

Policy Brief

Government Plan and Common Strategic Policy

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Introduction

On 19 September 2023 the then Council of Ministers published the *Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027*. This was approved, with a few amendments, by the States Assembly on 12 December 2023. The final [Government Plan 2024 - 2027](#) was published on 8 March 2024. The Plan remains in place notwithstanding the election of a new Chief Minister in January 2024. [Ministerial Plans](#) for 2024 were also published on 19 September 2023. Their status is unclear given the establishment of the new Council of Ministers, but at the least give an indication of some of the current issues. The new Council of Ministers is required to publish a Common Strategic Policy by the end of May 2024.

Legal requirements

Article 18(2)(e) of [The States of Jersey Law 2005](#) requires as one of the functions of the Council of Ministers –

agreeing and lodging for referral to one or more Scrutiny Panels established under standing orders and approval by the States, a statement of their common strategic policy.

Article 18 (2A) of the Law requires that –

The Council of Ministers must lodge the statement of their common strategic policy under paragraph (2)(e) –

- (a) no later than the day on which the first government plan is lodged; and
- (b) within 4 months of their appointment under Article 19(7).

Article 9 (1) of the [Public Finances \(Jersey\) Law 2019](#) requires that -

Each financial year, the Council of Ministers must prepare a government plan and lodge it in sufficient time for the States to debate and approve it before the start of the next financial year.

The remainder of Article 9 sets out in detail what must be included in the plan in respect of financial information.

Common Strategic Policy

The then Council of Ministers published its Proposed Common Strategic Policy in October 2022. This was agreed as amended by the States Assembly on 23 November 2022 and published in February 2023 as [Common Strategic Policy 2023 - 2026](#). This set out seven strategic priorities for the term of office of the Council of Ministers.

- **Housing and Cost of Living.** Improve access to, and supply of, good-quality affordable housing, and help people to achieve a decent standard of living.
- **Economy and Skills.** Develop a more sustainable, innovative, outward-facing and prosperous economy and help people acquire the right skills throughout their lives; we want Jersey to be an attractive place for everyone to achieve their potential.
- **Children and Families.** Help all children and young people to have the best start in life, recognising that the early years have a lasting impact, and that being loved, being listened to, and receiving a good, rounded education are essential to future life chances.
- **Ageing Population.** Enable people to live active, independent, healthy lives as they live longer.
- **Health and Wellbeing.** Provide and regulate good quality healthcare and social services, promoting better health and wellbeing underpinned by improvements in public health.
- **Environment.** Protect and enhance our urban, rural and marine environment so that everyone can continue to enjoy its benefits, moving purposefully and fairly on a path to net zero emissions.

- **Community.** Create a more inclusive, vibrant community where people feel respected and able to flourish, as well as safe and protected.

On 26 January 2024 Deputy Lyndon Farnham was elected Chief Minister. His Council of Ministers will be required to publish a Common Strategy Policy, for consideration by the States Assembly, by the end of May 2024.

As a candidate for Chief Minister Deputy Farnham was required to publish a statement of his vision for Jersey. His [statement](#) gives a good indication of what will be in the Common Strategic Policy. The key points are set out below -

My vision for Jersey is for an island that provides a high quality and a more affordable way of life for all residents.

To create a thriving and sustainable community that embraces its unique natural beauty, rich heritage, and vibrant culture, while also being a sought-after destination for visitors from around the world.

In this vision, Jersey will be a place where innovation and entrepreneurship flourish, creating opportunities for economic growth and prosperity.

We have lost our way. Government is too cumbersome, it tries to do too much and achieves little. We must slim down. We must identify our major problems and solve them one by one.

Healthcare and Education. I will prioritise healthcare and education which must be of the highest standard, providing our residents with access to the best possible facilities and services.

Affordable Housing. I will prioritise affordable housing. Affordable housing is a critical component of any thriving community. It is the foundation for ensuring that individuals and families of all income levels have access to safe, decent, and affordable homes. Affordable housing plays a vital role in promoting social equity, economic stability, and overall well-being. We must solve this.

Economy. The development of sustainable industries that respect and protect our environment, ensuring that future generations can continue to enjoy the island's natural beauty.

Community. We will foster a strong sense of community, promoting safety, inclusivity and diversity, and supporting the well-being of all individuals.

Heritage. Preserving and celebrating our unique heritage will be a key part of our vision. We will protect and maintain our historical sites, while also embracing modern developments that enhance our cultural offerings. Jersey will be a place where tradition and innovation coexist harmoniously. Our island will be known for its commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

Renewable energy. We will strive to be a leader in renewable energy, waste management, and conservation efforts. Through sustainable practices and responsible tourism, we must preserve our natural resources for generations to come.

External Relations and International Development. How the outside world perceives us is incredibly important. Maintaining strong external relations is vital for Jersey's development and prosperity. The benefits span across various aspects of the island's economy, culture, tourism, and international cooperation. By actively engaging with the global community, Jersey can unlock new opportunities, showcase its unique identity, contribute to global issues, and enhance its reputation on the international stage. One of the key requirements of the Chief Minister is to represent Jersey on the international stage, an area in which I have extensive experience.

Working together. The States Assembly consists of individuals from various backgrounds representing different parishes and constituencies, parties and other groups. When legislators work together constructively they bring a wide range of expertise to the policy development process. Future collaboration will ensure that policy discussions are inclusive and consider multiple view points leading to more and comprehensive policies that will better address the needs of Islanders. My commitment is to ensure that as an Assembly and as a Government we work together with respect and courtesy.

Government Plan 2024-2027

On 19 September 2023 the then Council of Ministers published the *Proposed Government Plan 2024-2027*. This was approved, with a few amendments, by the States Assembly on 12 December 2023. The final [Government Plan 2024 - 2027](#) was published on 8 March 2024. The Plan remains in place notwithstanding the election of a new Chief Minister in January 2024. The executive summary lists six highlights –

- General revenue income - £1.2bn
- Government spending on delivering services to Islanders - £1.16bn
- Spending on buildings and infrastructure - £113bn
- New healthcare facilities - £52m

- Increased single person allowance in 2024 - £20,000
- Balance in the Strategic Reserve - £1.1bn.

The Plan then has a section “delivering on our priorities” under seven headings –

Housing and cost of living

- Tax allowances increased by 7.7%.
- Increasing the rate of homeownership with £10m of government support.
- Improving standards of rental properties through the new landlord licensing scheme.

Economy and skills

- Implementing a new economic strategy which will help ensure Islanders enjoy a better standard of living in 2040 than they do today.
- Supporting technological innovation through the Impact Jersey Scheme.
- £4.2 million new investment in rural and marine sectors.

Children and families

- £2.6 million new funding for frontline services to support children and young people.
- Expanding the free primary school meals project to all States schools
- Continuing investment in facilities, including Mont a L’Abbe secondary school and Le Squez youth club.

Ageing population

- Continuing to develop the older persons living forum to make sure that the older community are included in government decision making.
- Developing the Jersey Pension Saver to improve financial well-being in old age.
- Reinstating £77m government funding to the Social Security Fund to support the state pension.

Health and well-being

- Continued funding for reduced GP fees funded from the Health Insurance Fund.
- Focus on recruitment and retention of frontline staff in health and education.
- £24m new funding for health service pressures and public health.

Environment

- Responding to the Climate Emergency through initiatives such as the ebike scheme and low carbon heating incentive.
- Delivering the first phase of the Carbon Neutral roadmap to deliver our overall objective of being a net zero Island by 2050.
- Speeding up Jersey's transition to electric vehicles through the Electric Vehicle Purchase Scheme.

Community

- Partnering with charities and community groups to deliver activities that improve Islanders' well-being through the community compass scheme.
- Dedicating 1% of government spending to Arts, Heritage and Culture.
- Spending a total of £11.7 M on renovating the Jersey Opera House.

Spending by department is as follows –

£286m	Health and Community Services
£206m	Children, Young People, Education and Skills
£160m	Treasury and Exchequer*
£107m	Customer and Local Services
£77m	Cabinet Office
£57m	Infrastructure
£40m	Justice and Home Affairs
£37m	Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture
£27m	States of Jersey Police
£20m	Overseas aid
£11m	Environment
£11m	Financial Services
£3m	Ministry of External relations
£43m	Non-Ministerial and other States Bodies

*Includes £94.9m grants to the Social Security Fund and Long Term Care Fund.

Capital expenditure of £113m includes –

£45.7m	Estates
£30m	Infrastructure
£20m	IT
£10.6m	Replacement assets
£6.7m	Feasibility and contingency

Expenditure from Social Security Funds of £452 million includes –

£320m	Pensions and other benefits
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£80m
£52m

Long Term Care benefits
Health benefits