



Brighter Futures

Patrons:

Dr Kyd

The Bailiff of Jersey

Sir Timothy Le Cocq

Registered Charity No: 204

Deputy Catherine Curtis

Chair, The Children, Education and Home Affairs Panel

8th November 2023

Dear Deputy Curtis,

As a local registered charity since 2008 who supports families, children and young people in Jersey, we are grateful for the opportunity to provide a written response to the Panel in respect of the Government Plan Review 2024 – 2027.

Working with 150 to 160 families every week in Jersey, Brighter Futures connects with most of the Government Plan priorities on a weekly basis. To date we have supported over 3,100 families, in turn supporting over 12,400 members of the community of Jersey.

Government Plan Review 2024 -2027 / Panel question –

Whether the resources allocated to revenue expenditure growth and capital and other projects are sufficient, ensure value for money and demonstrate best use of public funds?

Brighter Futures is an established Jersey Charity. It is generally recognized that Brighter Futures saves the people of Jersey millions of pounds every year, which has been respectfully acknowledged and quoted by The Bailiff of Jersey and the Chief of Police.

The Children's Commissioner's Office provided the statistics below:

17 children to date this year (as at September 2023) have been 'Looked After' in the UK. The average cost for a child to be cared for off island is quoted as £178K. It costs £83K for education alone per child, £260K for the cost of an average children's home, consequently costing hundreds of thousands per child.

Brighter Futures work with THE WHOLE FAMILY for £5,000 per year at this time.

Our projected costs for 2023 are £1,118,000. Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES) are the only department to support Brighter Futures since 2014. They provided 5% of our funding (after service charge), although as a 'one off payment' they increased this to 28% of our funding in 2023.

We provide a stable and experienced workforce, with 50% of our team employed with us for over 5 years, and 25% of our team employed with us for over 10 years. This continuity helps to provide an excellent service, which we evidence using the Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) Framework.

Sustainable investment in Brighter Futures will save Jersey money.

Until that happens, in my opinion the Government are not currently ensuring value for money and best use of public funds in this area.



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Upgrade to CYPES estates

In 2007, St. Marks School closed, and The Bridge Community Centre was created by Wendy Hurford MBE. Having worked for Education, she wanted to create a charity that supported families. She wanted to help to stop the cycle of deprivation, which she observed regularly through working with families in the education system. Mrs Hurford ensured that The Bridge was financially stable, and in 2008 she created Brighter Futures Charity, then supporting 6 families. To date we have worked with over 3,100 families, and over 12,400 individuals.

Since 2020, The Government has significantly increased the services based at The Bridge, and it is now overcapacity. There are statutory services that appear to use the building for largely administrative roles and could possibly be housed elsewhere in the Government's estate, whether in health buildings or education buildings according to their service. Due to parking, Brighter Futures have clients that cannot access the building, and return home, without accessing this much needed support for themselves and their families. There is an increased challenge to book rooms for meetings, groups and courses, which has potential to affect the model that we offer in the future.

The Government plan discusses:

To improve the condition of the existing CYPES estate, giving the flexibility to reprioritize as needed based on the urgency and readiness of projects in year.

Brighter Futures provides an extensive and supportive service for families, many of whom would not access statutory services, due to previous negative experiences. However, we need to have the space and capacity to continue to offer this service, support families, and as previously discussed, save money for the public purse.

Whilst The Bridge survived the recent hurricane and tornado that has devastated parts of Jersey, it needs some investment to allow it to continue to operate on a long-term basis. There has been very little investment since the building was changed to a Community Centre in 2007, apart from ongoing projects spending money on offices, for the employees to then move off after varied periods of time. This wasted investment has been ongoing for many years, with little or no investment in the shared areas, structure, or the areas used by Brighter Futures and its families.

66% of our client base live in or around The Bridge.

We value any support from CYPES and the Government of Jersey that will enable us to continue to offer our service from our central base for many years to come.



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Brighter Futures – who we are, what we stand for:

Our Vision - To create brighter futures for families in Jersey

Many families in Jersey continue to struggle to make ends meet due to low paid work, lack of affordable childcare and high living costs. When combined with unstable housing, food insecurity, social isolation and for some families, no access to government support, it would be of little surprise that the toxic overload of adversities has led to increasing rates of debt, domestic abuse, substance misuse and untreated mental health problems. We must not lose sight of the huge consequences of these threats to the health and development of our most vulnerable children and their families, now and for years to come. Brighter Futures have continued to respond strategically, operationally and flexibly to these ongoing concerns and to the emerging needs of vulnerable families.

Brighter Futures offers early intervention for the main carer and their whole family, whatever the challenges.

We provide a targeted support service. The parent/main carer in the family is referred to Brighter Futures either by a professional known to them or they can self-refer. We work alongside the main carer to support them with parent-child and family relationships, wellbeing and child development and personal and educational development. This is called the client's 'Journey to Wellbeing.'

High quality early learning that delivers a broad and comprehensive range of knowledge and skills can ensure positive progression through school and beyond to later life. This is of vital importance to children who are vulnerable and/or disadvantaged (in the broadest terms) and who may have had limited opportunities within the first 1001 critical days.

The 1001 Critical Days Manifesto

Originally launched at four party political conferences in October 2013, and then relaunched in Parliament on 14 December 2015, The 1001 Critical Days Manifesto is, 'a vision for the provision of services in the UK for the early years period, which puts forward the moral, scientific and economic case for the importance of the conception to age 2 period.'

Our approach – A strengths based, co-produced and solution focused approach¹

We work with clients acknowledging that they have strengths, skills, resilience and the ability to make informed choices and improve their well-being. Clients develop their strengths, resilience and support networks based upon the assumption that they come for help already in possession of various competencies/resources that may be tapped into that will improve their situation.

¹ Strengths-based practice is a collaborative process between the person supported by services and those supporting them, allowing those providing and being supported, as well as the elements that the person seeking together to them to work determine an outcome that draws on the person's strengths and assets. As such, it concerns itself principally with the quality of the relationship that develops between support brings to the process (Duncan and Hubble, 2000). Working in a collaborative way promotes the opportunity for individuals to be co-producers of services and support rather than solely consumers of those services (Morgan and Ziglio, 2007).



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Quality assured evidence-based programmes

We provide a broad range of evidence-based programmes and groups that are regularly reviewed, monitored, evaluated and quality assured. We seek feedback from clients, their families, referrers and external agencies to ensure that the programmes we offer remain current and relevant to their needs as well as being outcome focused, evidence-based and they are making a difference. We also seek feedback from clients regarding their one-to-one support and their relationship with their key worker and this is done confidentially and independently of the key workers.

One of the Government's important strategic priorities has been clearly identified as 'Putting children first' and if failing to ensure that vulnerable and disadvantaged children are appropriately supported at a stage in their life where it has the greatest potential to be transformative, Jersey is failing to 'Put children first'. A lack of early investment is very expensive to remediate later through intensive support and interventions.

A client's voice

Brighter Futures has given me confidence, comfort, and lots of friends. I feel heard, relaxed, and loved. I was new on the Island, had no emotional support, baby support or guidance on how to deal with this new change. I was lost, depressed, and felt very bad. Brighter Futures helped me with my mental and physical health by enrolling me on the relevant groups like mindfulness, keep fit, walking and growing together group. I cannot thank you enough. I now call Jersey home and that's down to the support received from Brighter Futures.

A referrer's voice

This client has declined support from the Family Support team as she feels that the support, she is receiving from Brighter Futures is a good fit for the family. Mum feels that Brighter Futures has offered her and her child a safe environment and she feels that she is listened to and not judged. She is working at her own pace which reducing her anxiety.

Discussion with adult social care and children's services.

IN CONCLUSION

We have evidenced for over 15 years and over 12,400 individuals, that our model works.

Brighter Futures would ask that we are part of the Govt Plan 2024 - 2027.

Thank you,
Fiona Brennan,
CEO Brighter Futures Charity