



Response - Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel - Review of the Government Plan 2023 - 2026	
Date of Response	Thursday, 10 th November 2022
Prepared By	Catriona McAllister, CEO
Summary of Board Paper	This paper provides a detailed response to the letter received by email on 9 th November 2022. Our answer to each question asked in the letter is outlined below.
What are the key obstacles to Jersey Sport delivering Government's Sports Strategy?	<p>1. Political and Departmental Awareness of Inspiring an Active Jersey</p> <p>The Government Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity was launched in September 2020 and set out a 10-year framework to increase the number of islanders who are physically active enough to support good mental and physical health by 10%. For the Strategy to be successfully delivered, it needs to increase the political understanding of its aims and how it can contribute significantly to the seven priorities for change. Sport and Physical Activity transcends many Government departments and areas of political responsibility and is an enabler of several key GOJ policies and strategies.</p> <p>However, planning and policy for Sport and Physical Activity within Government is almost nonexistent. There is little understanding by politicians or officers about the role of Jersey Sport. There is a lack of subject matter expertise within the Government and no one advocating for the sector. Hopefully, this will improve with the appointment of a Policy Officer for Sport. For Jersey Sport to effectively contribute to the IAJ Strategy, there needs to be a more significant political understanding of support for the Strategy.</p> <p>2. Management Arrangements</p> <p>The Economy Department commissions Jersey Sport through a Partnership Agreement to deliver specific services for other GOJ departments and to provide grants and support to the Sports community. The use of the funds is prescribed and fixed. The management of the Partnership Agreement has been very mixed, and in five years, we have had six different monitoring/Partnership Officers at various levels. The impact of this is that there is little understanding of the remit of</p>

Jersey Sport or even what they are funding us to do. The lack of consistency in approach makes it challenging to build relationships to the point required - that Officers understand our remit and value and are in a position to advocate for us within Government. The individual Officers are always supportive and have worked hard to build up knowledge and understanding, but the frequency of change creates a lack of consistency. It is unclear how we as an organisation can put forward new projects or initiatives for consideration and funding to help deliver against Government priorities.

The lack of understanding of the IAJ strategy and its ambitions and outcomes is also concerning. The Department cannot meaningfully set the parameters for our remit and direct what GOJ requires of us if they don't have a detailed understanding of the Strategy and, more importantly, understand how the sector can contribute to many agendas and priorities. Likewise, they cannot inform and advise the Minister with the depth of knowledge required, which often leads to a misconception about the role of Jersey Sport and how we operate. To their credit, the Department has recognised these issues, and a new Sports Policy role has been created and will commence imminently. Hopefully, this will provide both the depth of knowledge and consistency required to strengthen our partnership with EDTSC.

3. Funding

Jersey Sport developed a Government Plan Business Case 2023-27 for the IAJ elements we are best placed to deliver. This was based on the vision of increasing physical activity by 10% by 2030. Funding increases were focused on projects that target those who are least active and are from underrepresented groups.

Jersey Sport appreciates that we are operating in a challenging financial climate and that increasing funding is difficult. However, having taken considerable time and prepared a compelling case, we have had zero discussion or feedback on the submission. We are not even confident it was ever considered, read or presented to the relevant Ministers. The process is poor, and the arms-length organisation's ability to support the Government is ignored until they need something from us. It often feels like a one-way street.

In short, the IAJ strategy cannot be delivered because it is unfunded. The current funding will not be sufficient to maintain our activity, and cuts in services will be required to

	<p>stay solvent. Our grant has no inflation mechanism; therefore, we will experience a significant cut year after year.</p> <p>The Inspiring Active Places part of the Strategy, which is about building Sports and Wellbeing Facilities, has received limited funding, which is insufficient to move any of the projects forward. It is currently unclear how the development and improvement of sports facilities will be taken forward, meaning this part of IAJ is also stalled.</p> <p>4. Staff Recruitment and Retention</p> <p>The delivery of Sport and Physical Activity programmes is a labour-intensive process, with every activity requiring a minimum of two coaches/instructors. One of our biggest challenges is recruiting and retaining suitably qualified staff. With no inflation on our grant, we are limited in our capacity to provide cost-of-living increases, and with a hot labour market across all sectors, it may be challenging to retain our existing team. We have already had to pause one very popular programme due to staff shortages, and there is a real danger that programmes may not be deliverable.</p>
<p>What funding are you receiving to deliver the Government Sports Strategy?</p>	<p>Jersey Sport currently receives £2.142m. The vast majority of this funding is to provide specific activities to CYPES and Public Health, such as school swimming, PE and Cycling and GP Referral. Around £314k is given to Sports and Schools through grants.</p>
<p>Does the proposed funding in the Government Plan address these adequately?</p>	<p>No. There is no funding increase for Sport or Physical Activity in the Government Plan. As stated above, the IAJ strategy is not achievable and is receiving none of the increased funding requested in the next Government Plan period.</p>
<p>How do you consider Jersey Sport can be improved?</p>	<p>It would be a significant step forward if the GOJ's management of arms-length bodies were improved, and we are pleased that this work is underway. It would help significantly to develop an agreed scope and remit for the organisation's relationship with GOJ that is understood across Government and by Ministers, politicians and the public.</p> <p>Multiple departments regularly approach Jersey Sport to support their work. If there is a Sport or Physical Activity element, it is good that we are seen as the ideal partner for the project. However, this is not done in a coordinated fashion. Therefore, it is difficult for us to business plan for the totality of what we may be asked.</p> <p>It would significantly help our effectiveness and responsiveness if a defined remit for our work with GOJ could</p>

	<p>be developed. Following this, we could undertake an exercise to scope the quantum of what will require from us from GOJ as a whole. This would allow us to undertake a zero-based budgeting process, allowing better alignment between the requirements and associated funding needs.</p>
<p>Do you consider the funding sufficient?</p>	<p>Quite simply, no. As highlighted above, due to inflation, our funding is being eroded. We are developing plans to increase our fundraising capacity significantly, but the services we deliver directly for GOJ should be sufficiently funded through the grant.</p> <p>Additional funding is available for Sport through the lottery proceeds, but as we do not distribute this, there is a missed opportunity to join up thinking, add value to our work and ensure that lottery grants are aligned with the IAJ Strategy. Oddly, the body GOJ set up to manage and develop Sport and who already gives our £314k of grants to the sector is not the distributor of all funding to the Sport and Physical Activity sector. Jersey Sport believes we should administer all sports funding, including the lottery proceeds. This would allow for a single application process for financial support to the sector.</p> <p>The benefits of having islanders play sport and do physical activity is well known. The focus of our work and the IAJ strategy is to ensure opportunities to be active are equitable, and in doing so, contribute significantly to health improvement and social equality; two key Government priorities. It would therefore seem to be counterproductive not to invest in a sector that can do so much to positively impact the Seven Priorities for Change.</p>