a way should be found to avoid compromising the production of statistics in future emergencies. It is our recommendation that a review to be undertaken in liaison with the Statistic's Users Group to address the capacity issues.

We would also recommend that the Government gives greater consideration in the future to ways of harnessing and using the skills, expertise, and knowledge available across the private sector and Jersey's wider community.

This review has sought to represent the voices of both those providing and receiving services and support during the pandemic. Having considered the testimony of those who received financial support, as well as industries that did not, including agriculture, we have recommended greater clarity and accessibility to appeals, and wider applications for support when responding to any potential future crises.

The PAC's review has been made possible through the exceptional work carried out by the Island's Comptroller and Auditor General, who has already extensively reviewed and published findings and recommendations on the Government of Jersey's response to COVID-19. I hope this report is able to add value to her work and contribute to ensuring improved governance and financial management, both in any future crises and in day-to-day life.

I have had the opportunity over the last seven months to lead the PAC's COVID-19 Response Sub-Group, consisting of Connétable John Le Maistre, Connétable Andy Jehan, and Dr Helen Miles (who resigned from the PAC on 29 March 2022), and I am very grateful for all the hard work they have put in during this review. I would also like to thank the invaluable contributions made by the Chair Deputy Inna Gardiner and the members of the PAC for their diligence, determination, and analysis. They have all brought with them considerable knowledge and experience.

Finally, I would like to thank the exceptional Officers in the States Greffe for their invaluable help and expertise.

Section 2 – Executive Summary

The Public Accounts Committee (the PAC) has undertaken a review of the Government of Jersey's response to the COVID-19 pandemic since the virus first arrived on the Island in February 2020. Guided by its Terms of Reference (appendix 2), the PAC has sought to gain insight into the implementations of the measures agreed by the States Assembly, Emergencies Council, and the Council of Ministers, and to look at the Government's decision-making through an examination of its procurement procedures, financial management, and performance management.

The PAC has examined the Government's financial and internal performance and has identified lessons to be learnt from the pandemic. The PAC has also considered previous reporting from the Comptroller and Auditor General and Scrutiny Panels to further inform this review.

To facilitate emergency decision-making and strategic coordination by the Government and wider States of Jersey, an Emergency Response structure was assembled led by the Emergencies Council – the overarching body responsible for responding to emergency situations in Jersey – chaired by the Chief Minister. Gold, Silver and Bronze cells based on the UK's Blue Light Services model were established within the Government under the leadership of the then-Director General for Justice and Home Affairs to coordinate the Government's response, with frequently updated evidence and guidance reviewed and considered by the Competent Authorities Ministers and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell. Further Gold, Silver and Bronze cells were established with the Department for Health and Community Services to help facilitate the General Hospital's response to COVID-19.

The PAC has also noted the reduction in the Emergency Planning function at the beginning of the pandemic and the subsequent revision of this approach and the specific forums and planning work which informed that ongoing response.

The Public Health function necessarily played a central role during the COVID-19 pandemic and there is some focus in this report on the management of the function and its growth in response to demand for its services.

This report also looks at the role played by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell (STAC), which was established on 28 April 2020 to consider evidence and provide advice to decision-makers on public health matters. The PAC has looked at its independence and role in contrast to similar bodies elsewhere and has recommended a review of this function and the experience of its members to ensure that improvements can be made as necessary.

The arrival of the pandemic required an unprecedented and unforeseen shift in the working patterns and culture of public sector workers. As well as home-working, there were deployments for a number of staff and the necessity for long working hours. The PAC has sought to look holistically in this report on the governance and administration of services in this pressurised environment and how the impact on staff was monitored and managed. The report takes in the concerns expressed in relation to wellbeing and some of the mitigations taken.

As a matter of record, the PAC would like to acknowledge at the outset, the outstanding service provided by many individuals across all areas of public service throughout the pandemic and in its aftermath.

The PAC has also examined here – even if through necessity – the severe disruption to ‘business as usual’ work programmes and has considered the reporting, monitoring and decision-making used in suspending, delaying, and cancelling projects and work programmes and how this information has been published.

It is also the role of the PAC to examine the management of public finances. The nature of the pandemic required a significant level of borrowing to be undertaken to provide financial stability and the protection of reserves. The PAC has sought to understand how the Government managed its finances and financial assets and what additional safeguards were adopted to drive good financial governance. The PAC notes the previous findings and recommendations of the Comptroller and Auditor General in regard to the management of public finances and is satisfied with the Government’s approach to financial management during the pandemic.

In tandem to financial management, the PAC has also sought to understand how the performance of the public sector was managed at a corporate and departmental level. The PAC has previously considered the management of performance in its review (P.A.C.2/2022¹) and noted that the Government has sought to maintain standard performance management systems and metrics during the pandemic, with departments such as Customer and Local Services introducing overarching priorities to focus its officers on providing a high-quality response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The PAC has sought to understand the distribution of business support schemes and other financial and economic packages provided to Islanders to avoid bankruptcy and hardship. The PAC had previously scrutinised the impact of the Spend Local voucher schemes in a previous report² and has considered the business support schemes provided by the Government as reviewed by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Specific concerns are highlighted in this report in relation to the guidelines and implementation of the support provided and how it was distributed. These concerns included submissions provided by members of the agriculture industry, whose members appear to have been unable to access support despite significant financial loss. As a result of these concerns the PAC has made recommendations on clarity and access to appeals and applications for support.

This report seeks to enhance the understanding of how the procurement and supply chain management was governed within the Government of Jersey. The Committee is pleased to note the quality of the response provided by the Group Director for Commercial Services, the level of interaction with the UK Government to source PPE without additional cost to the Island, and the lack of breaches experienced, with damaged or unsuitable items replaced where required.

¹ [Performance Management Review – P.A.C.2/2022](#)

² [COVID-19 Response: Spend Local Scheme – P.A.C.2/2021](#)

The construction of the Nightingale Hospital was a major infrastructure project undertaken as part of the response. The PAC has sought to understand the decision-making behind the project, its costs, and its disposal and has recommended a review of its necessity and function.

At a time of crisis, the role played by Government's ability to communicate clear messages was vital. As a part of this report the PAC has sought to understand how communication was managed, how decisions were made and whether, from the evidence provided, they were successful in providing guidance and assurance. It is recommended that the Communications Directorate commit to a participatory review with on-Island stakeholders to identify areas of improvement.

In conducting its review, the PAC was mindful that the public sector was operating in fast-moving, challenging, and exceptional circumstances and that any investigation of the decision-making process must be seen in the context of the situation at the time. However, as would always be the case in a novel situation, there are lessons to be learned which will helpfully inform future improvements.

To this end, it is recommended the Government outline how each of these lessons will be embedded into future policy and practice. As outlined below, it is also recommended that this Committee's successor reviews aspects of the response which have not been covered in this report, including the Test and Trace and Vaccination programmes.

Section 3 - Key Findings and Recommendations

Key Findings

FINDING 1 - The Government of Jersey used a number of emergency planning measures from previous exercises to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including consideration of its previous emergency planning resources, including the Channel Island's Strategic Pandemic Influenza Plan and Day 1 No Deal Brexit preparation.

FINDING 2 – The 32-year-old Emergency Powers and Planning (Jersey) Law 1990 was designed prior to the introduction of Ministerial Government and may not reflect current structures and practice.

FINDING 3 – There are a number of similarities and potential overlaps between the membership and function of the Emergencies Council, the Competent Authority Ministers, and the Council of Ministers.

FINDING 4 - There are longstanding concerns about the timing of the release of minutes of Competent Authority Ministers meetings to Scrutiny.

FINDING 5 - While it was agreed that trade unions were to be represented on the General Hospital's Bronze group to track services and requests from Hospital staff, it is the PAC's understanding that this engagement did not happen on an operational level.

FINDING 6 – The Government of Jersey actively recruited eight Islanders with specific expertise and knowledge to assist with the delivery of pandemic response programmes, with six of these being remunerated by the Government.

FINDING 7 - Out-dated sources of information remain on the Government website in relation to emergency planning, including references to the Emergency Planning Board which has been replaced by the Jersey Resilience Forum.

FINDING 8 - The review of the governance framework should be used to appoint departmental responsibility to respond to new public health developments and improve the pace of appointing internal leadership for these items.

FINDING 9 – The publication of minutes of meetings and drafting of a code of practice for STAC was completed following a recommendation made by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

FINDING 10 – Aside from a single, independent, and non-remunerated member, all members of Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell either work directly for the Government or are remunerated by them.

FINDING 11 – No additional resources were provided to Statistics Jersey, leading to it suspending a number of activities, including analysis of Census 2021 results.

FINDING 12 – The Chief Statistician sought advice from the Director of Public Health regarding the publication of data from small jurisdictions.

FINDING 13 – The Government of Jersey focused on internal secondments to provide additional resources during the first wave of COVID-19, with additional support provided through contract staff for programmes including the COVID-19 Helpline and the Contact Tracing Team.

FINDING 14 – Business Continuity Plans designed to support staff in the event of a crisis were not designed to accommodate a two-year-long pandemic.

FINDING 15 – An Investment Appraisal Team was established during the COVID-19 pandemic to embed financial best practice.

FINDING 16 – A review of original business case objectives made during the pandemic will be undertaken by the Chief Economic Advisor.

FINDING 17 – Additional financial management processes were integrated into the Department for Health and Community Services in order to improve best practice during the pandemic.

FINDING 18 – The Government has sought to use standard performance management tools to monitor its performance during the COVID-19 pandemic alongside the introduction of Departmental Service Performance Measures and the tracking of Comptroller and Auditor General recommendations.

FINDING 19 – The Government was unable to report on its monitoring of the Recommendations Tracker in Q2 2020 but was able to achieve “normal discipline” in subsequent quarters.

FINDING 20 – The monitoring and reporting of performance within the Department for Health and Community Services was restarted in 2021, following the movement of the Health and Community Services informatics team back from the Department for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance.

FINDING 21 – Government of Jersey support schemes were not established on a statutory basis and do not have a formal appeals process.

FINDING 22 – The Government’s guidance on the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme misjudged the complexity of what was requested, and the level of financial literacy required of applicants. This has led to a greater number of overclaims.

FINDING 23 – The Government of Jersey did not provide financial or PPE support to Jersey’s agricultural sector.

FINDING 24 – Workers arriving in Jersey on a short-term basis did not receive financial support from the Government of Jersey if they contracted COVID-19 but were required to pay social security costs.

FINDING 25 – Charities have expressed concern about the level of support offered and provided to charities and carers.

FINDING 26 – Specialist response cells were established to provide for procurement and supply chain management within the Government.

FINDING 27 – 44 procurement exemptions were approved or in the process of being approved in 2021, representing a total of £20,458,593.

FINDING 28 – The three procurement breaches in 2021 totalled £308,000, excluding the Revolving Credit Facility.

FINDING 29 - £727,780 and £228,190 of expired or unsuitable items in quarantine were identified and written off at the end of 2020 and 2021 respectively.

FINDING 30 – Until the beginning of 2022, PPE was received free-of-charge from the UK's National Health Service, with the Director for Health and Community Services assuming responsibility for the management of the purchase of PPE going forward.

FINDING 31 – The supply of free PPE from the NHS and then onward to care homes and healthcare providers has had a significant financial impact on local suppliers of PPE.

FINDING 32 – The use of PPE by the Government has returned to 'business-as-usual' levels.

FINDING 33 – A disposal review of the deconstruction phase of the Nightingale Hospital was approved in February 2022. A subsequent pandemic stock review is expected to be undertaken in Q4 2022, with the recommendations arising from this review expected to be approved and published in Q1 2023.

FINDING 34 – As part of the disposal strategy of equipment used for the Nightingale Hospital, 200 oxygen concentrators that had initially been purchased for the Nightingale Hospital have been donated by the Department for Health and Community Services to Ukraine.

FINDING 35 – An internal review of the Communications Directorate's work during the COVID-19 pandemic has been carried out, with key lessons learned shared with the PAC.

Key Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1 - The minutes of the Competent Authority Ministers should be (and should have been) released to Scrutiny in a timely fashion throughout the course of the pandemic.

RECOMMENDATION 2 - The Government should prioritise the replacement of the 32-year-old Emergency Powers and Planning (Jersey) Law 1990 in order to ensure that it fully reflects the realities of ministerial governance for future crises, drawing on learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic

RECOMMENDATION 3 - The internal audit review of the GP surgery contract, as recommended by the Comptroller and Auditor General, should be finalised and published as soon as possible.

RECOMMENDATION 4 - The Government should undertake a review of the efficiency of the emergency decision-making processes and publish a revised emergency governance framework to simplify governance and decision-making processes with greater clarity, building on best practices in other jurisdictions and partnerships with other jurisdictions.

RECOMMENDATION 5 – The Government should clarify how individuals who were recruited to key work programmes to assist with the response to COVID-19 were selected, remunerated, and who they were accountable to.

RECOMMENDATION 6 – The Government should update its website in relation to emergency planning, removing references to the Emergency Planning Board which has been replaced by the Jersey Resilience Forum.

RECOMMENDATION 7 – The Government should review its engagement with the UK and other jurisdictions by 31 December 2022 to highlight areas of improvement identified through the meetings held and to improve the effectiveness of inter-jurisdictional collaboration during future public health crises.

RECOMMENDATION 8 - An internal review should be undertaken of Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell and of the effectiveness of Government emergency decision-making bodies to identify improvements, the appropriateness of the functions and whether there is a need to create a distinct independent scientific advisory body.

RECOMMENDATION 9 - The PAC would recommend that an internal review be undertaken to ascertain the efficiency and quality of statistics published during the COVID-19 pandemic and to identify best practice.

RECOMMENDATION 10 - It is recommended that as part of this review, and in liaison with the Statistics Users Group, Statistics Jersey addresses the issues which caused a pause in work which was not related to the pandemic to ensure that the production of other significant statistical analysis is not compromised during a future emergency.

RECOMMENDATION 11 – It is recommended that the Government give consideration to the prioritisation of emergencies and provides annual updates on emergency procedures in light of global and local developments, with consistent capacity given to future pandemics.

RECOMMENDATION 12 – It is recommended that the Department for Health and Community Services work in collaboration with relevant functions such as People and Corporate Services to produce and publish a staff wellbeing report and strategy as soon as possible and no later than the end of the second quarter of 2022.

RECOMMENDATION 13 – It is recommended that staff within the General Hospital are provided with the opportunity to undertake a participatory survey and review to understand staff wellbeing and concerns arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

RECOMMENDATION 14 – The Government of Jersey should seek to publish a breakdown of spend on its COVID-19 response in 2020, 2021 and 2022, with a clear indication of where savings were made through discounts and voluntary support from Islanders and businesses as part of the 2022 Annual Report and Accounts.

RECOMMENDATION 15 - The PAC would recommend that the results of the project closure reports are published upon completion by the Government to demonstrate transparency and encourage best practice to be developed in the event of a future crisis.

RECOMMENDATION 16 – The Government should seek to improve the clarity and legibility of guidance for future business support schemes to reduce overclaims, with a dedicated support officer to give assistance to applicants and ensure that the guidance is understood.

RECOMMENDATION 17 – The Department for Customer and Local Services should appoint an identifiable officer to serve as a direct point of contact between the Government and those who it is seeking repayments from.

RECOMMENDATION 18 – The Government should review its approach to agriculture and other excluded economic sectors to determine ways of providing support to local, on-Island industry.

RECOMMENDATION 19 - A consultation should be conducted with carers, charities, and volunteers to understand how to improve the support they receive in future crises.

RECOMMENDATION 20 - Clarity must be provided on when the supply of free PPE will come to an end to provide transparency on future public expenditure and the information needed by both local PPE suppliers and those continuing to receive free PPE for business planning purposes.

RECOMMENDATION 21 – The Government should publish a clarification regarding what the UK agreed to provide to Jersey free-of-charge during pandemic, including a breakdown of the estimated costs of these provisions.

RECOMMENDATION 22 - The final decommissioning report for the Nightingale Hospital should be prioritised and published as soon as possible to demonstrate transparency and best practice and include the relevant decommissioning plans for the deconstruction the Nightingale Hospital.

RECOMMENDATION 23 - The Communications Directorate should commit to a public-facing review of its communications strategy and structure during the COVID-19 pandemic, to identify areas of learning, engage with Islanders and affected organisations, and to respond to concerns raised to the PAC by stakeholders during this review.

Section 4 – Background

Purpose of this Report

The Public Accounts Committee's role is to receive reports from the Comptroller and Auditor General and to report to the States upon any significant issues arising. It also assesses whether public funds have been applied for the purpose intended.

In this review the Public Accounts Committee explores the Government of Jersey's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, including the implementation of response measures, its decision making, the management of public finances, the effectiveness of governance procedures, and the key lessons which have been learnt to inform the response to future crises of a similar nature.

This report builds on the reports published by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) in 2021 on the Government of Jersey's response to COVID-19, which are as follows:

- [COVID-19 Related Emergency Support Scheme](#)
- [Management of the Healthcare Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Procurement and Supply Chain Management](#)
- [Overall Management of Public Finances](#)
- [Support to Businesses during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

Work by the C&AG on the Test and Trace and Vaccination Programmes, the Government's overall governance and decision making and communications, is ongoing and does not form part of this review. The PAC would strongly urge its successor to review these areas as part of its future work programme.

Conflicts of Interest

Senator Tracey Vallois was Minister for Education and a member of the Council of Ministers until January 2021. Although the PAC notes that Senator Vallois was not involved in executive-level decision making during the COVID-19 pandemic after her resignation, she agreed to remove herself from any potential areas of conflict during the review.

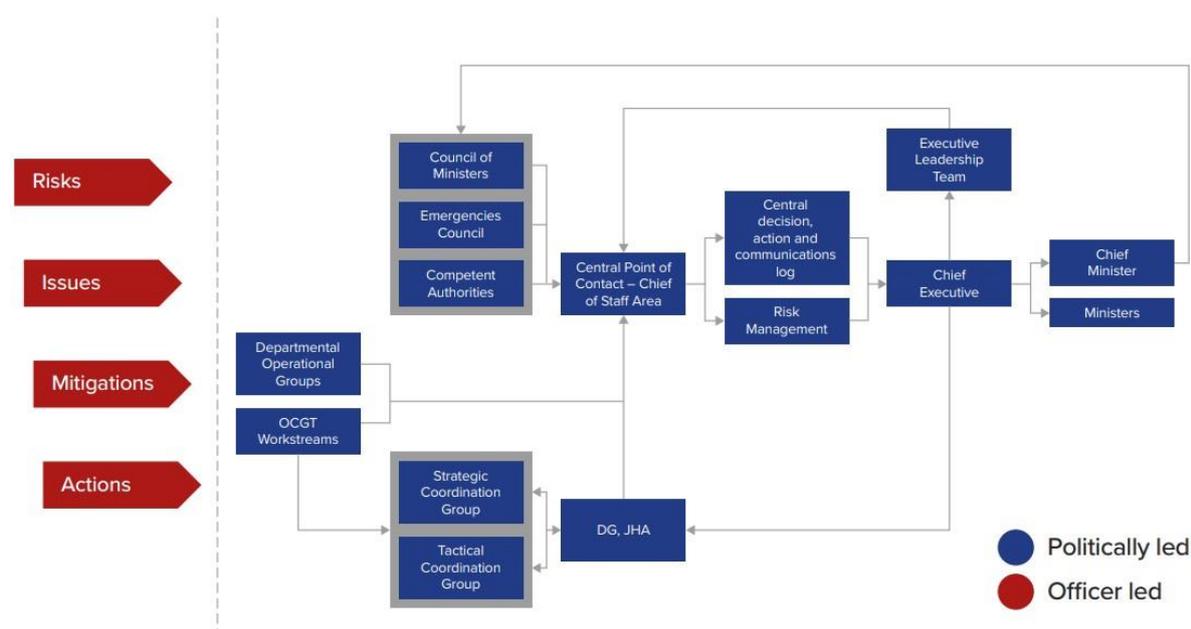
Clarification of Identity of the Chief Executive

At the time of publication, the Chief Executive for the Government of Jersey is Suzanne Wylie, who joined the Government of Jersey on 1 February 2022, replacing the Interim Chief Executive Paul Martin, who served as Interim Chief Executive from 1 March 2021 to 31 January 2022. Mr Martin is referred to as "Interim Chief Executive" in this report. The former Chief Executive, Charlie Parker, left the Government of Jersey on 31 March 2021.

Section 5 – Implementation and Co-ordination of COVID-19 Response Measures

The COVID-19 pandemic required governments across the world to implement an unprecedented series of responses to the public health emergency and the financial crisis that followed. The PAC has learned that the Government of Jersey used a number of emergency planning measures from previous exercises to respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The PAC has sought to understand how decisions were discussed, implemented, and coordinated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2020 States of Jersey Annual Report and Accounts provides the following outline of the governance structure used to coordinate the Government of Jersey’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic³:

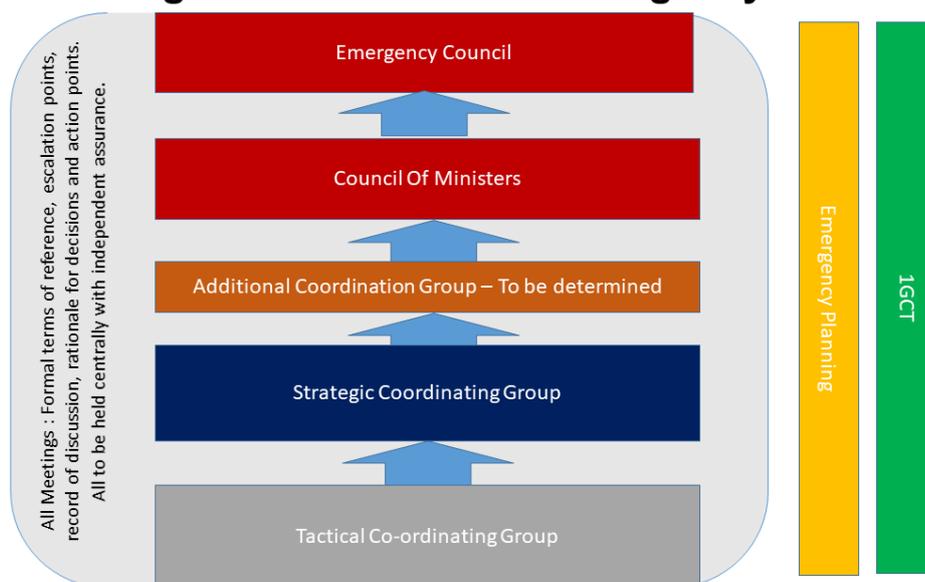


To further the PAC’s understanding of decision-making frameworks within Government during the COVID-19, the Chief Executive provided the following breakdown as part of her submission on 14 February 2022⁴, although the PAC notes that the Competent Authorities Ministers are not included because they are not a decision-making body in their own right.

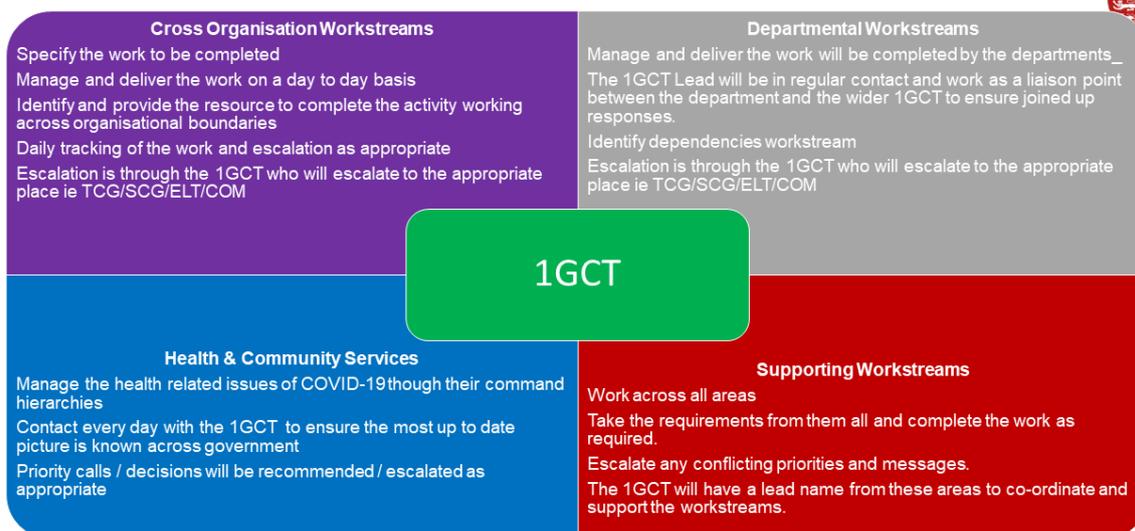
³ Report – States Annual Report and Accounts 2020 – 20 May 2021, p.169

⁴ Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022 – Appendix

Decision Making and Governance : Emergency State



How will it work ?



The PAC understands that the governance framework was delivered through the Government of Jersey’s One Gov framework first introduced in 2018, with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance outlining to the PAC in a public hearing on 23 February 2022 that the opportunity to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic through this framework provided “strategic agility and flexibility.”⁵

⁵ [Transcript - Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.35](#)

Preparation for COVID-19

The PAC notes that a “cross-Government review group” was formed in January 2020 by officers to consider the potential impact of COVID-19. On the advice of this group, the Department for Health and Community Services issued advice and guidance through a press notice on 30 January 2020.⁶ It is understood that the Council of Ministers first received a verbal update on COVID-19 on 3 March 2020.⁷

It would be helpful for clarity to be provided on Ministerial and Executive decision-making concerning the potential impact of COVID-19 between the first cluster of COVID-19 in China in December 2019 and the update of 3 March 2020 noted above. The PAC has been informed that officer-led meetings on emergency decision-making took place between 11 February and 19 March 2020.

The Jersey Resilience Forum produced a framework to respond to potential pandemics, with a table-top exercise undertaken involving the United Kingdom’s National Health Services’ Lead for Pandemic Influenza and its Emergency Preparedness Manager. It is understood that the report and updates recommended by the Jersey Resilience Forum were not finalised before the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in Jersey.⁸

It is understood that the last published resource relating to pre-pandemic emergency preparedness was the Community Risk Register⁹ dated 2014 (the PAC understands that updates were made in 2018 but that the document in the public domain remains as stated). The Chief Executive noted in her submission on 14 February 2022 that the current Channel Island’s Strategic Pandemic Influenza Plan was considered at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic to outline the key strategic public health options for officials to use in managing the spread of COVID-19.¹⁰

In addition, preparation for a “Brexit Day One No Deal” was used to inform the Government of Jersey’s response to COVID-19. It was explained by the Chief Executive that the One Gov Covid Response Team formed at the beginning of the pandemic included members of the Brexit Day One No Deal Group.¹¹ It was noted that its use was limited given that the ‘Day One No Deal scenario did not materialise.¹²

FINDING 1 - The Government of Jersey used a number of emergency planning measures from previous exercises to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including consideration of its previous emergency planning resources, including the Channel Island’s Strategic Pandemic Influenza Plan and Day 1 No Deal Brexit preparation.

⁶ [Press Notice - Advice is issued on Novel Coronavirus – Government of Jersey - 30 January 2020](#)

⁷ Council of Ministers agendas are shared with Scrutiny on a confidential basis.

⁸ [News Article – FOCUS: Jersey’s new pandemic plan held up... by pandemic – Bailiwick Express - 23 April 2020](#)

⁹ [Community Risk Register 2014](#)

¹⁰ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.9](#)

¹¹ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, pp.2-4](#)

¹² [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, pp.2-4](#)

Gold and Silver Response Teams

In March 2020, the Department for Justice and Home Affairs convened Strategic (Gold) and Tactical (Silver) coordinating groups. The Strategic Co-ordination Group was responsible for the strategic coordination, command and control of emergency services and other agencies and was responsible for dealing with the immediate response to the Pandemic.¹³ Direction was provided by the Gold group to the Operational (Bronze) Commanders through the Gold, Silver and Bronze Command structure¹⁴, and group was formed under the oversight of the Director General of Justice and Home Affairs and the Group Director for Public Protection and Law Enforcement (as Chair of the Silver group).¹⁵

In March, the Gold Command undertook a resilience exercise to test scenarios across services and infrastructure companies, to identify weaknesses in plans and contingency requirements. These included the lack of technical resources for infrastructure, the closure of schools, front line service delivery, supply chain disruptions, increased mortality handling, and the loss of critical staff.

The Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs noted that the then-Director General for Justice and Home Affairs took on additional responsibilities as a Senior Responsible Officer on areas not normally associated with the department, as well as on work programmes that were under the accountable remit of other Director Generals.¹⁶

The updated responsibilities of the then-Director General for Justice and Home Affairs included functioning as an early lead on the Nightingale Hospital (prior to it becoming the responsibility of the Department for Infrastructure, Housing and Environment), the Senior Responsible Officer for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Test and Trace, and the Vaccination Programme. This required reporting to Ministers other than the Minister for Home Affairs.¹⁷

These changes in role and responsibility were considered necessary and discussed with the Department for Treasury and Exchequer to ensure compliance and good governance. As an example of these managerial changes, the PAC further understands that the Integrated Public Health record that was established by the Department for Infrastructure, Housing and Environment to capture positive COVID-19 cases and direct contacts in Jersey was transferred to the oversight of the then-Director General of Justice and Home Affairs as part of the Emergency Response in 2020.¹⁸

One Gov COVID-19 Response Team

The One Gov COVID-19 Response Team was formed on 12 March 2020 to respond to the emerging concerns about the COVID-19 Pandemic and the formulation of a cross-Government approach to the pandemic. It was also set up to co-ordinate and prioritise business need across the Government of Jersey, to help departments release colleagues to

¹³ [Report – States Annual Report and Accounts 2020 – 20 May 2021, p.171](#)

¹⁴ [Report – States Annual Report and Accounts 2020 – 20 May 2021, p.171](#)

¹⁵ [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, p.2](#)

¹⁶ [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, p.2](#)

¹⁷ [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, p.2](#)

¹⁸ [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, p.2](#)

support other COVID-19 response functions. The team also prioritised activities across the Government. The One Gov COVID-19 Response Team worked in conjunction with the Executive Leadership Team, Strategic Coordination Group, and the Tactical Coordination Group.¹⁹

The One Gov Covid Response Team consisted of representatives from each Government department, as well as external stakeholders. It was active until the end of June 2020, before its functions were absorbed back into other departments as Business-as-usual activities. The team was reformed in November 2020 following an increase of COVID-19 cases.²⁰

The One Gov COVID-19 Response Team's initial tasks, working in partnership with the Government of Jersey's Executive Leadership Team and Gold Command, were to:

- Fully evaluate how critical services provided by each directorate, department and non-ministerial department were; and
- Identify the minimum number of staff needed to run 'time critical activities' to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.²¹

Following its reformation, the One Gov COVID-19 Response Team was responsible for strategically coordinating and overseeing Business Continuity Management across the Government.²²

Officers worked with colleagues across Government departments to design and deliver the COVID-19 Pandemic response. External stakeholders from sectors including education and childcare, business, Ports of Jersey, and the Jersey Field Squadron were engaged to provide assistance. Resource conflicts were escalated to Gold Command for a direction on the priority of response.²³

The One Gov COVID-19 Response Team worked in partnership with the Executive Leadership Team. Operational cells and teams were formed to manage the following areas:

- Community Response,
- Supplies and Supply Chain
- Business Continuity; and
- Emergency Resourcing²⁴

As outlined in the 2020 Annual Report and Accounts, meetings of the One Gov COVID-19 Response Team possessed formal terms of reference, escalation points, records of discussion, rationale for decisions, and action points.²⁵

An interim review of the One Gov COVID Response Team was undertaken after two months of operation and included a survey that allowed members to express thoughts, reflections, and

¹⁹ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.3](#)

²⁰ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.5](#)

²¹ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.5](#)

²² [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.3](#)

²³ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.3](#)

²⁴ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.3](#)

²⁵ [Report – States Annual Report and Accounts 2020 – 20 May 2021, p.171](#)

ambitions during ongoing work. This survey was completed at the end of June, with regular reflections on learning undertaken throughout the One Gov COVID Response Team's lifetime.²⁶

The PAC is pleased that an interim review was undertaken but noted that it has not received a copy of the results of this survey and would therefore welcome the publication of an overview of the performance of the One Gov COVID-19 Response Team to improve collective public understanding of its role during the COVID-19 pandemic and lessons learnt through which future improvements can be made.

Recording of Decision-Making

The PAC understands that the records and actions of COVID-19 Daily Strategic Calls within the Gold, Silver and Bronze Cells of the Government of Jersey's emergency response structure fed directly into the Government's Executive Leadership Team daily morning calls that were established at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic between the Executive Leadership Team, the One Gov Covid Response Team and the Chief of Police.²⁷ Daily decision logs were used to record issues raised and were underpinned by cross-government workstreams, with a single responsible officer owning an issue across the Government together with the agreed standard reporting methodology. A centralised document storage facility was also established to support decision making and cross-government workstreams.²⁸

In a submission from the Chief Executive on 14 February 2022, it was noted that the use of Decision and Action logs provided "real time information", including advice and management information on areas such as associated risks, with daily Executive Leadership Team calls providing to be an "invaluable two-way communication tool for all and informed future business planning and workforce planning". The PAC welcomes the confirmation of the use of decision and action logs and would welcome further clarity on how logs influenced and tracked decision-making and governance procedures during the pandemic.²⁹

The Emergencies Council

The Emergencies Council is constituted under Article 1 of the Emergency Powers and Planning (Jersey) Law 1990³⁰, which prescribes the functions and powers to the Emergencies Council in case of emergencies. The Law provides the Emergencies Council with the ability to make amendments to the provisions relating to the declaration of a state of emergency within the Island.

The Emergencies Council operates as the overarching body responsible for responding to emergency situations in Jersey and holds full executive powers to guide strategy and decision-making during major emergencies. The Emergencies Council functioned as the senior-most decision-making body in Jersey in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and sat above the Council of Ministers.

²⁶ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.4](#)

²⁷ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.3](#)

²⁸ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.3](#)

²⁹ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, pp.3-4](#)

³⁰ [Emergency Powers and Planning \(Jersey\) Law 1990](#)

The membership of the Emergencies Council is:

- The Chief Minister, Chair of the Emergencies Council
- The Minister for Home Affairs
- The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture
- The Minister for Infrastructure
- The Minister for Health and Social Services
- The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services
- A Connétable nominated by the Chair of the Comité des Connétables

The Minister for Children and Education (formerly the Minister for Education during 2020 – February 2021) and Minister for Treasury and Resources were invited to attend meetings of the Emergencies Council but were not members.

The Bailiff, Lieutenant-Governor and the Attorney General are entitled to attend and speak at any meeting of the Emergencies Council. Government officers were also in attendance to provide advice and support to its members.³¹

Meetings of the Emergencies Council have been shared with Scrutiny during the COVID-19 pandemic and have been considered as part of this review. However, publication of these minutes has largely been withheld under Article 35 of the Freedom of Information (Jersey) Law 2011. The PAC notes a public interest test was undertaken regarding the disclosure of these minutes as part of a Freedom of Information request published on 13 April 2021, with heavily redacted minutes published in response.³² Although the PAC understands the sensitivity of the information contained within the minutes of these meetings, it would welcome the publication of more complete copies of these minutes to represent transparency and best practice.

Competent Authority Ministers

In accordance with the Emergency Powers and Planning (Jersey) Law 1990, the Competent Authority Ministers was convened as a forum to discuss items related to the COVID-19 pandemic before they were elevated to decision-making authorities.³³

Whilst individual Ministers continued to exercise their statutory and non-statutory powers during the COVID-19 pandemic, certain Ministers exercised specific areas of competency in relation to the Pandemic as agreed by the Emergencies Council. The PAC notes that the Competent Authority Ministers do not make collective decisions, due to their powers being individual and made through orders and were instead tasked with considering and responding to relevant items.³⁴

The Competent Authority Ministers are:

³¹ [Webpage - Emergency planning: roles of responder groups – gov.je](#)

³² [Freedom of Information Request – Competent Authorities Ministers, Emergencies Council and Council of Ministers meetings – 13 April 2021](#)

³³ [Emergency Powers and Planning \(Jersey\) Law 1990](#)

³⁴ [Emergency Powers and Planning \(Jersey\) Law 1990](#)

- The Chief Minister
- The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture
- The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services
- The Minister for Home Affairs
- The Minister for Infrastructure
- The Minister for Health and Social Services

The Minister for Children and Education (formerly the Minister for Education from 2020 – February 2021) and the Minister for Treasury and Resources were also invited to attend these meetings but were not members of the Competent Authorities.³⁵

The PAC remains unclear about the distinction between the purpose of the three separate bodies - the Council of Ministers, Emergencies Council, and Competent Authorities Ministers – in relation to pandemic decision-making and would recommend a review of the functions of each in the emergency context and a streamlining of Minister-led governance and decision-making processes.

Concerns have been raised in a number of forums regarding the release of minutes of Competent Authority Ministers to Scrutiny and culminated in the States Assembly's approval of P.86/2021³⁶, lodged by the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel. The PAC has considered these minutes as part of its review.

The PAC would recommend that future Councils of Ministers are mindful of the Assembly's approval of P.86/2021 and of the long-standing Code of Practice³⁷ as it relates to sharing information with Scrutiny Panels and the PAC and release minutes in a timely fashion.

The PAC further notes that the Minister for Social Security and the Minister for International Development were responsible for the Community Taskforce and the Connect Me team, which served as the volunteer co-ordinating framework during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, these ministers were not members of the Emergencies Council or Competent Authorities Ministers. It is recommended Ministers responsible for coordinating volunteer support on future emergency be included on Ministerial decision-making bodies.

It is also relevant to highlight that the Emergency Powers and Planning (Jersey) Law 1990 is 32 years old and was designed prior to the introduction of Ministerial government. It is suggested that this law be reviewed to ensure that it reflects the structures now in place.

FINDING 2 – The 32-year-old Emergency Powers and Planning (Jersey) Law 1990 was designed prior to the introduction of Ministerial Government and may not reflect current structures and practice.

FINDING 3 – There are a number of similarities and potential overlaps between the membership and function of the Emergencies Council, the Competent Authority Ministers, and the Council of Ministers.

³⁵ [Emergency Powers and Planning \(Jersey\) Law 1990](#)

³⁶ [P.86/2021](#)

³⁷ [Scrutiny and Public Accounts Committee Proceedings: Code of Practice](#)

FINDING 4 - There are longstanding concerns about the timing of the release of minutes of Competent Authority Ministers meetings to Scrutiny.

RECOMMENDATION 1 - The minutes of the Competent Authority Ministers should be (and should have been) released to Scrutiny in a timely fashion throughout the course of the pandemic.

RECOMMENDATION 2 - The Government should prioritise the replacement of the 32-year-old Emergency Powers and Planning (Jersey) Law 1990 in order to ensure that fully reflects the realities of ministerial governance for future crises, drawing on learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic

Emergency Departmental Governance within Health and Community Services

The Interim Chief Executive's submission to the PAC on 11 October 2021 stated that, as an immediate response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Bronze, Silver and Gold taskforces were established within the Hospital by Health and Community Services, based on the same blue light service response framework overseen by the Director General for Justice and Home Affairs.³⁸

The Hospital's Bronze group comprised several operational cells, including wellbeing, workforce, PPE, and logistics. The Bronze group was also responsible for actioning Business Continuity Plans. Services offered within the General Hospital were reduced to the management of emergency care patients and the treatment of cancer.³⁹

Submissions provided to the PAC outline how areas of the General Hospital were repurposed to manage the expectation of acutely unwell patients and to provide for COVID-19-positive wards – designated as hot – and COVID-19-negative wards – designated as cold – in compliance with Public Health and infection control advice and guidance.⁴⁰

The PAC was informed by the Chief Nurse that wards were staffed according to need and UK best practice guidance and to provide additional assurance in regard to care. She identified that medical, nursing, and associated health staff were moved from other departments to improve capacity.⁴¹ A Datix reporting system is used to report incidents and embed a culture of safety, with staff encouraged to report adverse incidents.⁴²

The PAC held a private briefing held in February 2022 with a member of the public who had been hospitalised with COVID-19 in December 2021 and wanted to share their concerns. This included concerns about the quality and access to care and the communications equipment available to staff.⁴³

³⁸ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.9](#)

³⁹ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.10](#)

⁴⁰ [Submission – Director General for Health and Community Services – 9 March 2022, pp.1-2](#)

⁴¹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.39](#)

⁴² [Submission – Director General for Health and Community Services – 9 March 2022, p.7](#)

⁴³ Private Briefing held February 2022

Further concern was raised regarding working conditions and difficulties experienced as a result of limited staff availability. It was submitted that staff had expressed their dissatisfaction about conditions and staff morale.⁴⁴

The Chief Nurse has submitted that staffing operated on safe NICE guidelines, where “*there is no single nursing staff-to-patient ratio that can be applied across the whole range of wards to safely meet patients' nursing needs. Each ward has to determine its nursing staff requirements to ensure safe patient care.*”⁴⁵ She outlined the staffing ratios as follows:

“In the general hospital, each ward (except ICU) has a staffing establishment which is based on a 1:6 (1 registered nurse to 6 patients) staffing ratio during the day and 1:10 at night. However, it is important to note that this is further uplifted if the acuity requires it but can also be reduced where acuity does not require the established ratio in accordance with the NICE guideline. These principles were applied throughout the pandemic.

*For the ICU establishment HCS follows the national guidelines for staffing which is based on acuity of patients i.e. ventilated patients should have a ratio of 1:1 (1 critical care nurse to 1 patient) and 1:2 for other critically ill non-ventilated patients, supported by health care assistants and a supernumerary nurse in charge. However, as above for general hospital wards, the staffing level is always provided according to patient need and not the number of beds.”*⁴⁶

*“There were 39 registered ICU nurses substantively employed on shift rotation in ICU during the month of December. In addition, 5 ICU trained agency nurses were employed in December 2021.”*⁴⁷

The Chief Nurse has informed the PAC that “at no time were the wards or ICU critically understaffed during the Covid-pandemic. The correct staff establishment was maintained for ICU and the wards based on acuity.”⁴⁸

The PAC noted that the recruitment for bank healthcare assistant was increased to support the Department for Health and Community Services, with a recruitment and communication campaign launched to support this alongside a fast-track process.⁴⁹

The Director General for Health and Community Services said concerns regarding staffing levels were discussed at daily bronze meetings, where mitigating actions were taken.

The PAC also understands from Chief Nurse that training was provided to Associated Health Professional staff to undertake nursing and additional administrative tasks to support the nurses within the ITU and in staffing the Urgent Treatment Centre. The ICU also contains a dedicated practice development nurse to support the delivery of training and competency

⁴⁴ Private Briefing held February 2022

⁴⁵ [Submission – Director General for Health and Community Services – 9 March 2022, p.3](#)

⁴⁶ [Submission – Director General for Health and Community Services – 9 March 2022, p.3](#)

⁴⁷ [Submission – Director General for Health and Community Services – 9 March 2022, p.5](#)

⁴⁸ [Submission – Director General for Health and Community Services – 9 March 2022, p.3](#)

⁴⁹ [Submission – Director General for Health and Community Services – 9 March 2022, p.5](#)

assessment.⁵⁰ Staff from other service areas also received training to enable them to provide basic nursing care to support the staffing of the Nightingale Hospital.⁵¹

The Director General for Health and Community Services further noted that face-to-face outpatient appointments were halted, with appropriate clinics delivered virtually where feasible, and only emergency surgery performed. The Director General for Health and Community Services acknowledged the impact on inpatient and outpatient waiting lists.⁵² The PAC notes that, during a public hearing on 21 June 2021, the Director General for Health and Community Services outlined that “we learnt in the first wave that we had to continue elective activity in the second wave”⁵³, and outlined the approach to elective care as follows:

“Around elective work, we have been very fortunate in Jersey. Because we learnt from the first wave that ... so we went into the first wave, we stopped all elective work apart from emergencies and cancers, and that was a decision that our clinicians made, because our response was clinically led by our associate medical directors, but what we learnt in that wave is that we did not want to be storing up a position where we had people waiting for secondary care, already compromised in their health presentation, being further compromised by not having their elective procedures. Therefore, if we do get a third wave or a fourth wave, you have people who are already clinically compromised who are going to be vulnerable. So, we worked really hard, and Rob led his teams in order to be able to ensure that we delivered our elective caseload.”⁵⁴

The private briefing held with the member of the public who had been hospitalised with COVID-19 did raise a number of concerns for the PAC about the way in which patient feedback was captured at this time⁵⁵

The Chief Nurse informed the PAC that a bronze cell was established to facilitate working with non-government organisations, through which key information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic was distributed to partner organisations. This included daily calls with the Care Federation, the representative of care homes in Jersey, and Situation Report meetings.⁵⁶

The PAC notes that General Practitioners were drawn into the Department for Health and Community Services’ response to COVID-19. The PAC understands that there are currently 113 GPs (as of 6 April 2022) on the Department for Health and Community Services’ performance list.⁵⁷ GPs on the performance list may not currently be practising in Jersey. Currently there are 101 GPs practising.

The Executive Response to the Comptroller and Auditor General’s report on the Management of the Healthcare Response to the COVID-19 pandemic stated that 13 GP surgeries (which equates to 102 GPs) were contracted during the COVID-19 pandemic, with £2.548 million recovered from GP surgery invoices in December 2020.⁵⁸ Follow up information provided by

⁵⁰ [Submission – Director General for Health and Community Services – 9 March 2022, p.5](#)

⁵¹ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.9](#)

⁵² [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.10](#)

⁵³ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 21 June 2021, p.40](#)

⁵⁴ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 21 June 2021, p.4](#)

⁵⁵ Private Briefing held February 2022

⁵⁶ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.12](#)

⁵⁷ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.9](#)

⁵⁸ [R.70/2021 – Management of the Healthcare Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Executive Response, pp.9-10](#)

the department showed that as at publication, £0.5 million remained unpaid. The PAC understands that the independent review of GP surgery contract payments as recommended by the Comptroller and Auditor General was on track.⁵⁹ The PAC would recommend from this response that the review of the GP surgery contract as recommended by the Comptroller and Auditor General is finalised and published.

The Director General for Health and Community Services noted that recovery plans were established to support the General Hospital in its return to normal working, with surgical waiting lists and outpatient lists restarting in a phased approach. Virtual clinics continued where appropriate and waiting list initiatives established to provide additional catch-up on backlogs.⁶⁰

Following the first wave of the pandemic, debriefs were provided to the department's bronze cells, with learning incorporated into the Department for Health and Community Services' preparedness plan for the second wave of COVID-19. This included an operational plan that provided action cards to officers outlining how to respond to certain scenarios, and further bronze meetings taking place as determined by the COVID-19 activity within and outside of the General Hospital.⁶¹

The Director General for Health and Community Services noted that Union support was sought to support the movement of staff into different work areas⁶², however, the PAC notes that it has received a private submission indicating concern that, whilst it was agreed that trade unions were to be represented on the General Hospital's bronze group to track services and requests from Hospital staff, this engagement never materialised on an operational level.

FINDING 5 - While it was agreed that trade unions were to be represented on the General Hospital's Bronze group to track services and requests from Hospital staff, it is the PAC's understanding that this engagement did not happen on an operational level.

RECOMMENDATION 3 - The internal audit review of the GP surgery contract, as recommended by the Comptroller and Auditor General, should be finalised and published as soon as possible.

Emergency Governance Within Other Departments

The PAC has sought to understand how individual departments have responded to and adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic in regard to internal governance and decision-making and received a submission from the Chief Executive on 11 October 2021 that contained feedback from the Government of Jersey's Director Generals⁶³ The PAC notes from the Chief Operating Officer that Business Continuity Teams across multiple departments worked to refresh and test business continuity planning, time-sensitive activities, and to cascade systems to understand the impact of the pandemic. Modifications were made to Business Continuity Plans

⁵⁹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.35](#)

⁶⁰ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.10](#)

⁶¹ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.10](#)

⁶² [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.10](#)

⁶³ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021](#)

to provide for longer-term resilience, in order to compensate for the short- and medium-term focuses of standard business continuity planning.⁶⁴

The Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance noted that additional resilience was introduced within his department during the COVID-19 pandemic. This included the need to ensure that the statutory function of the Medical Officer for Health could always be sustained to provide appropriate public health authorisations and statutory advice. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were three individuals who were designated by Ministers as the Medical Officer for Health. This is consistent with legislation, which provides for alternate Medical Officers of Health to be designated.⁶⁵

The submissions from the Interim Chief Executive and the Director Generals outlined processes each department had for continuing normal departmental processes and for the additional meetings and processes required by the pandemic. The submissions also addressed business continuity and cross-departmental communication and workload.⁶⁶

For instance, the then-Director General for Children, Young People, Education and Skills chaired a business continuity meeting that was held at least weekly, and sometimes daily, and was attended by the department's senior leadership team. Business continuity issues were reviewed on a four weekly basis according to a structured agenda agreed by the Director General and guided by the department's Head of Governance. The Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills were required to develop a range of business continuity responses through the Director General and director-level oversight, with reviews and adjustments to prevailing pandemic conditions and strategy.⁶⁷ This included discussion on the need for rapid development of corporate policies and systems to enable secondments and mutual aid.⁶⁸

The Director General for Customer and Local Services noted that the Minister for Social Security had undertaken changes to delegations and operational requirements as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in payment of Isolation Benefit and changes to the proof required for Income Support claims in order to support Islanders and identified the additional services operated by his department during the pandemic.⁶⁹

The Treasurer of the States outlined that his department's responsibilities remained unchanged during the COVID-19 pandemic, and he did not hand over any responsibilities to other departments but noted the use of a rota responsibility to ensure senior officer cover and quick decision-making.⁷⁰ The department maintains a full schedule of all COVID-related decisions taken by the Minister or the Treasurer under delegation/statutory authority.

The Treasury and Exchequer and Commercial Services established a response structure that included a triage system and series of agreed priorities between the Department for Treasury

⁶⁴ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.4](#)

⁶⁵ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.18](#)

⁶⁶ [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, p.4](#)

⁶⁷ [Submission – Director General for Children, Young People, Education and Skills – 6 December 2021, p.1-2](#)

⁶⁸ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.8](#)

⁶⁹ [Submission – Director General for Customer and Local Services – 6 December 2021, pp.1-3](#)

⁷⁰ [Submission – Treasurer of the States – 3 December 2021, p.2](#)

and Exchequer, the Chief Executive, and the Chief Operating Office, to deliver the following projects:

- New grant and business support schemes
- Support for Blue Islands; and
- The purchase of essential supplies, including PPE.⁷¹

The Group Director for External Relations outlined in a submission to the PAC that her department was responsible for developing and establishing the Essential Traveller regime for 'lifeline' air connectivity with the UK, alongside developing new travel arrangements, pilot testing regimes and the repatriation of Jersey residents stranded overseas. External Relations was also involved in supporting engagement with the UK Government; primarily the Ministry of Justice, Cabinet Office, Department for Health, Department for Education, Department for Transport, and the Home Office.⁷²

A Gold group was implemented by States of Jersey Police. A Gold strategy was agreed with the Chief Officer and all subsequent actions and decisions were recorded informally. The Gold Group was chaired by the Deputy Chief Officer and included senior Honorary Officers, senior members of Police Staff and union representatives.⁷³ In addition, the Test and Trace Programme and Vaccination Programme have been overseen by the Director of Public Health and with members from partner departments, including People and Corporate Services and Treasury and Exchequer.⁷⁴

The PAC welcomes the detail provided in relation to the emergency governance and notes the considerable complexity of the organisation incurred as a result of these temporary changes.

The PAC would recommend that the Government of Jersey undertakes a review of the efficiency of the emergency decision-making processes and publish a revised emergency governance framework.

RECOMMENDATION 4 - The Government should undertake a review of the efficiency of the emergency decision-making processes and publish a revised emergency governance framework to simplify governance and decision-making processes with greater clarity, building on best practices in other jurisdictions and partnerships with other jurisdictions.

Emergency Planning

Day-to-day emergency planning is delegated by the Emergencies Council to the Jersey Resilience Forum, as chaired by the Chief Executive. The Jersey Resilience Forum is a multi-agency partnership which includes responders from the voluntary sector and the Parishes and other local organisations, in order to plan and prepare for localised incidents and emergencies, identify potential risks, and prepare emergency plans to prevent or mitigate impact.

⁷¹ [Submission – Treasurer of the States – 3 December 2021, p.8](#)

⁷² [Submission – Group Director for External Relations – 3 December 2021](#)

⁷³ [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, p.5](#)

⁷⁴ [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, p.6](#)

Out-dated sources of information remain in the Government website in relation to emergency planning, including references to the Emergency Planning Board which has been replaced by the Jersey Resilience Forum. It is recommended that these pages are updated to reflect the current situation and to avoid public confusion.⁷⁵

The PAC understands that the current Emergency Planning function provided the Director General for Justice and Home Affairs with accountability for the Government of Jersey's civil contingencies delivery.⁷⁶

The PAC discussed this during a private briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy, and its public hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance.⁷⁷ The PAC noted that the code of practice implemented for the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell (STAC) was undertaken in coordination with the Emergency Planning Office and discussed at the Jersey Resilience Forum with the Director of Public Health in attendance.⁷⁸

The PAC notes from the submission made by the Chief Executive on 14 February 2022 that emergency planning is continuously reviewed and did not require a specific review of these roles at the time the submission was made. The Chief Executive informed the PAC that key lessons had been learned regarding the complexity of the emergency governance structure and the opportunity had been taken to introduce a more refined approach.⁷⁹

The Chief Executive confirmed that officers were carefully considering all findings presented to them as “opportunities to refine and improve resilience” and were looking to follow similar learning in the UK and elsewhere. The Chief Executive further noted the operational benefits of working with Guernsey, and that there were intentions to create further benefits from this partnership in the future.⁸⁰

The Director of Public Health confirmed to the PAC during their private briefing on 2 February 2022 that there were plans to relaunch the emergency planning function through emergency planning officers within the Department for Justice and Home Affairs.⁸¹ These officers would work in collaboration with other departments throughout the States of Jersey – including blue light services – to develop this functionality, with a provision provided to work with officers in Guernsey on areas of joint response. However, the PAC understands from the Chief Executive's submission on 14 February 2022 that there is no plan to “change the resourcing or structure of the emergency planning function.”⁸²

⁷⁵ [Emergency planning: roles of responder groups – gov.je](#)

⁷⁶ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.8](#)

⁷⁷ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

⁷⁸ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

⁷⁹ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.9](#)

⁸⁰ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.9](#)

⁸¹ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

⁸² [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.9](#)

Recruitment of On-Island Support

To assist with the delivery of the Government of Jersey's response to COVID-19, eight individuals with specific experience, from the private sector and from arms-length organisations were recruited by the Government, to assist on workstreams and programmes where their knowledge could be applied.⁸³ This included expertise from the digital sector and for additional large scale project management skills.⁸⁴

The PAC supports the view that in responding to a crisis of this level it was important to harness the expertise of people across all sectors to support the work of Government. It is equally as important that a robust process is in place for doing so.

The PAC would recommend that their successor consider the appointments made as part of a review of the COVID-19 Test and Trace programme. The PAC has not requested a breakdown of the levels of remuneration provided to those listed in the Chief Executive's submission at this stage.

The submission does not detail workers hired on zero-hour and fixed-term contracts to deliver Testing, Tracing and Vaccination operations. The PAC further notes that Dr Graham Root was an independently and unremunerated contracted member of the STAC.⁸⁵

FINDING 6 – The Government of Jersey actively recruited eight Islanders with specific expertise and knowledge to assist with the delivery of pandemic response programmes, with six of these being remunerated by the Government.

FINDING 7 - Out-dated sources of information remain on the Government website in relation to emergency planning, including references to the Emergency Planning Board which has been replaced by the Jersey Resilience Forum.

RECOMMENDATION 5 – The Government should clarify how individuals who were recruited to key work programmes to assist with the response to COVID-19 were selected, remunerated, and who they were accountable to.

RECOMMENDATION 6 – The Government should update its website in relation to emergency planning, removing references to the Emergency Planning Board which has been replaced by the Jersey Resilience Forum.

States-Owned Entities and Charities

The Chief Executive outlined to the PAC that States-Owned Entities maintained their own operational and financial business arrangements as they would in business-as-usual circumstances. The Minister for Treasury and Resources was regularly briefed as the Government of Jersey's shareholder on business activity and due to the potential impact to balance sheets. The PAC understands that the COVID-19 pandemic did not create a need for

⁸³ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, pp.1-2](#)

⁸⁴ Private Briefing with Tony Moretta – 28 October 2021, Private Briefing with Malcolm Ferey – 30 November 2021

⁸⁵ Private Briefing with Dr Graham Root – 12 January 2021

any direct financial support, and it is not anticipated that support will be required in the recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁸⁶

The PAC notes that each department, through their Accountable Officer, has the opportunity to make grants to organisations that can support strategic purposes linked to the respective department. Charitable bodies were able to approach relevant departments in the event of other income sources suffering as a result of the pandemic, although departments are required under the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019 to manage funding as approved within that year's Government Plan, which includes the rebalancing of targets for savings.⁸⁷

As a result, no central funding was made available to support charitable bodies, and funding was instead provided directly through departments and the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme.⁸⁸ Support to charities was made available through the Community Taskforce, which provided oversight of community support, and worked with Parishes, voluntary and community sectors and businesses to coordinate assistance for Islanders.⁸⁹

Evolution of Public Health and Public Health Policy

The Public Health Directorate is a function under the Department for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance, and provides professional advice on public health matters. Situated within the Directorate is the Public Health Policy team, which provides advice and support on the development of public health policies. The Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance is the Directorate's Accountable Officer and additional accountability is provided by the Executive Leadership Team, the Chief Minister, the Minister for Health and Social Services, and the Competent Authorities Ministers, in order to guarantee a consensus from Ministers.⁹⁰

For governance context, the UK Health Security Agency (formerly Public Health England) is an executive government agency of the United Kingdom under the Department of Health and Social Care.

At the beginning of the pandemic, the Public Health function was a "very small team" that had to be "built up through time", resulting in the current status of Public Health being "far-removed from the Public Health team we [the Government of Jersey] had at the time."⁹¹

The Director of Public Health Policy has confirmed that he did not believe that there had been a significant evolution of responsibilities and key accountabilities during his time in the role, but did note that the departure of the former Director General for Justice and Home Affairs had led to the decision to fully re-integrate Public Health into Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance, in tandem with the establishment of a new vaccination board and a COVID-19 Status Certification Board to deal with vaccine access.⁹²

⁸⁶ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.4](#)

⁸⁷ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.4](#)

⁸⁸ [Government of Jersey COVID-19 Co-Funded Payroll Scheme: Guidance – Version 10 – May 2021](#)

⁸⁹ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.4](#)

⁹⁰ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

⁹¹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.8](#)

⁹² Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

The Director of Public Health further confirmed that he did not have concerns regarding the resourcing of the Public Health Directorate, and that initial concerns raised during his arrival had been addressed since his appointment, with the Directorate now running at close to full capacity.⁹³ Officers have stated that it would not be possible to conduct a full range of public health responsibilities should a new pandemic or similar events develop. In such an event, public health programmes would need to be deferred.

The PAC notes that the current senior officers within the Public Health Directorate joined the Government during the pandemic and were not involved in the early months of the response to COVID-19. The Director of Public Health Policy joined the Government of Jersey in September 2020, with the Director of Public Health joining in June 2021⁹⁴ and focusing on the pandemic response. The Director of Public Health confirmed that he believed that he had been successfully briefed by the Director of Public Health Policy and other senior officers upon arrival.⁹⁵

The PAC further discussed the Medical Officer for Health's role and risk monitoring functions being moved into the Directorate. The Director of Public Health Policy confirmed that he was now responsible for leading on all major public health policy issues.⁹⁶ The work of the Public Health Directorate is currently split between traditional public health, the provision of data on health improvement in the Island, the Jersey Care Model, emergency planning and future threats to public health and undertaking the role of Medical Officer for Health. It is understood that health monitoring undertaken by the Public Health Directorate also includes dependencies in other departments to ensure clear management of resources and provide focus on broader issues.⁹⁷

The Director of Public Health said that the Public Health Directorate had “developed at pace”, and now included the provision of public health intelligence and the consideration of environmental health as key services now provided by the Directorate.⁹⁸ The Director of Public Health informed the PAC that the Directorate was now equipped to improve its ability to plan its response to future incidents, including the potential use of environmental health and emergency planning events.⁹⁹

The Director of Public Health Policy informed the PAC funds had been allocated to the Public Health Directorate as a multi-disciplinary provision to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and that this was a positive approach in his view. However, when new treatments or vaccinations became available it took time to source departmental leadership and he suggested that a faster process should be developed.¹⁰⁰ The PAC would therefore recommend a review the governance framework used to appoint departmental responsibility to respond to new public health developments and improve the pace of appointing internal leaders on this area.

The PAC notes that Public Health Directorate had not received significant resources at the beginning of the pandemic. The function has since developed to incorporate a larger number

⁹³ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

⁹⁴ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

⁹⁵ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

⁹⁶ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

⁹⁷ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

⁹⁸ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

⁹⁹ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

¹⁰⁰ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

of officers. The Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance noted that a key learning was the need for a “stronger public health team”, and that the Island would have benefitted from “a Public Health team of 15 to 20 people at the outset”¹⁰¹ of the pandemic. The PAC understands from the Director of Public Health that “less than five” vacancies remain and that recruitment processes are being staggered over 2022 to “meet major requirements [with Public Health] first”.¹⁰²

FINDING 8 - The review of the governance framework should be used to appoint departmental responsibility to respond to new public health developments and improve the pace of appointing internal leadership for these items.

Collaboration with Public Health England

It is understood that there was access to a number of specialist advisors from within Public Health England on request. In addition, officer leads in the Isle of Man, Guernsey and Jersey held regular catch ups with each other and as a group with UK representatives and monthly catch ups to discuss areas including the preparation and publication of COVID-19 statistics.¹⁰³

The Director of Public Health confirmed to the PAC that meetings with UK authorities on COVID-19 are continuing. Directors of Public Health in the UK and Crown Dependencies are invited to weekly meetings with the Chief Medical Officer Sir Chris Whitty.¹⁰⁴

The PAC welcomes this collaboration and would recommend that the Government review its engagement with the UK and other jurisdictions to highlight areas of improvement identified through these meetings and to improve the effectiveness of collaboration during future public health crises. The PAC would recommend to its successor that Government collaboration with Public Health England is given further attention in a future review of the Test and Trace and Vaccination Programmes.

RECOMMENDATION 7 – The Government should review its engagement with the UK and other jurisdictions by 31 December 2022 to highlight areas of improvement identified through the meetings held and to improve the effectiveness of inter-jurisdictional collaboration during future public health crises.

Role of STAC

The Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell (STAC) was constituted to provide a common source of health, scientific and technical advice to the Government and Gold Commanders. It also provided a forum to debate key issues and develop advice in a timely and coordinated way. STAC did not have any central decision-making powers.

¹⁰¹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, pp.35-6](#)

¹⁰² [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.18](#)

¹⁰³ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.26](#)

¹⁰⁴ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.27](#)

The first meeting of STAC was held on 28 April 2020, with regular meetings held since. The Code of Practice¹⁰⁵ was endorsed on 6 December 2021, and its Terms of Reference¹⁰⁶ have been published and updated since June 2020, when they were first published as part of the COVID-19 Strategy (R.55/2020).¹⁰⁷ The previous terms of reference endorsed in June 2020¹⁰⁸ and March 2021¹⁰⁹ are on the Government website.

The Comptroller and Auditor General has previously raised concerns about the publication of STAC minutes and records and is pleased to note that these issues continue to be addressed.¹¹⁰ ¹¹¹ The submission provided by the Director of Statistics and Analytics states that Public Health Intelligence provided a data brief at the start of each STAC meeting, including data related to cases, hospitalisations, and vaccinations.¹¹²

The publication and presentation of key minutes were also expressed by the Primary Care Body¹¹³, which said that the minutes of STAC meetings had not been released directly to medical professionals on the frontline.

The Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance has confirmed that the presentation of the minutes of STAC meetings “have improved considerably from the outset.” Minutes are prepared by the States Greffe, which is also responsible for the preparation of minutes of the Council of Ministers, Emergencies Council, and Competent Authorities Ministers.¹¹⁴

At its public hearings, the PAC has queried both the time-lag between meetings and publication of minutes and also the anonymisation provided. The view expressed by the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance is that a “safe space” for a scientific consensus was needed within STAC to discuss ‘live issues’ before the minutes are released. The Deputy Medical Officer of Health noted: “the advice that we received was that it is best practice for scientific committees to anonymise the comments, to ensure those people cannot be targeted, I guess, and it was felt to be right to follow the best practice advice that is issued in the United Kingdom.” ¹¹⁵

The PAC would welcome clarity on STAC’s approach to the provision of a safe space and that this is reflected in an updated code of practice, to provide consistency.

The Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance confirmed to the PAC that minutes of STAC, the Competent Authority Ministers, Council of Ministers and

¹⁰⁵ [STAC Code of Practice – December 2021](#)

¹⁰⁶ [STAC Terms of Reference](#)

¹⁰⁷ [R.55/2020](#)

¹⁰⁸ [R.55/2020, p.28](#)

¹⁰⁹ [Previous STAC Terms of Reference](#)

¹¹⁰ [Management of the Healthcare Response to the COVID-19 pandemic – Comptroller and Auditor General – 29 April 2021, p.16](#)

¹¹¹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.12](#)

¹¹² [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, pp.4-5](#)

¹¹³ [Submission - Primary Care Body - 5 November 2021](#)

¹¹⁴ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.12](#)

¹¹⁵ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.12](#)

Emergencies Council formed the audit trail of decision-making. The Director of Public Health further noted that STAC provided “the main mechanism of governance” for his function.¹¹⁶

The Director of Public Health Policy confirmed that a strategic coordination group attended the strategic coordination group and each STAC meeting and was able to provide a link to other Government departments to improve the coordination of the strategic response.¹¹⁷

The PAC also held a private briefing with independent lay member of STAC, Dr Graham Root, on 12 January 2022. Dr Root confirmed that he had signed a contract with Government as part of his membership but had refused remuneration to retain full independence.¹¹⁸

Dr Root expressed concerns regarding the composition of STAC and the minimal presence of independent members compared to a majority who were directly employed by Government. He described STAC as a “largely consensus-driven body” with a risk of passive membership. Dr Root noted that this risk could potentially reduce the level of debate that could be held around the information presented to STAC during its meetings.¹¹⁹

He said that membership of STAC could be improved by encouraging the inclusion of more individuals outside Government (with the necessary vetting procedures followed and an assurance that members are not remunerated) and to expand the focus on debating evidence provided before outlining advice that could be supplied to policy officers. It was further suggested that the membership could benefit from independent members with training in data analysis and similar skills.¹²⁰ The PAC notes that STAC is currently almost exclusively composed of members who are either civil servants (with relevant medical, PH, analytical, or other scientific qualifications) or directly remunerated by the Government of Jersey.

The PAC discussed these views with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance on 12 February 2022. He noted that the Code of Practice for STAC outlined the independence of each member and affirmed his belief that no member “has some sort of superiority in their independence to the others” and that he “would stoutly defend the independence of all members when they are on STAC.”¹²¹

The PAC notes that the chairing of STAC has changed during the pandemic, with STAC initially chaired by the Medical Director¹²² before this position moved to the Director of Public Health when STAC updated its Terms of Reference in 2021.¹²³

The Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance noted that “it is a common risk to scientific committees that they can arrive at a consensus way of thinking but I think that is something that we rely on the chair and the vice-chair to guard against” and that the presence of a member outside of the public service can be helpful.¹²⁴ The Director of

¹¹⁶ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.16](#)

¹¹⁷ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

¹¹⁸ Private Briefing with Dr Graham Root – 12 January 2022

¹¹⁹ Private Briefing with Dr Graham Root – 12 January 2022

¹²⁰ Private Briefing with Dr Graham Root – 12 January 2022

¹²¹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.9](#)

¹²² [R.55/2020, p.29](#)

¹²³ [Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell – Terms of Reference – September 2021](#)

¹²⁴ [Transcript – Public Hearing with Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.9](#)

Public Health further informed the PAC that “a lot of attention [was given] to recording our breadth of opinion”.¹²⁵

The PAC further inquired about the difference between Jersey’s STAC function and the UK’s Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE). The Deputy Medical Officer of Health said that he saw STAC as being an amalgam of SAGE (in gathering scientific information, analysing it, and supplying the information forwards to decision-making bodies) and the Competent Authority Ministers, in helping to determine the operational elements from the information available.¹²⁶

The Deputy Medical Officer of Health said that much of the accumulated information and analysis on COVID-19 arrived from SAGE, and STAC was responsible for localising and translating this information into a Jersey context.

The PAC considers the function of STAC to be of vital importance in responding to future public health emergencies and would recommend that an internal review of STAC and the effectiveness of Government emergency decision-making be undertaken to identify improvement and the appropriateness of the functions outlined in this report.¹²⁷ The PAC notes that the Comptroller and Auditor General has previously recommended improvements that a more complete audit trail be provided for future STAC meetings. This was supported by the States Assembly’s support for P.88/2020 on 14 July 2020.¹²⁸ The PAC welcomes the improvements made to published STAC minutes and would recommend greater efficiency in publishing these minutes.¹²⁹

FINDING 9 – The publication of minutes of meetings and drafting of a code of practice for the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell was completed following a recommendation made by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

FINDING 10 – Aside from a single, independent, and non-remunerated member, all members of STAC either work directly for the Government or are remunerated by them.

RECOMMENDATION 8 - An internal review should be undertaken of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell and of the effectiveness of Government emergency decision-making bodies to identify improvements, the appropriateness of the functions and whether there is a need to create a distinct independent scientific advisory body.

Use of Statistics

The PAC has sought to understand how the Government has developed and published statistics during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional resources were provided to Health and Community Services’ Informatics and Public Health Intelligence teams to improve the quality of their response to the increased demand for COVID-19 statistics. It is understood that no

¹²⁵ [Transcript – Public Hearing with Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.12](#)

¹²⁶ [Transcript – Public Hearing with Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.8](#)

¹²⁷ [Transcript – Public Hearing with Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, pp.8-9](#)

¹²⁸ [P.88/2020 – Vote for Enhanced COVID-19 Exit Strategy Communication as amended](#)

¹²⁹ [Report - Management of the Healthcare Response to the COVID-19 pandemic – Comptroller and Auditor General – 29 April 2021, p.16](#)

additional resources were provided to Statistics Jersey which had a resulting impact on the delivery of other important pieces of work, including analysis of the Census 2021 results.¹³⁰⁻

The Director of Statistics and Analytics confirmed that decisions on prioritising the work of Statistics Jersey was made within the standard Government parameters, in consultation with colleagues in Medical, Health and Public Health functions. He said that the standard approach for publication was to place information on the Government website and via social media, to update that information frequently and to respond to feedback.¹³¹

The following survey activities undertaken by Statistics Jersey had to be stopped because of the Covid public health restrictions:

- The Living Costs and Household Income Survey (only partially completed following the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions in March 2020)
- Visit Jersey's Exit Survey (of visitors spend and experience)

In addition, the following work was paused to focus on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- The new Annual Business Survey (it was felt inappropriate to start the survey at a time of great stress to businesses and when the results were unlikely to be representative)
- Work on public health analyses, such as smoking and drinking.¹³²

The publication of Statistics Jersey's official statistics continued in line with its release schedule and affected work programmes have now been restarted, albeit at a reduced pace.¹³³

The Covid Informatics Team was responsible for producing swabbing projections based on intended Government of Jersey policy changes to help with estimates of costs. They also used data provided by Ports of Jersey in relation to the predicted arrivals into the Island to help with the planning of COVID-19 travel testing. They worked with hospital staff and GPs to ensure that operational requirements were met and that regular meetings were held with the Deputy Medical Officer of Health to identify areas improvement.¹³⁴

The Public Health Intelligence Team developed rapidly as Statistics Jersey became less involved in the reporting of COVID-19 health data. The team eventually took the lead on reporting COVID-19 statistics to bodies such as STAC. At the start of the pandemic, Statistics Jersey also carried out modelling of possible case numbers in Jersey based on models from the UK, and briefed STAC and Ministers on these models.¹³⁵

While existing data agreements were in place for Statistics Jersey, it is understood that the Health Informatics and Public Health Information teams required new data sharing agreements for sources of data, including vaccination data. These were quickly agreed and

¹³⁰ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022](#)

¹³¹ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.5](#)

¹³² [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.2](#)

¹³³ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.2](#)

¹³⁴ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.5](#)

¹³⁵ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.2](#)

included agreements between test providers for operational purposes and a secondary use for the production of statistics.¹³⁶

The above submission notwithstanding, the PAC was informed that Data sharing agreements between departments, particularly the details of those who had Covid-19, was a significant challenge and that guidance was sought.

Statistics Jersey undertook the following additional pandemic-related activities:

- An antibody survey to measure antibody rates in the community. Results were published in May, June, and July 2020, with field-staff deployed who were no longer working on the Living Costs and Household Income Survey or the Exit Survey
- A weekly 'Where are we on the curve' publication that was subsequently handed over to Public Health Intelligence in July 2020
- An economic indicator report from 28 April 2020 focusing primarily on administrative data from the Department for Customer and Local Services, the Royal Court, and, later on during the pandemic, the Transport function within the Department for Infrastructure, Housing and Environment. This report was published weekly before becoming monthly and then quarterly as open data.¹³⁷

Health and Community Services Informatics and Public Health Intelligence developed statistical outputs, including data on cases, hospitalisations, and deaths in response to the pandemic. This has included statistics on vaccinations following the start of the vaccination programme.¹³⁸

Decisions on the work and outputs from Statistics Jersey were made by the Chief Statistician and were not the result of decisions made by Ministers, based on the relative priority of requests for help and the "joint effort to protect lives and livelihoods"¹³⁹. However, the PAC further notes that Ministers would sometimes request analysis to support their decision-making. The Director of Statistics and Analytics also provided support to the Heads of Practice in Public Health and the Department for Health and Community Services in responding to requests for briefing on issues including the vaccine status of COVID-19 cases and the vaccination status of hospitalisations. This was to ensure the reliability of these statistics and their compliance with professional standards.¹⁴⁰

The Director of Statistics and Analytics confirmed that there were no changes in the accountability for Statistics Jersey and that the function retained its independence, but noted that, in his role as Chief Statistician, he had become a permanent member of STAC at the beginning of 2021.

¹³⁶ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.3](#)

¹³⁷ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.2](#)

¹³⁸ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.5](#)

¹³⁹ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.3](#)

¹⁴⁰ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.3](#)

The Director of Statistics and Analytics identified that decisions on analyses undertaken and published were informed by, among other things, media commentary on topics of interest to the public (e.g. the vaccine status of Covid cases) and approaches to publication of Covid statistics being taken by other jurisdictions, including Public Health England.¹⁴¹

The PAC sought to understand how the production of statistics provided additional value during the pandemic. The Director of Public Health noted that statistics had been used to respond to public health concerns. It was confirmed that regular reviews were undertaken of how epidemiological and health data was being measured against the actions and policies undertaken by the Government.¹⁴²

The PAC notes that statistics presented were provided in line with professional standards on the reporting of statistics.^{143 144}

The PAC understands that the Health Informatics and Public Health Intelligence team used their own professional judgement to determine which statistics it could collect and publish, and based these decisions on their own expertise, alongside the international advice and experience available.¹⁴⁵

The Director of Statistics and Analytics said that a key challenge had been the ability to recruit and deploy experienced statisticians and analysts, due to the increased demand for these roles in health, economic and social areas.¹⁴⁶

The Chief Statistician further outlined to the PAC that it was his responsibility to support best practice and maintain the non-disclosure of personal data:

“I have a role across the statistical system on things like career and professional development, but also the upholding of the code of practice for statistics, so on a few issues I have supported the best practice in the H.C.S. informatics and the Public Health Intelligence teams when we have been dealing with difficult issues. When we were considering publication of the vaccine status of COVID hospitalisations there were some really quite tricky issues around the quality of the data and also maintaining the non-disclosure of personal data, so I was very much involved with those, advising and supporting the heads of those teams.”¹⁴⁷

The Head of Public Health Intelligence outlined the quality and type of statistics published and how the Government sought feedback:

“We had sort of evolution of the statistics that have been provided over the course of the pandemic. Some of the dataset has just become available and has become of a good enough quality for us to be able to produce those with certainty and look to do

¹⁴¹ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, pp.4-6](#)

¹⁴² Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

¹⁴³ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

¹⁴⁴ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.4](#)

¹⁴⁵ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

¹⁴⁶ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.7](#)

¹⁴⁷ [Transcript- Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.24](#)

that so, for example, looking at the cases of COVID positive cases and the vaccination statistics themselves. For that in itself, we did quite a bit of consultation with, for example, the statistics users group to make sure that we were able to show the uptake on different priority groups alongside the data quality assessment and then there is also quite a wealth of information within the reporting that we do to make sure that all the caveats are provided to improve the understanding of the figures that are being published. We also check through with S.T.A.C. on the data that we wish to provide and will discuss, for example, around the work that we did at the end of the year on working with H.C.S. around getting the data on the vaccine status of hospitalisations published.”¹⁴⁸

It is vital that there is transparency around how statistics are commissioned and who has called for them in order to ensure that there is public trust in what is being presented.

The PAC understands that Statistics Jersey has not yet conducted an internal review of its work and performance during the pandemic, but the Chief Statistician has reviewed the workload of Statistics Jersey in the context of having to restart the Covid delayed Living Costs and Household Income Survey, alongside the broader Statistics Jersey workload.

The PAC would recommend this work is done to investigate the efficiency and quality of statistics published identify best practice, with the scoping and terms of reference to be drafted by the Statistics Users Group.¹⁴⁹

FINDING 11 – No additional resources were provided to Statistics Jersey, leading to it suspending a number of activities, including analysis of Census 2021 results.

FINDING 12 – The Chief Statistician sought advice from the Director of Public Health regarding the publication of data from small jurisdictions.

RECOMMENDATION 9 – The PAC would recommend that an internal review be undertaken to ascertain the efficiency and quality of statistics published during the COVID-19 pandemic and to identify best practice.

RECOMMENDATION 10 – It is recommended that as part of this review, and in liaison with the Statistics Users Group, Statistics Jersey addresses the issues which caused a pause in work which was not related to the pandemic to ensure that the production of other significant statistical analysis is not compromised during a future emergency.

Lessons Learned

The Chief Operating Officer informed the PAC that the length of the pandemic resulted in consideration being given to widening the training available for Government officers who could lead on emergency responses and provide additional capacity and resilience.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ [Transcript- Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.29](#)

¹⁴⁹ [Submission – Director of Statistics and Analytics – 22 February 2022, p.8](#)

¹⁵⁰ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.3](#)

An Enterprise Risk Management System is now embedded used to drive discussions on identifying, reviewing, and mitigating key areas of concern across the Department for Justice and Home Affairs.¹⁵¹

The PAC notes that operational lessons have been identified within the department's services through discussion with team members and implemented, with the function of relevant teams reviewed and adapted where needed. Tabletop exercises have been held to identify the lessons from service operations to date that can be shared across Justice and Home Affairs.¹⁵²

The Director of Public Health has confirmed that there were plans to recreate the emergency planning function through emergency planning officers in Justice and Home Affairs, who would work with officers throughout the States of Jersey – including blue light services – and with responsible officers holding provision to establish work programmes with officers in Guernsey if required.¹⁵³

When asked about longer-term work in relation to COVID-19, the Director of Public Health noted the negative impact on mental health and his concerns regarding the level of alcohol consumption in Jersey and confirmed that these areas would be explored in greater detail as the pandemic recedes. The Director of Public Health confirmed plans to examine cancer and heart disease rates in Jersey as part of the Public Health Directorate's future work programme.¹⁵⁴

The PAC notes from a private briefing that the Government's emergency planning process had provided a low level of consideration to disease, and that greater consideration had been presented to natural or artificial disasters, and financial collapse.¹⁵⁵

The PAC would recommend that the Government give consideration to prioritisation of hypothetical emergencies and provide annual updates on emergency procedures in light of global and local developments, with consistent capacity given to future pandemics.

RECOMMENDATION 11 – It is recommended that the Government give consideration to the prioritisation of emergencies and provides annual updates on emergency procedures in light of global and local developments, with consistent capacity given to future pandemics.

¹⁵¹ [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, p.5](#)

¹⁵² [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, p.6](#)

¹⁵³ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

¹⁵⁴ Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

¹⁵⁵ Private Briefing with Malcolm Ferey – 30 November 2021

Section 6 – Impact on Departmental Work and Employees

Tracking of Suspended/Delayed Projects/Programmes

The Interim Chief Executive’s submission of 11 October 2021 stated that the Corporate Portfolio Management Office was established at the beginning of 2020 to provide ‘in-flight’ programmes and project updates to the Executive Leadership Team on a monthly basis. This reporting included an overarching description of the initiative, its key objectives, the responsible Delivery Team, its rating for each programme or project (using the Government Plan colour coordination of Red, Amber, or Green), issues or risks, the activities undertaken during the reporting period and the planned activity for the forthcoming period. This reporting was made available to each Director General for their respective portfolio.¹⁵⁶

Updates on projects approved as part of the Government Plan 2020-2023 were provided in the Government Plan 6 Month Progress Review, published in September 2021, which included progress to date on all initiatives that were funded through revenue or capital investment following the approval of the Government Plan 2020-23, as reflected against each Common Strategic Priority. This review outlined the impact of the pandemic on each project.¹⁵⁷

A second mid-year review was published in August 2021 that reflected the impact of the pandemic on the approved Government Plan 2021-24.¹⁵⁸ The reporting of performance has been considered by the PAC and by the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel in its own review of the Government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁵⁹

The Interim Chief Executive noted that there had been “considerable improvements” in the Corporate Portfolio Management Office’s reporting, both in regard to the quality of information received from the projects and programmes, and in the level of analysis and challenge that it provides. The Interim Chief Executive said that, although the Corporate Portfolio Management Office had only just begun reporting at the beginning of the pandemic – with not all programmes and projects being reported in a consistent manner – this had now been addressed with 95% of the portfolio reporting monthly from August 2021.¹⁶⁰

The Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance said that, at the outset of the pandemic, the strategic focus was on the “provision of public health advice, legislation and intelligence in order to protect Islanders”, with over half of the department’s capacity deployed on COVID-19 work at the peak points. Secondments were also made from elsewhere in the public service and interim specialist support used as needed.¹⁶¹

He said that a “small number of dedicated colleagues” were needed to carry on with mainstream work required under statutory, Assembly or external timelines and these officers were often working alone. These areas included the Bridging Island Plan, Government Plan, Brexit, Climate Emergency, the Redress Scheme, and the 2021 Census.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁶ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.13](#)

¹⁵⁷ [Government Plan 2020-23 6 month progress review](#)

¹⁵⁸ [Government Plan 2021-24 Mid-Year Review 2021](#)

¹⁵⁹ [S.R.7/2021](#)

¹⁶⁰ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.12](#)

¹⁶¹ [Submission – Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 3 December 2021, p.2](#)

¹⁶² [Submission – Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 3 December 2021, p.3](#)

The status of these projects was published in the Departmental Annual Report and Mid-Year Review 2021, to illustrate how deferred items were starting to come back on track as capacity was gradually released back onto mainstream activities in 2021.^{163 164}

Secondment of Staff and Office Support

As part of the Chief Executive’s submission on 14 February 2022, it was outlined that a COVID-19 Emergency Resourcing Team was established to second resources from departments and partner organisations in response to COVID-19, with an emergency resourcing team working with business continuity teams to establish pools of who could be released into business-critical roles. This was preferred to a strategy of recruiting staff from agencies.¹⁶⁵

The following table was provided summarising the people moved into new roles in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as of 31st July 2020¹⁶⁶:

Department	Approved Requests	Approved Vacancies	Candidates Placed	Live Vacancies
Chief Operating Office	17	29	27	
Children, Young People, Education and Skills	5	28	1	
Customer and Local Services	8	37	17	
Growth, Housing and Environment*	25	104	91	6
Health and Community Services	30	165	132	
Justice and Home Affairs	34	116	90	
Non-Ministerial Departments				
Office of the Chief Executive	5	6	6	
Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance	39	111	86	
Treasury and Exchequer	0	0	0	0
Total	163	596	450	6

¹⁶³ [Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance Departmental Annual Report 2020](#)

¹⁶⁴ [Government Plan 2021-24 Mid-Year Review 2021](#)

¹⁶⁵ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.5](#)

¹⁶⁶ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.5](#)

**now Infrastructure, Housing and Environment*

Candidates were initially sourced from areas that resulted in no additional costs to Government, including, internal redeployment, States owned entities, Talentlink applications and agency workers¹⁶⁷

The PAC received responses from the Accountable Officer for each department as part of a response received from the Interim Chief Executive on 11th October 2021. The Chief Operating Officer said that, once emergency resourcing requests had been approved by the One Gov Emergency Response Team, the resourcing team matched colleagues to requests, resulting in a total of 119 internal redeployments during the first wave (20 March – 31 July 2020).¹⁶⁸

Where it was not possible to match colleagues internally to business-critical roles, external resources were sought, such as through internal secondments from States-Owned entities and local agencies, including zero-hour contracts. Daily status updates were produced, continuing into 2021 and feeding into Gold Command. Daily workforce capacity reports were also produced to monitor the service and risk levels of service provision within the Government of Jersey.¹⁶⁹

A safe exit strategy was produced to enable redeployed colleagues to be moved back into their original roles. The Chief Operating Officer informed the PAC that this ensured that critical and/or essential services could be maintained safely and appropriately whilst ensuring that business continuity was stepped down during July/August 2020.¹⁷⁰

It is understood that there were a minimal number of secondments during the second and third waves, with most roles filled by colleagues employed on zero-hour or fixed-term contracts. This ensured resources for critical work programmes. The coordination of staff was eventually moved into a single team to make additional resources available to focus on business recovery. It is understood that work has also been undertaken to connect this to the work of People and Corporate Services in response to the Be Heard survey undertaken in 2020 to understand the concerns of employees. The PAC notes that departments have worked independently to consider how to rebuild their teams and services.¹⁷¹

The Director General for Customer and Local Services noted that his department's response was staffed primarily by seconded resources from his and other departments. Ongoing support services, including the COVID-19 Helpline, are now resourced using funding made available through States Assembly approval. He noted that, where business-as-usual individuals are still supporting or leading on pandemic-related work programmes, secondments were in place to ensure that individuals roles were backfilled and supported appropriately.¹⁷²

The Director General for Infrastructure, Housing and Environment outlined said that the changing nature of the economy allowed certain regulatory staff to be released into contact

¹⁶⁷ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.5](#)

¹⁶⁸ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, pp.2-3](#)

¹⁶⁹ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022](#)

¹⁷⁰ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.4](#)

¹⁷¹ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021](#)

¹⁷² [Submission – Director General for Customer and Local Services – 6 December 2021, pp.2-3](#)

tracing, with further support quickly identified and additional regulation staff released. In turn, the effect of the pandemic on construction, hospitality, food, parking, and transport allowed further regulatory officers to be released due to the significant reduction in regulation required.¹⁷³

The Chief Operating Officer said secondments during the second and third wave of the pandemic were “minimal.” Most roles were filled by colleagues employed on a zero-hours or fixed term contract, allowing resources for Contact Tracing, Monitoring and Enforcement and the Vaccination Team. As above, longer-term approaches were moved into a single response team within Justice and Home Affairs.¹⁷⁴

Reduced activity on the Island’s borders meant that Jersey Customs and Immigration and the States of Jersey Police saw a reduction in operations and greater flexibility in activities within the Department for Justice and Home Affairs and allowed additional officers to be released.¹⁷⁵

Team Jersey is understood to have supported departments by providing individual coaching to frontline managers. Following the second wave, the programme team worked directly with departmental senior teams to allow them to reflect on steps taken. This work was combined with that of the People and Corporate Services function in response to the Be Heard survey data accumulated in 2020 to provide information for departments to understand what issues need to be addressed to re-engage employees.¹⁷⁶

The Director General for Children, Young People, Education and Skills outlined that his department’s Head of Informatics was seconded to the Public Health function within Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance to support the work of STAC and the Competent Authorities Ministers. This arrangement was managed by the repositioning of its remaining informatics capability until the Head of Informatics moved back to the department in June 2021.¹⁷⁷

As a result of increased communications activity, the Director of Communications said, in a submission on 21st February 2022, that two additional communications officers and one senior communications officer joined the team to support the delivery of campaigns including ‘HomeTime’ and ‘Back to School’. A videographer was recruited to support the Government’s digital team. The latter two officers were placed on zero-hour contracts and were tracked through the usual line-management and performance management systems. This was tracked in collaboration in association with the Government of Jersey’s People Hub, who coordinated the onboarding of additional resources.¹⁷⁸

The PAC notes that Modernisation and Digital was able to provide a home working option through Microsoft Teams, which provided an opportunity for office space to become available to teams in need of it. The PAC notes that the One Gov Covid Response Team initially worked within the Team Jersey office on The Parade, before additional space was made available through Jersey Property Holdings. Contact Tracing, Helpline and Media Briefing teams occupied space on The Parade. The PAC understands that Contact Tracing initially occupied

¹⁷³ [Submission – Director General for Infrastructure, Housing and Environment – 3 December 2021, pp.2-3](#)

¹⁷⁴ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.4](#)

¹⁷⁵ [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, p.4](#)

¹⁷⁶ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, pp.6-8](#)

¹⁷⁷ [Submission – Director General for Children, Young People, Education and Skills – 6 December 2021, p.2](#)

¹⁷⁸ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, pp.9-10](#)

space within the Business Continuity suite at La Collette, a portacabin at Highlands College, and a space at La Chasse.

The PAC further notes that a “small number of management and resourcing staff” were based at The Parade in the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic before being relocated to the Government offices in Broad Street.¹⁷⁹

FINDING 13 – The Government of Jersey focused on internal secondments to provide additional resources during the first wave of COVID-19, with additional support provided through contract staff for programmes including the COVID-19 Helpline and the Contact Tracing Team.

Staff Wellbeing

The pandemic had a significant impact on the wellbeing of staff and the PAC has sought to understand how this was managed. As noted in the PAC’s previous report on Government Performance Management, the results of the 2020 Be Heard survey showed that staff morale suffered as a result and had significant effects on reform and change.¹⁸⁰

Likewise, the PAC is aware that the pandemic continues to affect staffing. 62 staff were signed off work with COVID-19 in the Department for Health and Community Services alone on the day of its public hearing with its Director General.¹⁸¹

The PAC understands from Chief Executive’s submission on 14 February 2022 that, as part of the planning phase for the emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a plan was developed for monitoring and supporting the workforce. Assumptions were tested by the Gold group using two scenarios: the health response (testing the pandemic plan in place) and critical infrastructure providers. A daily dashboard was established that monitored staff absence and the reasons for absence.¹⁸²

An all-employee data collection exercise was undertaken to gather up-to-date information, with emergency contact details, communications channels and workforce modelling considered. This included consideration of dependants to understand how staff ability to attend work would be affected, what impact it may have on their wellbeing and that of others who would have greater pressure to deliver work.¹⁸³

Absence management policies were relaxed, with interim temporary policies introduced to reduce management overhead and provide assurance to colleagues that there was an awareness of the difficulties that colleagues may face when restrictions were in place, with policy summaries and FAQs released to reflect this and provide easy access to information.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁹ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.6](#)

¹⁸⁰ [P.A.C.2/2022, p.14](#)

¹⁸¹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.11](#)

¹⁸² [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.6](#)

¹⁸³ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.6](#)

¹⁸⁴ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.6](#)

The Chief Executive said systems were used to track and monitor workforce wellbeing¹⁸⁵ and noted that there were regular meetings and briefings with trade unions, and headteacher meetings were held that focused on schools, capacity planning and absences.¹⁸⁶

A business continuity network was also developed. Daily calls monitored the impact of the absence on the workforce and highlighted key issues from specific business areas. Business impact was also regularly reported to the meetings of the Gold group and Competent Authorities Ministers. The Chief Executive provided a breakdown of the targeted support and anticipated emerging issues¹⁸⁷:

The PAC has sought to understand how concerns could be raised by patients and staff within the General Hospital. The Director General for Health and Community Services and Chief Nurse outlined the use of the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) and the regular visibility of senior nurses as points of contact.¹⁸⁸

The Chief Nurse informed the PAC that a high level of visibility was required by senior nurses to make them available to staff and patients¹⁸⁹ and that a key point of feedback received from patients at the General Hospital was the ability to communicate with relatives.¹⁹⁰ The Medical Director of Health and Community Services noted that efforts would be made to immediately respond to concerns, with some complaints and concerns requiring an investigation from the Department for Health and Community Services.¹⁹¹

The PAC sought to understand how staff could raise concerns within the General Hospital. The Director General for Health and Community Services said that a “guardian-type post” as used in the NHS is in place and dedicated staff can raise issues and share concerns. The Director General for Health and Community Services further outlined that an NHS “Happier” app would be used to improve understanding of staff wellbeing and support.¹⁹²

The PAC notes that a “wide range of wellbeing services” were used by the Department for Health and Community Services.¹⁹³

The Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance, said that work had been undertaken to normalise working arrangements for officers performing roles directly related to the pandemic – around 6 to 9 months into the pandemic – to allow for the rotation of work.¹⁹⁴

During the PAC’s public hearing on 23 February 2022 with the Director General, he noted that, with the benefit of hindsight, he would have adopted a practice more in-line with blue light service shift patterns to ensure continuity of service and adequate staff breaks. He added that the Island’s civil service “did really lay down their own health and well-being to support the

¹⁸⁵ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.7](#)

¹⁸⁶ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.6](#)

¹⁸⁷ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, pp.7-8](#)

¹⁸⁸ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.42](#)

¹⁸⁹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.43](#)

¹⁹⁰ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.43](#)

¹⁹¹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.44](#)

¹⁹² [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, pp.45-6](#)

¹⁹³ [Submission – Director General for Health and Community Services – 9 March 2022, p.7](#)

¹⁹⁴ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.20](#)

Island”.¹⁹⁵ The PAC acknowledges the huge effort made by staff to support the community throughout the pandemic.

He noted that frontline staff were often more visible, and therefore easier to check on, whereas it was easier to “miss people” who were isolated and working projects unrelated to the pandemic (as already noted in this report). The Director General confirmed that there were business continuity plans to address staff support in the event of crises, but that these were not able to fully accommodate a situation as unprecedented as a two-year pandemic.¹⁹⁶

The Director General for Health and Community Services noted that the health staff in Jersey were “exhausted” as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, despite bringing their “best selves to work every day”.¹⁹⁷

The PAC would recommend that the Department for Health and Community Services work in collaboration with relevant functions such as People and Corporate Services to produce and publish a staff wellbeing report and strategy that outlines the work it intends to undertake to provide continuing support and recovery opportunities to healthcare workers in Jersey.

The PAC would further recommend that staff within the General Hospital are provided with the opportunity to undertake a participatory survey and review to understand staff wellbeing and concerns arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

FINDING 14 – Business Continuity Plans designed to support staff in the event of a crisis were not designed to accommodate a two-year-long pandemic.

RECOMMENDATION 12 – It is recommended that the Department for Health and Community Services work in collaboration with relevant functions such as People and Corporate Services to produce and publish a staff wellbeing report and strategy as soon as possible and no later than the end of the second quarter of 2022.

RECOMMENDATION 13 – It is recommended that staff within the General Hospital are provided with the opportunity to undertake a participatory survey and review to understand staff wellbeing and concerns arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Non-Ministerial Responses

The PAC has received submissions from Non-Ministerial Departments regarding how they adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic, shifting their focus, and providing support to the pandemic response.

¹⁹⁵ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.21](#)

¹⁹⁶ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance – 23 February 2022, p.21](#)

¹⁹⁷ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.48](#)

Non-Ministerial Departments moved to a work-from-home approach, with face-to-face work only continuing where required and services such as Parish Hall Enquiries temporarily suspended when it was not possible to hold them remotely.^{198 199}

The States Greffe Secretariat Team undertook new responsibilities for minuting meetings of the Competent Authorities Ministers and STAC. The Greffier noted that meetings of the States Assembly moved online using Microsoft Teams, before a hybrid system was established in the Summer of 2020 in collaboration with the Modernisation and Digital Directorate and Digital Jersey.²⁰⁰

The Attorney General outlined to the PAC that there had been a “huge increase in urgent requests for advice” and expressed concern about technological difficulties staff had faced trying to access States servers remotely. The Attorney General further noted that legal advisors worked closely with the Department for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance and the Legislative Drafting Office to fast-track new legislation and safeguarding procedures.²⁰¹

The Deputy Viscount (as coroner) formed a multi-agency working group, the Jersey Excess Death Group, to deal with emerging challenges of the management of deaths due to the pandemic. It was based on the group formed as part of the Island’s Pandemic Flu exercise in November 2019 and from existing management of death groups. This became operational on 24 March 2020, chaired by the States of Jersey Police Detective Chief Inspector, as a Bronze cell of the Tactical Co-Ordination Group (Silver) which was chaired by the Chief Fire Officer. Minutes were taken by the coroner, with the Central Business Continuity Team monitoring attendance²⁰².

A Community Deaths Cell was also established by the Viscount, consisting of a dedicated team of seven General Medical Practitioners who attended all deaths in the community. The Viscount further noted that they had removed the need for a “Part 2” cremation certification, and had granted medical practitioners the option to issue a Medical Certificate of Fact and Cause of Death, regardless if they had met the patient in life, and the removal of a need for a “Part 2” cremation certification and granting the ability of a medical practitioner to issue a Medical Certificate of Fact and Cause of Death, even though they had never met the patient in life. A process developed where all community deaths were discussed with the duty coroner and authorised accordingly if appropriate.²⁰³

The PAC would suggest that each non-ministerial department review the impact on its staff and workload to ensure that the response was appropriate and to explore any improvement in future reactions to crisis.

¹⁹⁸ [Submission – Probation and After-Care Service – 13 January 2022, p.2](#)

¹⁹⁹ [Submission – Attorney General – 18 January 2022, p.3](#)

²⁰⁰ [Submission – Greffier of the States – 14 January 2022, pp.1-2](#)

²⁰¹ [Submission – Attorney General – 18 January 2022, pp.2-4](#)

²⁰² [Submission – Viscount – 20 January 2022, pp.2-5](#)

²⁰³ [Submission – Viscount – 20 January 2022, p.2](#)

Section 7 – Management of Public Finances

The costs of the pandemic in 2020 published in the 2020 Annual Report and Accounts totalled £189,542,76. ²⁰⁴ The States of Jersey 2021 Annual Report and Accounts state that £108,929,000 was spent in 2021 in response to Covid-19. ²⁰⁵ As a result, the PAC understands that the rough total cost of the COVID-19 pandemic over the two years to be £298,471,763.

The States of Jersey approved P.28/2020²⁰⁶, which temporarily extended powers to the Minister for Treasury and Resources to withdraw amounts from the Consolidated Fund and other States funds under Article 24 of the Public Finances (Jersey)²⁰⁷ as a result of the state of emergency brought about by the pandemic. The States Assembly approved an increased financing limit, and the Treasury and Resources Minister approved the Revolving Credit Facility, the Fiscal Stimulus Funds, and additional financial measures to allow the Government of Jersey to draw upon sufficient funds to aid the Island in maintaining and recovering from the financial effects. These financial tools have been previously scrutinised by the Comptroller and Auditor General²⁰⁸, the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel²⁰⁹, and the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel.²¹⁰

Financial Management

The Interim Chief Executive's submission of 11 October 2021 noted that financial management and monitoring processes remained unchanged. Additional funding requirements to respond to the pandemic was primarily identified through the preparation of full business cases, in accordance with the requirements of the Public Finances Manual.²¹¹

Business cases provided the opportunity to outline how projects would be monitored and established the objectives for any assessments that would need to be carried out. The monitoring of these projects was the responsibility of their relevant Accountable Officer, with their performances reported on and elevated to the Executive Leadership Team and the Corporate Portfolio Management Office.²¹²

The Interim Chief Executive noted that business case practice was continuing to evolve at the outset of the pandemic, following the establishment of an Investment Appraisal Team to embed best practice with respect to business case and cost-benefit analysis in Q4 2019. The Interim Chief Executive noted that the on-going work of this team would help to provide a "more comprehensive appreciation of the cost-benefit cases for intervention and the relative merits of competing delivery options."²¹³

²⁰⁴ [Report – States Annual Report and Accounts 2020 – 20 May 2021, p.148](#)

²⁰⁵ [Report – States Annual Report and Accounts 2021 – 7 April 2022, p.218](#)

²⁰⁶ [P.28/2020](#)

²⁰⁷ [Public Finances \(Jersey\) Law 2019](#)

²⁰⁸ [Report – Overall Management of Public Finances during the COVID-19 pandemic – Comptroller and Auditor General – 28 June 2021](#)

²⁰⁹ [S.R.7/2021](#)

²¹⁰ [S.R.13/2020](#)

²¹¹ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, pp.9-10](#)

²¹² [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, pp.11-12](#)

²¹³ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, pp.10](#)

The Interim Chief Executive confirmed that there had been no material use of public funds that did not comply with the Public Finances (Jersey) Law and the Public Finances Manual, with all approved exemptions forming part of the Government of Jersey's financial management and governance processes. No requirements were relaxed during the pandemic, with the Treasurer of the States issuing a letter to Accountable Officers on 25 March 2020 to reinforce these requirements.²¹⁴

During the 'Stay-At-Home' period the Treasury and Exchequer Payments Team worked in Broad Street to process invoices and provide prompt payment for goods and services required by the Government. A shadow Payments Team was also established (comprising of employees from across Government who had previously worked in the Treasury and Exchequer Payments Team) who could be called upon in the event of staff sickness. Priority was given to making payments to suppliers and individuals. The Public Employees' Pension Team resources prioritised the payment of pensions over routine administration.²¹⁵

The Treasurer of the States informed the PAC that the following financial management practices were incorporated:

- "Reporting processes were developed and enhanced through the pandemic period. For example, in the first instance calculating the financial impact of different scenarios lacked sufficient specificity in the guidance and hence was open to varying interpretation. Once identified from the review and feedback this was amended.
- Trackers were reviewed regularly and challenged. We still maintain the trackers and have expanded their use.
- A new format of Business case writing, and review was being developed and enhanced as we went through the pandemic. Improvements were made through dialogue and collaboration across teams and departments."²¹⁶

The PAC has considered the recommendations made by the Comptroller and Auditor General in respect of financial management during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the Treasurer of the States informing the PAC that there were "good processes of constructive dialogue with the C&AG on her reviews at all stages."²¹⁷ The PAC notes that the following recommendations that were previously made by the Comptroller and Auditor General have now been implemented:

- A breach of the Public Finances Manual (PFM) has been recorded in relation to the procurement of the revolving credit facility.
- Minor changes have been made to processes to enable changes to the PFM to be made more quickly.

²¹⁴ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, pp.9-11](#)

²¹⁵ [Submission – Treasurer of the States – 3 December 2021, p.7](#)

²¹⁶ [Submission – Treasurer of the States – 3 December 2021, p.11](#)

²¹⁷ [Submission – Treasurer of the States – 3 December 2021, p.7](#)

- A new online breach and exemption process has been developed and is being tested at the date of this response.²¹⁸

The PAC understands that a review of the original business case objectives will be undertaken by the new Chief Economic Advisor following their arrival in March 2022.²¹⁹

FINDING 15 – An Investment Appraisal Team was established during the COVID-19 pandemic to embed financial best practice.

FINDING 16 – A review of original business case objectives made during the pandemic will be undertaken by the Chief Economic Advisor.

Financial Management of the Department for Health and Community Services

In tandem with the work undertaken within the Department for Treasury and Exchequer, the following mechanisms were installed to improve the financial management of projects in relation to the Department for Health and Community Services, with the following financial controls implemented:

- The establishment of COVID-19 Head of Expenditure workstreams to ensure accurate reporting and financial monitoring of COVID-19 response expenditure
- All expenditure relating to the COVID-19 response that required additional financial resources required a business case to be reviewed by the Department for Health and Community Services' Senior Leadership Team, prior to its submission to the Department for Treasury and Exchequer's Investment Appraisal Team
- Funding for approved expenditure was allocated on an actuals basis to ensure adequate and accurate distribution of funding, and enabled a timely response to additional funding requests
- COVID-19 expenditure was monitored on a monthly basis and included budget meetings, the population of a central expenditure tracker to ensure greater financial control, and the financial planning requirements for the Department for Health and Community Services
- Finances were represented at Gold, Silver and Bronze command meetings to ensure the alignment of funding and operational requirements
- Financial reporting was made to the Department for Health and Community Services' Senior Leadership Team to provide detailed analysis of the COVID-19 expenditure incurred, and to detail risks
- Financial reporting as made to the Department for Health and Community Services' Finance and Performance Committee

²¹⁸ [Submission – Treasurer of the States – 3 December 2021, p.8](#)

²¹⁹ [Submission – Director General for the Economy – 3 December 2021, p.6](#)

- Monthly financial drawdown processes were implemented to improve transparency and financial reporting through a clear, documented, and auditable process
- Adherence to the Public Finances Manual to guide the expenditure approval processes, such as through the Procurement Procedure Policy for tendering and associated exemptions from its guidance.²²⁰

The PAC notes that the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an impact of £23.6 million in 2020 and £11.9 million for COVID-19-related expenditure on the Department for Health and Community Services, with mitigations enabled through reserve funding approved by the Minister for Treasury and Resources and accessed through business cases.²²¹

The Department for Health and Community Services' Head of Finance said that the use of the zero-based budgeting methodology introduced in the Government Plan 2020-2023 had allowed COVID-19 spend to be separated from departmental spend, due to the need to demonstrate actual spend as Business-as-Usual activity.²²² This is consistent with the budgeting approach to all other States of Jersey departments.

The PAC understands from the Director General for Health and Community Services that the total expenditure on COVID-19 at the General Hospital was as follows:

- 2020 - £4,250,170
- 2021 - £2,579,865²²³

The PAC has received the following breakdown of the Department for Health and Community Services' COVID-19 expenditure by initiative²²⁴:

HCS Immediate Covid Response		GP Redeployment and Primary Care				PPE Supply	COVID Operations Business Case	COVID Service Recovery	Total Expenditure by Year
Initiative	Including Winter	Nightingale Wing	Response	Test & Trace	Covid Vaccine	(including Warehousing)	Response to Operational Pressures		
2020 (£)	12,316,024	1,202,708	6,015,236	541,092	192,304	4,044,170	0	0	24,311,534
2021 (£)	661	638,890	-273,702	0	5,003,110	662,169	3,967,399	1,716,253	11,714,780

The PAC noted the Government's acceptance of a recommendation made in its report on the 2020 Annual Report and Accounts to separate spending made in response to COVID-19 or non-recurrent expenditure from routine annual spend²²⁵ and is pleased to note development in implementing this practice. It would recommend that the Government seek to publish a breakdown of the spend of its response to COVID-19 in 2020, 2021 and 2022, with clear

²²⁰ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, pp.10-11](#)

²²¹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.11](#)

²²² [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.19](#)

²²³ [Submission – Director General for Health and Community Services – 9 March 2022, p.8](#)

²²⁴ [Submission – Director General for Health and Community Services – 9 March 2022, p.8](#)

²²⁵ [P.A.C.1/2021 Res. – PAC Review of the States Annual Report and Accounts 2020 – Executive Response – 28 September 2021, p.6-7](#)

indication of where savings were made through discounts and voluntary support from Islanders and businesses.

The PAC would recommend that a breakdown of spend should be provided in the 2022 Annual Report and Accounts that outlines the COVID-19 spend across the entire pandemic (January 2020 to the withdrawal or expiration of COVID-19-related Emergency Powers).

FINDING 17 – Additional financial management processes were integrated into the Department for Health and Community Services in order to improve best practice during the pandemic.

RECOMMENDATION 14 – The Government of Jersey should seek to publish a breakdown of spend on its COVID-19 response in 2020, 2021 and 2022, with a clear indication of where savings were made through discounts and voluntary support from Islanders and businesses as part of the 2022 Annual Report and Accounts.

Section 8 – Management of Performance

Assessment of Performance of COVID-19 Response

The PAC has sought to understand how the Government has measured, monitored, and reported on its performance during the pandemic. The PAC also considered this in its Performance Management report, published 8 March 2022.²²⁶

The PAC notes that performance and financial management for all departments are reported in the Annual Report and Accounts²²⁷ and Departmental Operational Business Plan updates²²⁸ with service performance measures published for Q1-Q3 2021 as part of the wider Jersey Performance Framework.^{230 231}

Closure reports have been produced where appropriate to review the success of schemes delivered during the COVID-19 pandemic, their financial performance, and lessons learned. The PAC notes that the Government has also endeavoured to use the reporting of the Comptroller and Auditor General to assess its performance and understand areas of improvement.^{232 233}

The Interim Chief Executive outlined in his submission on 11 October 2021 that Departmental Service Performance Measures had been included for the first time in the 2020 Annual Report and Accounts and were used to help report on the performance when delivering services to the public during the pandemic.²³⁴

From 2021, Service Performance Measures have been reported on a quarterly basis; Q1 and Q2 were published on 31st August 2021 alongside the 2021 Mid-Year Review.²³⁵ The PAC notes that Government did not report on Recommendations Tracker monitoring in Q2 2020 as a result of other pressures but was able to achieve ‘normal discipline’ in subsequent quarters.²³⁶

The PAC is aware that development of performance monitoring and reporting within Health and Community Services restarted in 2021 following the return of the Health and Community Services’ informatics team from the Department for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance, with reporting including the Department for Health and Community Services’ quarterly [Quality and Performance Reporting](#) that includes reflections on COVID-19 testing and the impact of patients waiting for elective admissions.²³⁷

The Director General for Health and Community Services informed the PAC that the Quarterly Performance Report was being used with information including waiting list data to improve

²²⁶ [P.A.C.2/2022](#)

²²⁷ [Report – States Annual Report and Accounts 2020 – 20 May 2021](#)

²²⁸ [Departmental Operational Business Plans 2022](#)

²²⁹ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.15](#)

²³⁰ [Jersey Performance Framework](#)

²³¹ [Performance Measures 2021](#)

²³² [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.9](#)

²³³ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, pp.8-15](#)

²³⁴ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.9](#)

²³⁵ [Performance Measures 2021](#)

²³⁶ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.9](#)

²³⁷ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, pp.9-11](#)

clinical support and resolve the previous removal of services during the COVID-19 pandemic.²³⁸ The Associate Medical Director of the Surgical Services Care Group further informed the PAC that PPE performance guidelines within the Department for Health were directly aligned to those published by Public Health England.²³⁹

The PAC understands that departments participated in Emergency Planning groups including the Strategic Co-Ordination Group and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell as required. These learning points were captured and shared with the relevant leadership teams for consideration²⁴⁰

The PAC further notes from its public hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services that both the Director General and the Deputy Medical Officer of Health highlighted the relatively low mortality rate in Jersey of 108 per 100,000 (115 at the time of the public hearing), compared to 268 per 100,000 in the United Kingdom.²⁴¹

Departmental Assessment of Performance of COVID-19 Response

The PAC notes from the submissions it has received from Director Generals and Group Directors that, alongside the standardised performance management processes, each department incorporated its own practices in managing performance during the pandemic²⁴²..

It is recognised that minimal development of the Department for Health and Community Services' core reporting was undertaken in 2020. As previously noted, the department's informatics resources were used to report on the pandemic, and other relevant departmental resources were focused on delivery of services.²⁴³

The Director General for Customer and Local Services said that his Senior Leadership Team held regular meetings to discuss and address any Business Continuity issues and to priorities resources and communication accordingly. These meetings fed into the Gold and Silver corporate reporting structure. The Director General introduced two high level aims for the department to allow employees to understand the new priorities:

- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of the public and colleagues; and
- To ensure that government can continue to deliver critical services to the public.²⁴⁴

Both initiatives had their own performance measures, and operational oversight and management structures were responsible for responding to existing customer demand, which included moving the process for Income Support Claims online to deal with increased demand. The Ministerial Team was kept up to date on developments and performance through weekly meetings with the Director General for Customer and Local Services and policy and communication officers.²⁴⁵

²³⁸ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.33](#)

²³⁹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.34](#)

²⁴⁰ [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, p.5](#)

²⁴¹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.47](#)

²⁴² [PAC - Response to COVID-19 Submissions](#)

²⁴³ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.9](#)

²⁴⁴ [Submission – Director General for Customer and Local Services – 6 December 2021, p.4](#)

²⁴⁵ [Submission – Director General for Customer and Local Services – 6 December 2021, p.4](#)

The Director General for Children, Young People and Skills noted that his department used “existing, tried and tested” performance management processes through the chairing of internal groups such as Performance Boards and Strategic Departmental Leadership Team meetings to determine departmental performance. In addition to this, Gold and Silver command structures disseminated lessons learned, alongside “real time sharing of learning, principally through the dissemination of minutes and action points of formal meetings, accompanied by formal monitoring of business continuity plans.”²⁴⁶

The Director General for the Economy held weekly meetings of the Departmental Leadership team to advance business decisions, with weekly ministerial meetings providing structured opportunities to escalate matters, discuss business delivery and add/remove/re-schedule priorities as needed.²⁴⁷

The Group Director for External Relations outlined that she chaired weekly meetings and set internal Key Performance Indicators for responses to repatriation enquiries. Consideration was given to the impact of COVID-19 on Service Performance Measures and performance enquiries were represented on Gold and Silver command groups.²⁴⁸

The Treasurer of the States noted that he held weekly meetings with the Minister for Treasury of Resources to discuss work programmes and receive feedback on the departmental performance. The Treasurer of the States said that business continuity lessons had been captured and fed back to the central team.²⁴⁹

The Treasurer of the States noted that his department’s performance measures had been considered on a monthly basis at Performance Senior Leadership Team meetings, which were then reported to the Executive Leadership Team and published on the Government website. The format of reporting developed to review and assess the budgetary impact of the pandemic and actual spend and forecast was tracked each month.²⁵⁰

The Treasurer of the States said that debt and revenue collection and creditor days have improved through monthly monitoring and the publishing of quarterly service measures. The PAC notes that the COVID-19 pandemic has also allowed for operational Key Performance Indicators to be regularly monitored at Treasury Senior Leadership Team meetings.²⁵¹

The interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs noted that normal departmental processes were used through regular management meetings and involvement of the Justice and Home Affairs Heads of Services to enable enhanced communication.²⁵²

FINDING 18 – The Government has sought to use standard performance management tools to monitor its performance during the COVID-19 pandemic alongside the

²⁴⁶ [Submission – Director General for Children, Young People, Education and Skills – 6 December 2021, pp.3-4](#)

²⁴⁷ [Submission – Director General for the Economy – 3 December 2021, p.3; p.11](#)

²⁴⁸ [Submission – Group Director for External Relations – 3 December 2021, p.4](#)

²⁴⁹ [Submission – Treasurer of the States – 3 December 2021, pp.3-4](#)

²⁵⁰ [Submission – Treasurer of the States – 3 December 2021, p.4](#)

²⁵¹ [Submission – Treasurer of the States – 3 December 2021, p.6](#)

²⁵² [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, pp.4-7](#)

introduction of Departmental Service Performance Measures and the tracking of Comptroller and Auditor General recommendations.

FINDING 19 – The Government was unable to report on its monitoring of the Recommendations Tracker in Q2 2020 but was able to achieve “normal discipline” in subsequent quarters.

FINDING 20 – The monitoring and reporting of performance within the Department for Health and Community Services was restarted in 2021, following the movement of the Health and Community Services informatics team back from the Department for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance.

Section 9 – Governance of External Support During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Support Schemes for Individuals and Businesses

The Government launched several schemes to support individuals and businesses to minimise bankruptcies and redundancies. These included:

- The Co-Funded Payroll Scheme (CFPS)
- The Business Disruption Loan Guarantee Scheme
- The Visitor Accommodation Support Scheme
- The Fixed Costs Support Scheme
- The Visitor Attractions and Events Scheme
- The COVID-19 Related Emergency Support Scheme²⁵³

The objectives were:

- Protecting employment
- Safeguarding livelihoods
- Avoiding business failures
- Positioning the Island for a robust economic recovery²⁵⁴

The Government, in partnership with the Jersey Resilience Forum and JESIP, also issued a Coronavirus Business Continuity Checklist, to assist all organisations in Jersey to “adopt robust and flexible continuity management arrangements.”²⁵⁵ Further guidance was also provided through a specialist webpage on the Government of Jersey website, outlining the support it was providing to businesses.²⁵⁶

Customer and Local Services administered COVID-19 Related Emergency Support Scheme, the Co-funded Payroll Scheme, Visitor Accommodation Support Scheme and Fixed Costs Support Scheme. The Co-Funded Payroll Scheme and Business Disruption Loan Guarantee Scheme were led by Treasury from a policy perspective. Visitor Attractions and Events Scheme, Visitor Accommodation Support Scheme and Fixed Costs Support Scheme were led by the Department for the Economy from a policy perspective and the first of these was also administered by that Department. The COVID-19 Related Emergency Support Scheme was developed by Customer and Local Services and Strategic Policy Planning and Performance.

The Director General for the Economy noted that his department was responsible for providing enhanced services to local small-and-medium-sized enterprises through increased grant funding to Jersey Business and contributed to the development of financial measures.²⁵⁷ It was recommended that businesses engage with Jersey Business for further assistance, with the Jersey Chamber of Commerce and trade bodies also engaged to raise awareness.²⁵⁸

²⁵³ [Government support for businesses – gov.je](https://www.gov.je/government-support-for-businesses)

²⁵⁴ [Submission – Director General for Customer and Local Services and Director General for the Economy – 8 March 2022, p.1](#)

²⁵⁵ [Coronavirus Business Continuity Checklist, p.2](#)

²⁵⁶ [Government support for businesses – gov.je](https://www.gov.je/government-support-for-businesses)

²⁵⁷ [Submission – Director General for the Economy – 3 December 2021, p.2](#)

²⁵⁸ [Submission – Director General for Customer and Local Services and Director General for the Economy – 8 March 2022, p.2](#)

The Comptroller and Auditor General reviewed these support schemes as part of her ongoing review of the Government's Response to COVID-19, resulting in the publication of the following reports:

- The COVID-19 Related Emergency Support Scheme
- Government support to businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic – Co-Funded Payroll Scheme
- Government support to businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic – Other Schemes

Each report examined the objectives of these schemes, their business cases, decision-making, design and operation of the control framework, and the monitoring and reporting arrangements used to measure the performance of these schemes.

The PAC notes the C&AG's positive comments on the implementation and operation of the COVID-19 Related Emergency Support Scheme (CRESS)²⁵⁹ and the Government's acceptance of her recommendations following the publication of this report, as reflected in the Public Finances Manual.²⁶⁰

The C&AG found that the schemes had been developed and implemented at pace and that risk had been appropriately considered. However, the PAC noted that concerns regarding the public communication of schemes were made prior to the establishment of a business case and approval of a formal Ministerial Decision.²⁶¹

The PAC noted the finding of the C&AG regarding the lack of formal Ministerial Decision for early scheme extensions where the overall cost (including the extension) was not expected to exceed the original funding allocation.²⁶² The PAC is aware that this finding has been recognised by Government.

The PAC observed that Ministerial Decisions have been included in subsequent extensions to these schemes, including the latest instalment of the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme.²⁶³

The PAC further notes the use of Letters of Instruction by Director Generals for their respective Minister where they, as Accountable Officer, believed it necessary to outline their concerns. These were requested by Director Generals for the following COVID-19-related schemes:

- Visitor Attraction and Events Scheme (Acting Director General for the Economy) – 14 December 2020
- Co-Funded Payroll Scheme (Treasurer of the States and Director General for Customer and Local Services) – 1 February 2021
- Fixed Costs Support Scheme (Acting Director General for the Economy) – 8 February 2021

²⁵⁹ [Report – The COVID-19 Related Emergency Support Scheme – Comptroller and Auditor General – 30 March 2021, p.5](#)

²⁶⁰ [R.50/2021 Res. – COVID-19 Related Emergency Support Scheme: Executive Response](#)

²⁶¹ [Report – Government support to businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic - Other Schemes – Comptroller and Auditor General – 24 November 2021, p.5](#)

²⁶² [Report – Government support to businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic - Other Schemes – Comptroller and Auditor General – 24 November 2021, p.5](#)

²⁶³ [Ministerial Decision - Co-Funded Payroll Scheme \(CFPS\) Phase 7: Changes of Scope and Approval of Scheme Guidance – MD-TR-2022-0005 – 21 January 2022](#)

- Visitor Attractions and Events Scheme 2 (Acting Director for the Economy) – 4 March 2021
- Co-Funded Payroll Scheme Phase 7 (Treasurer of the States and Director General for Customer and Local Services) – 22 December 2021
- Change in Scope of Co-Funded Payroll Scheme Phase 7 (provided by Minister for Treasury and Resources without request) – 21 January 2022²⁶⁴

In the Interim Chief Executive's submission on 11 October 2021, it was noted that a project closure report would be prepared to evaluate the performance of each intervention by its objectives, in line with the Government's project management best-practice. This included the full economic and social impact where necessary, with the project closure report aiming to draw interim conclusions pending a further review when essential information could become available.²⁶⁵

The PAC has been made aware that the closure reports have not yet been drafted and are expected for completion by 31 December 2022. The PAC would recommend that the results of these reports are published by the Government to demonstrate transparency and encourage best practice to be developed in the event of a future crisis.

The PAC is aware that a number of businesses which sought support from the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme have been contacted by the Government regarding repayment as a result of overclaims. The PAC held a private briefing with the Director General for Customer and Local Services and Jersey Business on Monday 10th March 2022 to discuss the requests for repayments.

The PAC understands that the Government will contact businesses believed to have overclaimed to outline their position. Following this, a 30-day period would elapse before further contact was made, with an additional 10-day window for the contacted business to provide evidence that a repayment is not necessary, before a demand for repayment would be made.²⁶⁶

The PAC understands that around 400 people have been identified and contacted regarding discrepancies between their Co-Funding Payroll application and their tax return. This totals around £2.6 million of overpayments, with around 120 claiming over the maximum limit. However, the Director General for Customer and Local Services confirmed that these numbers are subject to change because requests for repayment had only just begun. He said that his department had clear leadership on the administration of these schemes, and that the Government's Internal Audit function had been involved in the design of the scheme and provided consistent challenge to ensure that the necessary controls were placed on the scheme.²⁶⁷

The PAC understands that self-employed individuals were able to use their tax returns to support their applications to the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme.

²⁶⁴ [Letters of instruction for public finances – gov.je](#)

²⁶⁵ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.10](#)

²⁶⁶ Private Briefing with the Director General for Customer and Local Services – 10 March 2022

²⁶⁷ Private Briefing with the Director General for Customer and Local Services – 10 March 2022

The Government has recovered £5.4 million from the £10.9 million being sought in repayments at the time of publication. The PAC is aware that a number of individuals have now received requests for repayment from the Government.²⁶⁸ It is further understood that the Government is currently seeking approximately £4.8 million in overclaims, and that there is no intention to write off the money sought, although the Director General for Customer and Local Services noted that some money would inevitably prove to be unrecoverable as a result of recipients leaving the Island since receiving funds.²⁶⁹

The PAC notes that, as a result of these support schemes not being established on a statutory basis, there is no formal appeals process through the Government.²⁷⁰ The Director General for Customer and Local Services said grievances would need to follow the Government's three stage complaints process.²⁷¹

The Director General for Customer and Local Services further outlined that the department was looking at 100% of self-employed recipients of the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme, but that it was only looking at between 18-26% of businesses who represented over 80% of the value of the payments made to businesses in the months tested. This is a result of the difference in audit trails provided by businesses and by the self-employed. He noted that this was in line with the standard sample size for examining business compliance, and that a considerably smaller number of businesses would need to be examined due to the greater level of evidence provide by businesses when originally applying for support.²⁷²

The PAC has received submissions from businesses, particularly the hair and beauty sector, as part of its review and a private submission outlined dissatisfaction regarding the quality of guidance provided for the business support schemes and the sharing of information between Government and businesses, particularly regarding the sharing of risk assessments and health and safety checks undertaken during the pandemic.²⁷³

The PAC notes that the Government revised its decision on the inclusion of charities during the second phase of the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme. The submissions provided by Mencap and Headway state that the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme greatly reduced the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on charities, particularly those which are heavily reliant on fundraising for income.^{274 275}

The PAC has received submissions from a wide number of on-Island charities regarding their experiences in accessing the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme. The PAC would like to highlight a submission it has received in confidence from a charity regarding the "excessive" number of applications that it was required to make to receive funding from the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme, with a significant delay in communication leading to significant anxieties from within the organisation.²⁷⁶

²⁶⁸ Private Briefing with the Director General for Customer and Local Services – 10 March 2022

²⁶⁹ Private Briefing with the Director General for Customer and Local Services – 10 March 2022

²⁷⁰ Private Briefing with the Director General for Customer and Local Services – 10 March 2022

²⁷¹ Private Briefing with the Director General for Customer and Local Services – 10 March 2022

²⁷² Private Briefing with the Director General for Customer and Local Services – 10 March 2022

²⁷³ Private Submission received March 2022

²⁷⁴ [Submission – Mencap – 11 October 2021](#)

²⁷⁵ [Submission – Headway – 13 October 2021](#)

²⁷⁶ Private Submission received February 2022

The PAC has considered the guidance provided by the Government for the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme and has examined the submissions made in relation to this review and to the Corporate Services Panel. It has concluded that while the Government’s guidance is correct, it has misjudged the complexity of what was requested, and the level of financial literacy required of applicants. In turn, it is the PAC’s view that this has led to a greater number of overclaims.²⁷⁷

The PAC would recommend that the Department for Customer and Local Services should appoint an identifiable officer to serve as a direct point of contact between the Government and those from whom it is seeking repayment.

FINDING 21 – Government of Jersey support schemes were not established on a statutory basis and do not have a formal appeals process.

FINDING 22 – The Government’s guidance on the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme misjudged the complexity of what was requested, and the level of financial literacy required of applicants. This has led to a greater number of overclaims.

RECOMMENDATION 15 - The PAC would recommend that the results of the project closure reports are published upon completion by the Government to demonstrate transparency and encourage best practice to be developed in the event of a future crisis.

RECOMMENDATION 16 – The Government should seek to improve the clarity and legibility of guidance for future business support schemes to reduce overclaims, with a dedicated support officer to give assistance to applicants and ensure that the guidance is understood.

RECOMMENDATION 17 – The Department for Customer and Local Services should appoint an identifiable officer to serve as a direct point of contact between the Government and those who it is seeking repayments from.

Support for Farmers

The PAC received a submission from the Jersey Farmers’ Union on 4 November 2021, outlining concerns about the impact of the pandemic on agriculture caused by the Government’s listing of the industry as a sector exempt from financial support.²⁷⁸ Agriculture was “designated as an essential industry that was able to continue trading even where the Stay-at-Home Order was in place and was not considered to be amongst those mostly significantly impacted.”²⁷⁹ Further reasoning for the exclusion of certain economic sectors was provided by the Director Generals for Customer and Local Services and the Economy:

“These were sectors that were considered to be less severely impacted by public health restrictions. The sectors eligible for support evolved over time as public health measures changed and the constraints they placed on the economy reduced. Sectors

²⁷⁷ [Government of Jersey COVID-19 Co-Funded Payroll Scheme Phase 5 – Guidance – Version 10 May 2021](#)

²⁷⁸ [Submission – Jersey Farmers’ Union – 4 November 2021](#)

²⁷⁹ [Submission – Director General for Customer and Local Services and Director General for the Economy – 8 March 2022, p.1](#)

that were not eligible for support at any time included those deemed as essential and those that could effectively adapt business models - such as by employing working from home - and were unlikely to see a fall in demand as significant as that experienced by businesses required to close their operations.”²⁸⁰

The submission made by the Jersey Farmers’ Union included reference to complications experienced in providing for social distancing and purchasing PPE, at significant cost to the industry, for an additional 350 workers for the harvesting and packaging of potatoes and the growing and harvesting of summer vegetables in Jersey.

The PAC held a public hearing with the Jersey Farmers’ Union, the Jersey Royal Company, and a representative from Woodside Farms on 21 February 2022. During the public hearing, the Business Unit Director of the Jersey Royal Company outlined to the PAC that around 2,600 tonnes of sales were lost in 2020 and 2021, representing a loss “just short of £3.5 million.”²⁸¹

The Secretary of the Jersey Farmers’ Union expressed concerns regarding the lack of support provided to incoming staff to work in agriculture and the requirement that workers staying on-Island must pay social security contributions without the opportunity to receive short-term sickness benefit if they had contracted COVID-19.²⁸² The Business Unit Director of the Jersey Royal Company informed the PAC that the cost of isolating staff represented around £468,000.²⁸³

The Business Unit Director of the Jersey Royal Company informed the PAC that the agricultural sector had purchased its own PPE stocks and did not receive it from the Government, with the President of the Jersey Farmers’ Union placing the total cost of PPE in 2020 and 2021 at £250,000.²⁸⁴

The President of the Jersey Farmers’ Union noted that the impact of the pandemic had a knock-on effect on agricultural businesses due to the loss of a prime consumer,²⁸⁵ although it was noted that supermarkets were able to continue to stock considerably lower levels of local produce where possible.²⁸⁶ The Secretary of the Jersey Farmers’ Union said better communications with the Government of Jersey would have improved the ability of the sector to respond to the pandemic, highlighting issues around the communication of isolation requirements and vaccinations.²⁸⁷ The PAC further noted the concerns raised by the representative of Woodside Farms during the public hearing:

“I still do not know why agriculture was exempt. So presumably that means I have not had a clear message about why I have not been helped. I still do not know why we were excluded. I do not get it.”²⁸⁸

²⁸⁰ [Submission – Director General for Customer and Local Services and Director General for the Economy – 8 March 2022, p.2](#)

²⁸¹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Jersey Farmers’ Union and Jersey Royal Company – 21 February 2022, p.10](#)

²⁸² [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Jersey Farmers’ Union and Jersey Royal Company – 21 February 2022, p.14](#)

²⁸³ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Jersey Farmers’ Union and Jersey Royal Company – 21 February 2022, p.13](#)

²⁸⁴ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Jersey Farmers’ Union and Jersey Royal Company – 21 February 2022, p.16](#)

²⁸⁵ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Jersey Farmers’ Union and Jersey Royal Company – 21 February 2022, p.8](#)

²⁸⁶ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Jersey Farmers’ Union and Jersey Royal Company – 21 February 2022, p.27](#)

²⁸⁷ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Jersey Farmers’ Union and Jersey Royal Company – 21 February 2022, p.25](#)

²⁸⁸ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Jersey Farmers’ Union and Jersey Royal Company – 21 February 2022, p.30](#)

The PAC further notes that offers were made by the agricultural industry to improve food security, but the Government of Jersey was unwilling to provide financial support, even though the initiative had been welcomed:

“We did have an initial meeting with Deputy Steve Luce. Our local food security, it was all about: “Can you go out and grow some extra crops?” So between our 2 businesses, Charlie was prepared to go and grow some, we were prepared to help out with land and equipment and staffing to do that. But why were we going to go and do that? The Government wanted some more local food security yet they were not prepared to support that. So we could have gone and grown double the amount of produce for the local supermarkets in year one, and made sure that the Island was a bit more secure in its food source. But that was all going to be at our risk.”²⁸⁹

The PAC has considered the concerns raised by the Jersey Farmers’ Union and would recommend that the Government of Jersey review its approach to agriculture and other excluded economic sectors to determine ways of providing support to local, on-Island industry, and consider the benefits that incoming, short-term workers may receive from the Government during a period of crisis.

FINDING 23 – The Government of Jersey did not provide financial or PPE support to Jersey’s agricultural sector.

FINDING 24 – Workers arriving in Jersey on a short-term basis did not receive financial support from the Government of Jersey if they contracted COVID-19 but were required to pay social security costs.

RECOMMENDATION 18 – The Government should review its approach to agriculture and other excluded economic sectors to determine ways of providing support to local, on-Island industry.

Support for Charities, Carers and Volunteers

The PAC notes that many charities relied heavily on the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme after an initial decision not to include charities was revisited.

Concerns were also highlighted by Enable Jersey and The Inclusion Project regarding the support offered directly to carers, with their concerns outline as follows:

- That little or no support was offered directly to carers, and no-one appeared to be looking at the carer’s wellbeing
- Support was available for the person with the disability, which made a difference
- There seemed to be a view that a disabled person’s support network would also provide the carer with support if needed
- Carers should have been offered more support rather than having to rely on that provided by family and friends

²⁸⁹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Jersey Farmers’ Union and Jersey Royal Company – 21 February 2022, p.26](#)

Government professionals were not always available when support and assistance was needed.^{290 291}

The Jersey Child Care Trust noted that while the application process was fairly easy to navigate it was difficult to prove the income threshold required.²⁹² One charity that provided a private submission said that, whilst it received PPE, it did not receive financial help due to its charity status.²⁹³ ArtHouse Jersey said that it had not been clear whether they qualified for the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme but were able to minimise costs and avoid support in part through moving operations online.²⁹⁴

Autism Jersey wrote that it found it “very helpful” to eventually be able to source PPE from a single source free of charge and to attend regular updates on its use. The charity also sourced support through funding for shop managers’ salaries and a delay in payment of social security for two quarters. They developed a Business Continuity Plan using the model provided by the Government, with further support provided from various departments, which they have found useful over the course of the pandemic.²⁹⁵

A private submission received by the PAC further noted that many of those offering assistance in the Parishes were volunteers and some were adversely affected financially by isolation as a result of contracting COVID-19 while volunteering but received no additional support. Some parishes provided additional financial support to Islanders for applications such as provisional driving licenses at the additional financial hardship of the Parishes.²⁹⁶ The PAC further notes that Parishes and their staff were not eligible for the Co-Funding Payroll Scheme.

Further support for charities was provided through the Lloyds Foundation-organised funders group which provided a central route to register charity applications and match these to donor funding.²⁹⁷

The Chief Executive confirmed that she was not aware of any charities experiencing reductions in funding from the Government in 2022.²⁹⁸

In light of these submissions, the PAC would recommend that the Government of Jersey should seek consultation with carers, charities, and volunteers to understand how to improve the support they receive in future crises. Although the PAC understands that support schemes were designed for “those best suited to the protection of livelihoods”²⁹⁹, it would recommend that further consideration should be given to supporting organisations that bring considerable social value to the Island.

FINDING 25 – Charities have expressed concern about the level of support offered and provided to charities and carers.

²⁹⁰ [Submission – Enable Jersey – 1 November 2021](#)

²⁹¹ [Submission – The Inclusion Project – 4 November 2021](#)

²⁹² [Submission – Jersey Child Care Trust – 5 November 2021](#)

²⁹³ Private submission received November 2021

²⁹⁴ [Submission – ArtHouse Jersey – 14 February 2022](#)

²⁹⁵ [Submission – Autism Jersey – 29 November 2021](#)

²⁹⁶ Private submission received December 2021

²⁹⁷ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.4](#)

²⁹⁸ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.4](#)

²⁹⁹ [Submission – Director General for Customer and Local Services and Director General for the Economy – 8 March 2022, p.2](#)

RECOMMENDATION 19 - A consultation should be conducted with carers, charities, and volunteers to understand how to improve the support they receive in future crises.

Procurement and Supply Chain Management

The PAC received a submission from the Group Director for Commercial Services on 4 March 2022 outlining the function's role in procurement and supply chain management.³⁰⁰

It stated that the function had supported the Health and Community Services' project team through the provision of support for the development of a procurement strategy, including questions over supply chain surveillance and key strategic commercial and procurement negotiations. The PAC notes that the Senior Leadership Team within Commercial Services met daily, with priorities rewritten – including the implementation of its Target Operating Model – to focus resources on the following areas:

- Global negotiation
- Influence jurisdictions internationally restricting barriers to trade and providing access to restricted supplies
- Supporting local grant schemes
- Enabling security for the island of an airbridge; and
- Ensuring critical supplies were delivered for Islanders.³⁰¹

The Group Director for Commercial Services noted that business-as-usual management was undertaken to monitor expenditure undertaken through the commissioning departments.³⁰²

Commercial Services was responsible for leading on commercial negotiations with strategic forums coordinated by the UK's Department for Health and Social Care. Stakeholders included the devolved administrations of the UK, the Crown Dependencies, the Overseas Territories Forum, and the UK NHS Supply Chain Forum. Participation in these forums allowed Government to maintain assurance over the continuity of supply in regard to both the volume and types of products and consumables required.³⁰³

Jersey's needs were established through a Command Cell Structure outside of Commercial Services, with PPE pandemic stock levels established by a PPE Cell. Commercial and Distribution Cells were also established to determine the volume and types of products required, as well as to monitor, procure and distribute these products to key locations. The Department for Health and Community Services held responsibility for the PPE and Distribution Cells, with Commercial Services holding responsibility for the Commercial Cell.³⁰⁴

Commercial Services received demand from emergency response cells that had been endorsed by Minister and the relevant pandemic-level command structures. Daily consultations were held with a Gold Group for PPE that fed into the Health and Community

³⁰⁰ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022](#)

³⁰¹ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.1](#)

³⁰² [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.8](#)

³⁰³ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.2](#)

³⁰⁴ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, pp.2-4](#)

Services Gold Response Team, with key decision-making in relation to PPE chaired by the then Director General for Justice and Home Affairs. Support was requested from departments through a centralised inbox. This is still in existence and is now part of business-as-usual operations.³⁰⁵

Additional support for Commercial Services was requested through the HR process established to support the pandemic response. It was also noted that there was a lack of skills within the Government to support niche requirements, which required interim support.³⁰⁶

The Group Director for Commercial Services said that a variety of sourcing routes provided a “sustainable level of goods” and allowed for a greater understanding of the market and supply chain dynamics.³⁰⁷ Goods were procured to a specification and standard as stated on the purchase orders and were agreed through consultation between the Department for Health and Community Services and the Public Health function. These standards were in accordance with international bodies including the World Health Organisation, the European Union, and the European Economic Commission.³⁰⁸

Pandemic-related goods that arrived in the Island and did not pass a quality test were either rejected, repurposed, or replaced by the responsible supplier, although around £1.8 million of PPE supplies from four suppliers were referred for further investigation as a result of quality concerns on inspection.³⁰⁹ Quality testing was coordinated by the Health and Community Services’ operational team under the management of the Head of Non-Clinical Services, with items inspected for visual quality, expiry, and quantity on arrival at on-Island storage centres. Samples were provided to the Department for Health and Community Services’ Health and Safety and IPAC teams for confirmation of standard and suitability.³¹⁰

The PAC notes from the Comptroller and Auditor General’s report on Procurement and Supply Chain Management that the Government engaged the described suppliers to seek a remedy, with two resolved satisfactorily through the replacement of supplies from one and receipt of the appropriate documentation of authenticity from another.³¹¹

The Group Director for Commercial Services confirmed that serology tests were procured early in the pandemic to support the surveillance of the on-Island response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that this was known and endorsed by Public Health, the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell, and the Emergencies Council.³¹² The PAC noted the Comptroller and Auditor General’s report that 100,00 serology test kits were procured in batches from two suppliers starting 15 April 2020, with the total estimated cost for these recorded as £1.3 million. These tests did not fully satisfy the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) specification criteria, based on clinical validation tests.³¹³

³⁰⁵ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.1](#)

³⁰⁶ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.7](#)

³⁰⁷ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.3](#)

³⁰⁸ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.5](#)

³⁰⁹ [Report – Procurement and Supply Chain Management during the COVID-19 pandemic – Comptroller and Auditor General – 7 May 2021, p.17](#)

³¹⁰ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.5](#)

³¹¹ [Report – Procurement and Supply Chain Management during the COVID-19 pandemic – Comptroller and Auditor General – 7 May 2021, p.17](#)

³¹² [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.5](#)

³¹³ [Report – Procurement and Supply Chain Management during the COVID-19 pandemic – Comptroller and Auditor General – 7 May 2021, pp.27-8](#)

The Comptroller and Auditor General recommended a review of the “procurement of rapid serology test kits and subsequent evidence to assess lessons learnt from the process”³¹⁴, which the Government confirmed as complete in the Executive Response to the Comptroller and Auditor General’s report on 1 July 2021.³¹⁵

It is understood that future pandemic stock would continue to carry a risk of write off as pandemic subsidies and PPE use decreases, with a continued holding of a 45-day pandemic stock directed by Ministers with a supporting HCS business case funding the project until 2025. The PAC further understands that no procured items have been destroyed to date, although some items obtained free of charge have been destroyed in response to a safety notice recommending immediate disposal. These were replaced free of charge by the supplier.³¹⁶

During a public hearing on 10 March 2022, the Associate Medical Director of the Surgical Services Care Group said that ventilation supply is benchmarked against the number of Intensive Therapy Unit beds, as well as the staff and facilities available for these beds. At the beginning of the pandemic, it was deemed necessary to rationalise the use of the machinery and available staffing, resulting in evaluations of treatment options and oxygen demand, with areas including Northern Italy used to understand ventilation needs in affected areas.³¹⁷

The Associate Medical Director of the Surgical Services Care Group said that there was capacity to match “what we needed to”, but noted that it became apparent during the construction of the Nightingale Hospital that non-invasive ventilation could function as an effective treatment modality, as well as high-flow oxygen, resulting in the Nightingale Hospital procuring its own oxygen provision and resulting in the Island experiencing “a remarkably better position than all of the hospitals in the UK” as a result of high levels of oxygen facility.³¹⁸

A 2022 Pandemic Stock Strategy was agreed by the Department for Health and Community Services’ Executive Team to allow for the distribution or disposal of unusable items to achieve “best value” through the sale, donation, or disposal at the earliest opportunity.³¹⁹

The Group Director further noted that working collaboratively with the Department for Health and Community Services and the Department for Infrastructure, Housing and Environment led to improvements in the consistency of storing procured equipment and goods. In addition, new contractual framework agreements were included for both on and off island suppliers to mitigate potential surges in demand of critical goods in the future, such as PPE.³²⁰

The Group Director for Commercial Services outlined the breaches and exemptions in 2021 as follows³²¹:

³¹⁴ [Report – Procurement and Supply Chain Management during the COVID-19 pandemic – Comptroller and Auditor General – 7 May 2021, p.29](#)

³¹⁵ [R.75/2021 Res. – Procurement and Supply Chain Management during the COVID-19 pandemic – 1 July 2021, pp.6-7](#)

³¹⁶ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.5](#)

³¹⁷ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, pp.12-3](#)

³¹⁸ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.13](#)

³¹⁹ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.5](#)

³²⁰ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.3](#)

³²¹ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.4](#)

1st January 2021 – 31st December 2021	
Number of Exemptions Approved/in Progress	44
Number of Breaches	3
Value of Exemptions Approved/in Progress	£20,458,593
Value of Breaches	£308,000 (excluding a breach in respect of the Revolving Credit Facility)

It was noted that the Government has a defined procedure for any expenditure not undertaken in line with the Public Finance Manual, with such expenditure requiring formal approval by the Group Director for Commercial Services.³²²

With regards to competition and pricing, due diligence was undertaken to ensure Value-for-Money, this included use of existing and emerging suppliers, and prioritising negotiation of the free issue of goods, resulting in savings of around circa £6,000,000.³²³

During the Health and Community Service end of year PPE stock reviews, expired or unsuitable items (masks, gowns, and sanitiser) in quarantine were identified for write off. The write off amounts for 2020 and 2021 were £727,780 and £228,190 respectively, which were approved by the appropriate departmental budget holders. Consideration has been given to future write off requirements following a pandemic stock strategy review and efforts have been made to marginalise the stock to a reasonable level to avoid write off were possible following approval in February 2022 by the department executive.³²⁴

FINDING 26 – Specialist response cells were established to provide for procurement and supply chain management within the Government.

FINDING 27 – 44 procurement exemptions were approved or in the process of being approved in 2021, representing a total of £20,458,593.

FINDING 27 – The three procurement breaches in 2021 totalled £308,000, excluding the Revolving Credit Facility.

FINDING 29 - £727,780 and £228,190 of expired or unsuitable items in quarantine were identified and written off at the end of 2020 and 2021 respectively.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The Director General for Health and Community Services said that the Government possessed a “significant stockpile of PPE” that would last for three months in the event of a flu pandemic.³²⁵ The majority of stock was provided through by NHS. The PAC has been told by the Group Director for Commercial Services that Jersey had not been affected by the decision made by the UK Government to write-off £8.7 billion of PPE as a result of fees paid above the market rate, a lack of useability, and other factors.^{326 327}

³²² [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.4](#)

³²³ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.20](#)

³²⁴ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.5](#)

³²⁵ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.24](#)

³²⁶ [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.4](#)

³²⁷ [News Article - COVID-19: Government writes off £8.7bn of pandemic PPE – BBC News – 1 February 2022](#)

The Director General for Health and Community Services said that a PPE cell was established in April 2020 to meet demand and provide procurement services, with this provision managed through a bronze cell led by clinicians and headed by the Associate Medical Director of the Surgical Services Care Group. The then-Director General for Justice and Home Affairs served as the Accountable Officer for PPE procurement.³²⁸

The Group Director for Commercial Services confirmed to the PAC that the PPE Framework used by the Government was monitored by Commercial Services and the Department for Health and Community Services' Head of Non-Clinical Services. The PAC notes a submission from Family Nursing and Home Care that the establishment of the PPE Cell was a "very positive" move in helping to alleviate supply chain issues.³²⁹

The Deputy Medical Officer for Health outlined that, while PPE stocks were initially managed by the Department for Health and Community Services, this function was moved to Commercial Services within the Chief Operating Office (now within Treasury & Exchequer) to centralise the demands for PPE.³³⁰

The procurement of PPE was formally managed by the then Director General for Justice and Home Affairs, in his position as the head of the Gold Command Emergency Response structure. The Director General for Health and Community Services confirmed to the PAC that regular presentations were held around the volume of stock, its run-rate, and what stock was on order, in order to inform relevant key internal stakeholders on PPE supplies.³³¹

Until the beginning of 2022, Jersey was able to receive PPE supplies from the NHS free of charge. It is acknowledged by the PAC that the free supply from the NHS has had a significant financial impact on local suppliers of PPE who found that their usual customers were now able to receive supply free of charge and so significantly reduced their orders.

Evidence was provided to the PAC from Guardian Medical Supplies who stated that they had seen a marked drop in income as a result of the Government's decision to "automatically provide free PPE to private healthcare professionals."³³²

The Director General for Health and Community Services confirmed that she had assumed responsibility for the management of the purchase of PPE at the beginning of 2022, resulting in the shutdown of the PPE Cell and its monitoring being moved to the Non-Clinical Services Manager.³³³

The Director General for Health and Community Services confirmed that the then-Director General for Justice and Home Affairs had developed a strong level of understanding of PPE requirements which provided for an effective transfer for responsibility and good governance.³³⁴

³²⁸ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.22](#)

³²⁹ [Submission – Family Nursing and Home Care – 20 October 2021](#)

³³⁰ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.15](#)

³³¹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.22](#)

³³² [Submission – Guardian Medical Supplies Ltd. – 4 April 2022](#)

³³³ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.23](#)

³³⁴ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.23](#)

She further confirmed that charities, care homes and other external organisations were continuing to receive PPE and they were not being charged. She said that the contracts for the supply of PPE were maintained by the Department for Health and Community Services' suppliers and that overall PPE supply had returned to Business-As-Usual levels for the entirety of the Island.³³⁵

The PAC has noted that, while care homes and other service providers were able to receive free PPE, parishes were required to purchase their own supply.

It is the view of the PAC that clarity should be provided about when the arrangement for supplying free PPE will come to an end. Not only will this provide necessary transparency on any future public expenditure but will also provide the information needed by both local PPE suppliers and those continuing to receive free PPE for business planning purposes.

The Comptroller and Auditor General raised concerns about confusion over the number of invasive and non-invasive ventilators. The Medical Director for Health confirmed that it was difficult to accurately determine what counts as an invasive ventilator or a non-invasive ventilator. The Director General for Health and Community Services outlined that she had requested that the new Head of Non-Clinical Services prioritised the creation of an effective equipment inventory over 2022.³³⁶

FINDING 30 – Until the beginning of 2022, PPE was received free-of-charge from the UK's National Health Service, with the Director for Health and Community Services assuming responsibility for the management of the purchase of PPE going forward.

FINDING 31 – The supply of free PPE from the NHS and then onward to care homes and healthcare providers has had a significant financial impact on local suppliers of PPE.

FINDING 32 – The use of PPE by the Government has returned to 'business-as-usual' levels.

RECOMMENDATION 20 - Clarity must be provided on when the supply of free PPE will come to an end to provide transparency on future public expenditure and the information needed by both local PPE suppliers and those continuing to receive free PPE for business planning purposes.

RECOMMENDATION 21 – The Government should publish a clarification regarding what the UK agreed to provide to Jersey free-of-charge during pandemic, including a breakdown of the estimated costs of these provisions.

Nightingale Hospital

The construction of a temporary, 180-bed Nightingale Hospital was announced on 9th April 2020.³³⁷ Funding of up to £14.4 million was allocated from the General Reserve by a

³³⁵ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.24](#)

³³⁶ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.17](#)

³³⁷ [News Release – Jersey Nightingale Hospital Approved – 9 April 2020](#)

Ministerial Decision to cover the costs.³³⁸ The need was identified as part of the Health and Community Services' COVID-19 Readiness and Delivery Plan, which initially estimated bed requirements for the management of the COVID-19 as 600, a potential gap of 248 from the total static bed capacity of 352.

This modelling was based on the Public Health England model produced on 16 March 2020, which outlined a “reasonable worst-case scenario” for UK Crown Dependencies.³³⁹ During the public hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services, the Chief Nurse noted that conversations had been held with Family Nursing and Home Care, Jersey Hospice, and other providers regarding the establishment and operation of the Nightingale Hospital.³⁴⁰

The C&AG has noted that this project was exempt from the procurement guidance in the Public Finances Manual, which has been documented with steps put in place to manage commercial risk.³⁴¹ A detailed business case was prepared to outline the decision,³⁴² with a specific training programme developed for the Nightingale Hospital.³⁴³

The construction and set up of the Nightingale Hospital took 26 days³⁴⁴. Running costs to the end of June 2021 from its construction totalled £3,019,743.³⁴⁵

The Comptroller and Auditor General has said that it was unclear where the extra staff to support the Nightingale Hospital would have come from, should they have been required.³⁴⁶

The structure was removed in July 2021 and any items on hire returned to their respective owners.³⁴⁷

The costs of Nightingale Hospital were outlined in the response to a Freedom of Information request on 23 September 2021³⁴⁸ and an interim Decommissioning Waste Report³⁴⁹ was published under a separate Freedom of Information request published on 13 September 2021, with a list of Nightingale Hospital furniture and equipment that has been catalogued and stored.³⁵⁰ At the time of publication, no items had been sold or donated, although consumable items such as bottles of water have been used.

The Head of Finance for Health and Community Services confirmed that none of the items from the Nightingale Hospital's equipment stock had been sold, with a considerable level remaining in storage and “initiatives underway to explore disposal of that stock”, including the sale and gifting of stock where appropriate.³⁵¹

³³⁸ [C&AG Report – Procurement and Supply Chain Management – 7 May 2021, p.29](#)

³³⁹ [C&AG Report – Procurement and Supply Chain Management – 7 May 2021, p.29](#)

³⁴⁰ [Transcript – Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.30](#)

³⁴¹ [C&AG Report – Procurement and Supply Chain Management – 7 May 2021, p.29](#)

³⁴² [C&AG Report – Procurement and Supply Chain Management – 7 May 2021, p.30](#)

³⁴³ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.41](#)

³⁴⁴ [Annual Report and Accounts 2020, p.96](#)

³⁴⁵ [Freedom of Information - Track, Trace, Testing, Monitoring and Nightingale costs – 26 January 2022](#)

³⁴⁶ [C&AG Report – Management of the Healthcare Response – 29 April 2021, p.6](#)

³⁴⁷ [Freedom of Information - Track, Trace, Testing, Monitoring and Nightingale costs – 26 January 2022](#)

³⁴⁸ [Freedom of Information - Nightingale Hospital furniture and equipment – 13 September 2021](#)

³⁴⁹ [Report - Nightingale Hospital Decommissioning Waste Report \(interim\) – 28 July 2021](#)

³⁵⁰ [List of Nightingale Hospital furniture and equipment catalogued and stored – 13 September 2021](#)

³⁵¹ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.25](#)

The Group Director for Commercial Services informed the PAC in a letter dated 4th March 2022 that a disposal review of the deconstruction phase of the Nightingale Hospital had been approved in February 2022 and has allowed the Government to take steps towards achieving “best value” for the use, sale, donation, or disposal of equipment. A subsequent pandemic stock review is expected to be undertaken by the Department for Health and Community Services in Q4 2022, with the recommendations published in Q1 2023.

The Director General for Health and Community Services said that she would “tend to avoid selling our stock” and confirmed that they were exploring what stock was available to gift to Ukraine following the Russian invasion in February 2022.^{352 353}

The Director General for Health and Community Services confirmed that a decommissioning report would be “valuable for us” and noted that they had recorded “lots of lessons” from its establishment and decommissioning.³⁵⁴ The PAC would therefore recommend that the final decommissioning report for the Nightingale Hospital should be prioritised and published as soon as possible.

The Comptroller and Auditor General had previously recommended the development of a “detailed procurement strategy to agree costs and plan for decommissioning the Nightingale Hospital site” and the preparation of a detailed decommissioning plan for the Nightingale Hospital equipment to minimise financial loss to the States.³⁵⁵ The Government accepted and marked as complete the first recommendation and listed the second to be completed by the end of June 2021.³⁵⁶ The PAC has not seen these documents and would strongly recommend that the Government publish this information as soon as possible to demonstrate transparency and best practice.

The Director General for Health and Community Services said that she believed that it was unlikely that she would “do anything different around the Nightingale”, and that it “demonstrated that if we worked across government, across the community, how we could really deliver at pace”. The Director of Public Health said that he believed the Nightingale Hospital to be “a very good example of the increase in resilience in secondary care.”³⁵⁷

FINDING 33 – A disposal review of the deconstruction phase of the Nightingale Hospital was approved in February 2022. A subsequent pandemic stock review is expected to be undertaken in Q4 2022, with the recommendations arising from this review expected to be approved and published in Q1 2023.

FINDING 34 – As part of the disposal strategy of equipment used for the Nightingale Hospital, 200 oxygen concentrators that had initially been purchased for the Nightingale Hospital have been donated by the Department for Health and Community Services to Ukraine.

³⁵² [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, pp.25-6](#)

³⁵³ [Tweet – @GovJersey – 11 March 2022](#)

³⁵⁴ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, p.26](#)

³⁵⁵ [Report – Procurement and Supply Chain Management during the COVID-19 pandemic – Comptroller and Auditor General – 7 May 2021, p.41](#)

³⁵⁶ [R.75/2021 Res. – Procurement and Supply Chain Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Executive Response, p.7](#)

³⁵⁷ [Transcript – Public Hearing with the Director General for Health and Community Services – 10 March 2022, pp.27-8](#)

RECOMMENDATION 22 - The final decommissioning report for the Nightingale Hospital should be prioritised and published as soon as possible to demonstrate transparency and best practice and include the relevant decommissioning plans for the deconstruction the Nightingale Hospital.

Governance of Communications

The PAC has sought to understand how the Government of Jersey worked to communicate with Islanders and businesses. The PAC received a submission from the Director of Communications on 21 February 2022, outlining the work of the Communications Directorate during this period.³⁵⁸

The PAC understands that the Communications Directorate, including each departmental Head of Communications and the Government of Jersey's central press office, internal communications team, and specialists in marketing, digital and design were re-prioritised to provide reactive crisis communications and proactive behavioural change support. The Director of Communications noted that he used the existing 'One Gov' structure to flatten the hierarchies within the Communications Directorate in order to assign officers to groups dedicated to various policy priorities. These groups were each responsible for supporting the creation, promotion, and implementation of policy initiatives; disseminating messages to colleagues, stakeholders, and Islanders; and advising Ministers and senior official on public announcements.³⁵⁹

The Communication Directorate's weekly 'grid' of communications activity was used to monitor and develop work and strategies.³⁶⁰ It is noted that each department maintained its own budget for specific communications activities.³⁶¹

The Director of Communications outlined that media monitoring and public sentiment tracking was undertaken to understand the public and internal communications that would need to be generated. Proposals would be agreed and shared with the Ministerial Support Unit, Director Generals, and the previous and interim Chief Executives for approval, before being shared with the Government of Jersey's Strategic Coordination Group.³⁶²

Support was provided by Behavioural Scientists within the Public Health team and the Communications Directorate collaborated with the Department for Infrastructure, Housing and Environment and the Parish of St Helier.³⁶³

Strategies developed by the Communications Directorate were shared with the Council of Ministers and Emergencies Council, as well as the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel on request. Private feedback was obtained from States Members to further develop strategies, including schools and Portuguese-liaison.³⁶⁴

³⁵⁸ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022](#)

³⁵⁹ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.2](#)

³⁶⁰ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.3](#)

³⁶¹ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.9](#)

³⁶² [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.2](#)

³⁶³ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, pp.2-3](#)

³⁶⁴ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.3](#)

The Director of Communications noted the 24-hour-7-days-a-week operating schedule for the Communications Directorate and established a rota to determine officer availability and improve the speed of communications.³⁶⁵

Feedback was monitored through the Government of Jersey's channels, including through social media interactions, press conference questions and conversations with journalists, and through real-time assessments from call centres, customer feedback, and policy officers within the One Gov Tactical Coordination Group.³⁶⁶

Internal Communication

The Director General for the Economy's submission of 3 December 2021 detailed that response measures were communicated in ministerial briefings but noted that this sometimes led to messages being lost amidst. The Director General recommended that consideration should be given to separate economic response briefings targeted more specifically at the business community and delivered consistently with stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce.³⁶⁷

Press Conferences

Online press conferences were a key method of communicating policy. 47 live press conferences were held during the pandemic. These were broadcast on the Government of Jersey's social media channels, YouTube, and streamed live by the Island's media. Questions and comments from the public were tracked and answered where possible, with additional feedback provided through radio stations.³⁶⁸

The Director of Communications and the Head of Media both spoke to journalists on a daily basis and worked with the Ministerial Support Unit to make time for Ministers to do broadcasts for on social media and the traditional media.³⁶⁹

Press conferences were livestreamed at the request of Ministers but full agreement of policy changes was required from STAC, the Competent Authorities Ministers, the Council of Ministers, and the Emergencies Council before these took place.³⁷⁰

An in-house Government of Jersey owned studio in the Parade was established to increase the quality of video production and provide greater control over the scripting, directing, and producing of Jersey centric content.³⁷¹

³⁶⁵ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.3](#)

³⁶⁶ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.5](#)

³⁶⁷ [Submission – Director General for the Economy – 3 December 2021, p.11](#)

³⁶⁸ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, pp.4-5](#)

³⁶⁹ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.4](#)

³⁷⁰ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.4](#)

³⁷¹ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.4](#)

Other Communication Methods

Adverts and physical measures such as signage were also used to display public health messages. Further messaging was also displayed on Government of Jersey buildings.³⁷²

410,000 leaflets were distributed across the Island by Jersey Post outlining key public health information, for those Islanders who were not online.³⁷³ Specific content was also tailored to stakeholder groups, such as a collaboration with the Youth Service and the youth digital radio station.³⁷⁴

The Director of Communications noted the risks of misinformation and disinformation through online social media platforms and the need to position the social media platforms as sources of fact for COVID-19 updates and advice.

All key messages were translated into Portuguese, Polish and Romanian, with British Sign Language videos shared on Government channels, and subtitles were provided. Several messages were translated in collaboration with the Royal Association for Deaf People UK.³⁷⁵

A memorandum of understanding was signed between the Government and all local telecommunication providers to enable mass communication of Government messages in relation to the public health emergency. Island-wide SMS messaging functions were used to alert Islanders to significant updates and announcements and changes to advice.³⁷⁶

Defining Success

Specific metrics were attached to interactions through different communications channels, such as through clicks and engagements. Particular consideration was given to cost per item and the measuring of engagement. The Director of Communications said that, where success measures were not met, the details of the communications in question were considered and revised where necessary. The Government of Jersey's Communications Directorate sought feedback through the One Gov Tactical Coordination Group and the Public Health Teams, with public opinion measured through public commentary on social media, radio station calls, letters to the Jersey Evening Post, and Ministerial correspondence.³⁷⁷

Tactical lessons were learned if an announcement was not understood or acted upon by the public, with this process taking place within two days, and new messages or artwork created and delivered to test engagement levels.³⁷⁸ Sentiment and long-term behaviours were assessed before meetings of the Emergencies Council and then shared with the participants. Further discussions and priorities were discussed and considered through the forums outlined within the Communications Directorate.³⁷⁹

³⁷² [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.6](#)

³⁷³ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.6](#)

³⁷⁴ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.7](#)

³⁷⁵ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.7](#)

³⁷⁶ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.7](#)

³⁷⁷ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, pp.7-8](#)

³⁷⁸ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.8](#)

³⁷⁹ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.8](#)

The Director of Communications confirmed that an internal review of the Communication Directorate’s work³⁸⁰ and performance during the COVID-19 pandemic³⁸¹, and outlined that lessons had been learned by the Directorate, including:

- the need to improve the communication of nuanced policy position
- to provide earlier engagement for communications officers when planning a Minister’s diary
- provide greater weight to the views of children and young people and prioritise rapid communications to them; and
- to ensure that press notices are signed off by the Minister quoted.³⁸²

As a result of these lessons, the Director of Communications further outlined that the key lessons to be integrated going forward consists of:

- the use of plainer language with shorter, less formal messages
- continue to ensure closer collaboration between the Ministerial Support Unit and Communications Officer
- the use of a dedicated communications officer within the Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills to increase communication and engagement support to provide reports to the department on the views of young people; and
- the requirement of press notices to be signed off from the lead Minister.³⁸³

FINDING 35 – An internal review of the Communications Directorate’s work during the COVID-19 pandemic has been carried out, with key lessons learned shared with the PAC.

Feedback from Stakeholders

The Children’s Commissioner has noted that children were not consulted on Emergency Measures and were often not the focus of Government communications, further noting that messages regarding isolation and attending school were “often confused and conflicting.” She said that Ministers did not meet with young people to listen to their experiences and answer questions, and when decisions were made, they were not always shared in a format that was accessible to children and young people.³⁸⁴

A number of stakeholders have also expressed concern about the quality of communication at the beginning of the pandemic. Family Nursing and Home Care described initial communication as “very poor”, but noted that it improved, with various groups formed to help channel relevant information to key stakeholders.³⁸⁵

In its submission the NASUWT expressed its concerns that the Government had not recognised the work of teachers during the pandemic and had ignored concerns and pursued

³⁸⁰ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, pp.7-8](#)

³⁸¹ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.10](#)

³⁸² [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.10](#)

³⁸³ [Submission – Director of Communications – 21 February 2022, p.10](#)

³⁸⁴ [Submission – Children’s Commissioner – 19 October 2021](#)

³⁸⁵ [Submission – Family Nursing and Home Care – 20 October 2021](#)

policies that “have seen the virus spread through schools and teachers having higher infection rates than the general population.”³⁸⁶

The NASUWT criticised the lack of ‘closed-border’ approach and cited the increased impact on education and infection. The union expressed concern that the Government had not adequately prepared teachers for waves of COVID-19 in the Autumn of 2021 and Spring 2022. The submission described initial communication as “very poor” but noted that aspects of this did improve over time including the formation of various groups which helped channel relevant information.³⁸⁷

The NASUWT recommended a clear structure of command groups should be established to ensure that everyone could understand the policies and guidance being communicated, noting that “20 minutes notice of a press release announcing major changes is simply unacceptable.”³⁸⁸

The submission noted that social media briefings and announcements could cause problems when the messaging quickly changed, making it difficult to respond appropriately. It also noted that detailed government guidance was sometimes only published days after it was announced. They stressed need to publish detailed guidance at the time of, or before, an announcement.

A private submission from a major service provider expressed concern about the over-dependence on the use of social media (particularly Facebook) as the primary means to communicate with the public and its inaccessibility for more vulnerable islanders. They noted that easy-read versions of government guidance were often issued “many days and sometimes weeks” after new rules were introduced.³⁸⁹

Further concern was also expressed by stakeholders who submitted evidence that public messaging was sometimes not aligned with Government guidance. An example provided was that the communication reported was that masks were no longer required, whereas the Government of Jersey’s guidance was that they were highly recommended – even if they were no longer a legal requirement.

In light of these concerns, the PAC would recommend that the Communications Directorate commit to a public-facing review of its communications strategy and structure during the pandemic, to identify areas for improvement and engage with Islanders and affected organisations to respond to concerns raised in submissions.

RECOMMENDATION 23 - The Communications Directorate should commit to a public-facing review of its communications strategy and structure during the COVID-19 pandemic, to identify areas of learning, engage with Islanders and affected organisations, and to respond to concerns raised to the PAC by stakeholders during this review.

³⁸⁶ [Submission – NASUWT – 3 March 2022, p.2](#)

³⁸⁷ [Submission – NASUWT – 3 March 2022, pp.5-6](#)

³⁸⁸ [Submission – NASUWT – 3 March 2022, p.11](#)

³⁸⁹ Private submission received November 2021

Section 10 – Lessons Learned for Governance and Financial Management During a Pandemic

The then-Director General for Children, Young People, Education and Skills outlined that Gold and Silver structures disseminated lessons learned alongside “real time sharing of learning, principally through minutes and action points from formal meetings and accompanied by formal monitoring of business continuity plans”.³⁹⁰ Operational lessons have been identified within services through discussion with team members and implemented quickly, with team function being reviewed and adapted where needed. Tabletop exercises have been held to identify the lessons from service operations to date that can be shared across the Government of Jersey.³⁹¹

Learnings from the pandemic have been included in 2022 Departmental Strategies with the respective business continuity team undertaking lessons learned through the business continuity network. The Group Director for Commercial Services informed the PAC that one of the key learnings they were incorporating at this level was “to involve Commercial Services earlier in the process” and to minimise any lack of understanding of the importance of execution within the response process. This has been picked up in the working with the CPMO on reviewed Public Finance Manual processes and with Strategic Finance in response of new Business Case template development.³⁹²

The Director General for the Economy said that areas of improvement were shared within the leadership team for consideration in future schemes and policy and to support activity. Each project group has a documented lessons learnt summary for internal use.³⁹³

In his submission, the Director General for Children, Young People, Education and Skills recommended a “standing mutual aid plan” based on a range of plausible emergency scenarios. This would speed up mobilisation and assist in implementation of the ITS programme which would allow easy access to datasets and business intelligence. The Director General expressed the view that the Government “is still too reliant upon the manual joining up of data derived from outdated, and, increasingly, unsupported systems.”³⁹⁴

He noted that it would be useful to have a range of business continuity scenarios “on tap” to allow for quicker planning and insight into public health responses through the Social Recovery programme led by Public Health on behalf of the Council of Ministers. He also highlighted a need to enhance the Department’s communication capacity.

³⁹⁰ [Submission – Director General for Children, Young People, Education and Skills – 6 December 2021, p.4](#)

³⁹¹ [Submission – Interim Director General for Justice and Home Affairs – 5 December 2021, p.5](#)

³⁹² [Submission – Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.3](#)

³⁹³ [Submission – Director General for the Economy – 3 December 2021, p.5](#)

³⁹⁴ [Submission – Director General for Children, Young People, Education and Skills – 6 December 2021, p.2](#)

Implementation and Management of Departments

As part of the Interim Chief Executive's submission to the PAC on 11 October 2021, the Director General for Health and Community Services outlined the following improvements for the department, including:

- Maintaining effective business continuity plans
- Maintaining a pandemic preparedness plans
- Reviewing workforce and treatment plans to ensure ongoing support to areas most affected by the pandemic (e.g. dental)
- Effective emergency planning using JESIP principles and regular training for staff
- Implementation of earlier technological communications to allow for improved communication and advice for young people.³⁹⁵

In a submission to the PAC, the then-Director General for Children, Young People, Education and Skills highlighted the use of a Team A and Team B structure within the department to ensure that different people could be on duty at different times and help relieve significant time commitments.³⁹⁶

Management of Performance and Public Finances

The Interim Chief Executive outlined that the initial reporting and publication of Departmental Services Performance Measures were currently under review as part of the process for developing the Departmental Operational Business Plans for 2022, and that the quarterly reporting basis had supported the identification of further improvements to Departmental service delivery.³⁹⁷

He noted that the ongoing work of the Investment Appraisal Team in strengthening and embedding processes and procedures surrounding the development of business cases would allow them to improve future business cases and provide a more comprehensive appreciation of the cost-benefit cases for intervention and their relative merits of competing delivery options. The Interim Chief Executive noted that this would help to improve both initial decision-making and the ongoing monitoring of performance.³⁹⁸

Procurement and Supply Chain Management

The Group Director for Commercial Services outlined that learnings were included in the 2022 Strategy, with her function's business continuity team undertaking lessons learned through the business continuity network. She noted that it was key "to involve Commercial Services earlier in the process" and to minimise any lack of understanding of the importance of execution within the response process.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁵ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.8](#)

³⁹⁶ [Submission – Director General for Children, Young People, Education and Skills – 6 December 2021, p.4](#)

³⁹⁷ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.12](#)

³⁹⁸ [Submission – Interim Chief Executive – 11 October 2021, p.12](#)

³⁹⁹ [Submission - Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.3](#)

This has been picked up in the working with the CPMO on reviewed Public Finance Manual processes and with Strategic Finance for new Business Case template development. The Group Director noted that working with Treasury & Exchequer during the pandemic made apparent the benefits of moving into that department.⁴⁰⁰

Emergency Responsiveness

The Chief Executive informed the PAC in her response of the 14 February 2022 that legislation was being designed to replace the Emergency Powers and Planning (Jersey) Law 1990⁴⁰¹. She noted that this work had been in development for several years and had been “somewhat slowed” by Brexit planning and the response to COVID-19 but confirmed that it was now “fully back in development.”

The Jersey Resilience Forum has also been relaunched, and the PAC noted the publication of Version 1.0 of the Jersey Multi Agency Emergency Measures Plan Response Guide in May 2021,⁴⁰² which provides a summary of the responses, procedures and responsibilities of the emergency services at the scenes of major incidents, and the support role offered by the Government of Jersey and other agencies.

The Chief Executive further confirmed to the PAC that public health legislation would be updated, including emergency arrangements, with consultation planned with emergency arrangements.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰⁰ [Submission - Group Director for Commercial Services – 4 March 2022, p.8](#)

⁴⁰¹ [Emergency Powers and Planning \(Jersey\) Law 1990](#)

⁴⁰² [Jersey Multi Agency Emergency Measures Plan Response Guide – May 2021](#)

⁴⁰³ [Submission – Chief Executive – 14 February 2022, p.9](#)

Section 11 - Conclusions

It is beyond question that the pandemic had a profound impact on Jersey. As the Island community begins to recover it is right that Government and scrutiny bodies examine the manner in which the decisions were made over this period.

The Scrutiny function of the States Assembly has undertaken a number of reviews focusing on specific areas of the Government's response as it falls under the Panels remit. This review has focused on the implementation of the pandemic response, the decision-making processes involved and what measures were in place to ensure accountability.

The scope of this review was necessarily broad and brings together the feedback of those in the community and the evidence provided by Government departments to ensure that the voices of those providing and receiving the services and support generated as part of the response were heard.

As stated at the start of this report, it is recognised that throughout the pandemic, officers and the Council of Ministers were operating in the exceptionally challenging circumstances of co-ordinating a response to a situation which changed quickly both globally and in Jersey.

It is in this context – and acknowledging the hard work and long hours of many individuals across all areas of Government – that the PAC has made its recommendations for review of a number of processes and projects to ensure that the experience of the last two years informs lasting improvements to governance and accountability in future crises.

Appendix 1 - Public Accounts Committee Membership

Deputy Inna Gardiner, Chair



Senator Tracey Vallois



Connétable Andy Jehan



Connétable Karen Shenton-Stone, Vice-Chair



Connétable John Le Maistre



Non-States Members (independently appointed):

Dr Helen Miles (resigned 29 March 2022)

Mr Adrian Lane

Mr Graeme Phipps

Mr Paul van Bodegom

Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference

Public Accounts Committee

COVID Response Review

Terms of Reference

1. To assess the Government's implementation of the Covid-19 Response measures.
2. To examine the impact of COVID-19 response measures on departmental business as usual activities, including the secondment of Government staff to other departments to aid the response effort.
3. To assess the methods of the Executive in measuring, monitoring, and reporting on its performance, financial management (including value for money and cost benefit analyses) and impact on work programmes during the Covid-19 pandemic.
4. To examine whether the Government has applied public funds for the purpose intended by the States in responding to the pandemic and complied with the requirements set out by the Public Finances (Jersey) Law and Public Finances Manual.
5. To consider the effectiveness of the Government's governance procedures during the pandemic, with particular regard to its:
 - a. decision making
 - b. procurement and supply chain management
 - c. healthcare response
 - d. management of public finances
 - e. communication
 - f. support to businesses and individuals
6. To determine what key lessons in governance and financial management have been learned and will be applied to future crises, including evaluating the Government's response to the C&AG's reports and recommendations on the pandemic response.

Appendix 3 – Evidence Collected

Public-Facing Submissions

The PAC received additional submissions from external stakeholders who have asked for these to be held in confidence by the PAC. The PAC has therefore complied with these requests.

Submissions from the Government of Jersey

- [Interim Chief Executive - 11 October 2021](#)
- [Director General of the Economy - 3 December 2021](#)
- [Group Director for External Relations - 3 December 2021](#)
- [Director General of Infrastructure, Housing and Environment - 3 December 2021](#)
- [Director General of Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance - 3 December 2021](#)
- [Treasurer of the States - 3 December 2021](#)
- [Director General of Justice and Home Affairs - 5 December 2021](#)
- [Director General of Children, Young People, Education and Skills - 6 December 2021](#)
- [Director General of Customer and Local Services - 6 December 2021](#)
- [Chief Executive - 14 February 2022](#)
 - [Chief Executive - 14 February 2022 - Appendix 1](#)
- [Director of Communications - 21 February 2022](#)
- [Chief Statistician \(Director of Statistics and Analytics\) - 23 February 2022](#)
- [Group Director for Commercial Services - 4 March 2022](#)
- [Director Generals for Customer and Local Services and the Economy - 8 March 2022](#)
- [Director General for Health and Community Services - 9 March 2022](#)

Submissions from the States of Jersey

- [Comité des Connétables - 10 November 2021](#)
- [Chief Probation Officer - 13 January 2022](#)
- [Greffier of the States - 14 January 2022](#)
- [Comptroller and Auditor General - 17 January 2022](#)
- [Attorney General - 18 January 2022](#)
- [Office of the Lieutenant Governor - 18 January 2022](#)
- [Official Analyst - 18 January 2022](#)
- [Judicial Greffier - 19 January 2022](#)
- [Viscount - 20 January 2022](#)

Submissions from External Stakeholders

- [Jersey Mencap - 11 October 2021](#)
- [Headway - 13 October 2021](#)
- [Children's Commissioner- 19 October 2021](#)
- [Family Nursing & Home Care - 21 October 2021](#)
- [Parish of St. Helier – 22 October 2021](#)
- [Citizens Advice Jersey - 29 October 2021](#)

- [Enable Jersey - 1 November 2021](#)
- [Jersey Business - 3 November 2021](#)
- [Jersey Farmers' Union - 4 November 2021](#)
- [The Inclusion Project - 4 November 2021](#)
- [Primary Care Body - 5 November 2021](#)
- [Jersey Child Care Trust - 5 November 2021](#)
- [Autism Jersey - 29 November 2021](#)
- [Age Concern - 3 December 2021](#)
- [ArtHouse Jersey - 14 February 2022](#)
- [Royal College of Nursing - 3 March 2022](#)
- [NASUWT - 3 March 2022](#)
- [Guardian Medical Supplies Ltd. – 4 April 2022](#)

Public Hearings

- [Transcript - Estate and Performance Management - Director General for Health and Community Services - 28 June 2021](#)
- [Transcript - Performance Management and the Response to COVID-19 - Director Generals for Customer & Local Services and Strategic Policy, Planning & Performance - 4 October 2021](#)
- [Transcript - Public Accounts Committee - Performance Management and Response to COVID-19 - Director Generals of Children, Young People, Education and Skills & Health and Community Services - 29 November 2021](#)
- [Transcript - Performance Management and Response to COVID-19 - Treasurer of the States - 17 January 2022](#)
- [Transcript - Response to COVID-19 - Jersey Farmers' Union and Jersey Royal Company - 21 February 2022](#)
- [Transcript - Response to COVID-19 - Director General of Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance - 23 February 2022](#)
- [Transcript - Response to COVID-19 - Director General for Health and Community Services - 10 March 2022](#)

Private Briefings

- Private Briefing with Tony Moretta – 28 October 2021
- Private Briefing with Malcolm Ferey – 30 November 2021
- Private Briefing with Dr Graham Root – 12 January 2022
- Private Briefing with the Director of Public Health and the Director of Public Health Policy – 2 February 2022

P.A.C.3/2022 – Response to COVID-19

- Private Briefing with a Member of the Public Regarding Experiences of Hospitalisation During the COVID-19 Pandemic – 16 February 2022
- Private Briefing with the Director General for Customer and Local Services and Jersey Business – 10 March 2021

Comptroller and Auditor General Reports

- [The COVID-19 Related Emergency Support Scheme – 30 March 2021](#)
 - [Executive Response](#)
- [Management of the Healthcare Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic – 29 April 2021](#)
 - [Executive Response](#)
- [Overall Management of Public Finances During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
 - [Executive Response](#)
- [Procurement and Supply Chain Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic - 1 July 2021](#)
 - [Executive Response](#)
- [Government of Jersey's Support to Businesses During the COVID-19 Pandemic – 24 November 2021](#)
 - [Executive Response](#)

Scrutiny Reports

- [Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel – COVID-19 Response: March – October 2020 \(S.R.13/2021\) – 3 December 2020](#)
- [Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel - COVID-19 Response and Recovery \(S.R.7/2021\) - 17 March 2021](#)
- [Public Accounts Committee - Review of States Annual Report and Accounts 2020 \(P.A.C.1/2021\) - 16 August 2021](#)
 - [Executive Response](#)
- [Public Accounts Committee - COVID-19 Response: Spend Local Scheme \(P.A.C.2/2021\) - 11 October 2021](#)
 - [Executive Response](#)
- [Public Accounts Committee – Performance Management \(P.A.C.2/2022\) – 8 March 2022](#)

Government of Jersey Reporting

- [States Annual Report and Accounts 2020 – 20 May 2021](#)
- [Government Plan 2020-2023 – 22 July 2019](#)
 - [6-Month Progress Review - 5 August 2020](#)
- [Government Plan 2021-2024 – 12 October 2020](#)
 - [Government Plan Mid-Year Review 2021 – 31 August 2021](#)
- [Government Plan 2022-2025 – 21 September 2021](#)

Government of Jersey Reporting on Performance

- [Jersey Performance Framework](#)
- [Performance Measures 2021](#)
- [Departmental Annual Reports 2020](#)
- [Departmental Operational Business Plans 2020](#)
- [Departmental Operational Business Plans 2021](#)
- [Departmental Operational Business Plans 2022](#)

Government of Jersey Publications

- [COVID-19 Strategy – 3 June 2020 \(includes the Terms of Reference for STAC\)](#)
 - [Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell – Terms of Reference – March 2021](#)
 - [Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell – Terms of Reference – September 2021](#)
 - [Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell – Code of Practice – 6 December 2021](#)
 - [Minutes of the Scientific and Advisory Cell](#)
- [Webpage - Emergency planning: roles of responder groups – gov.je](#)
- [Community Risk Register 2014](#)
- [Government support for businesses – gov.je](#)
- [Coronavirus Business Continuity Checklist](#)
- [Government of Jersey COVID-19 Co-Funded Payroll Scheme Phase 5 – Guidance – Version - 10 May 2021](#)

- [Jersey Multi Agency Emergency Measures Plan Response Guide – May 2021](#)

Freedom of Information Responses

- [Freedom of Information Request – Competent Authorities Ministers, Emergencies Council and Council of Ministers meetings – 13 April 2021](#)
- [Freedom of Information - Nightingale Hospital furniture and equipment – 13 September 2021](#)
 - [List of Nightingale Hospital Furniture and Equipment Catalogued and Stored – 13 September 2021](#)
 - [Report- Nightingale Hospital Decommissioning Waste Report \(interim\) – 28 July 2021](#)
- [Freedom of Information - Track, Trace, Testing, Monitoring and Nightingale costs – 26 January 2022](#)



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