



JERSEY AUDIT OFFICE

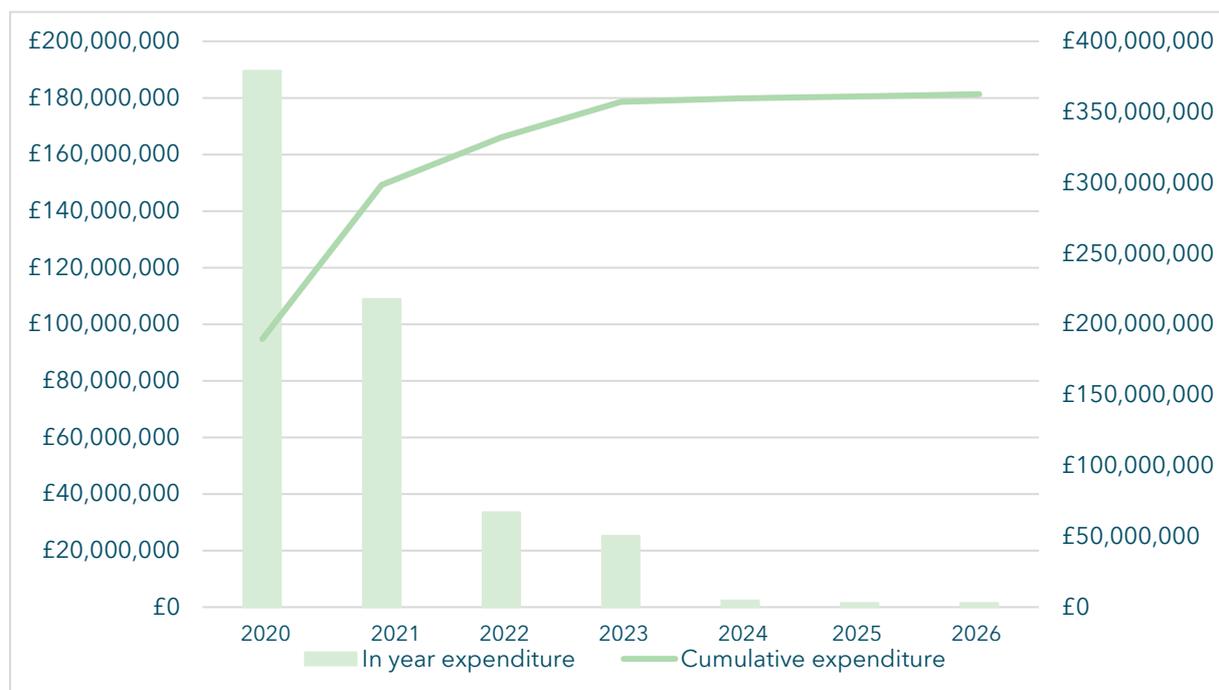
Economic, Social and Health-related Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic

Project Specification

Background

The rapidly evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly during 2020 and 2021, called for an extraordinary response from Government as it has sought to save lives and protect health and livelihoods in Jersey. During 2020 and 2021 the primary focus of Government was on implementing emergency measures to protect Islanders. Towards the later stages of 2021 the focus shifted to include recovery and, in particular, addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy, on social issues and on health-related issues. The total projected costs of the Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2026 is estimated as £363 million as shown in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1: COVID-19 related expenditure



Source: Jersey Audit Office Analysis of States of Jersey Accounts and Government Plans

The key elements of the expenditure that relate to economic, social and health-related recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2023 are summarised in Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2: Costs relating to economic, social and health-related recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic

	2020 £000	2021 £000	2022 £000	2023 £000
Economic measures				
COVID-19 income support and Co-Funded Payroll Scheme	106,120	30,690	5,301	-
Economic Recovery	-	12,448	3,700	-
Economic Stimulus	11,638	-	-	-
Economic Support	1,997	-	-	-
Fiscal Stimulus projects	-	7,400	11,600	-
Social measures				
Social recovery allocation	-	-	3,769	2,670
Children's mental health and wellbeing	214	955	-	-
Schools catch up package	199	1,082	-	-
Health-related measures				
HCS service recovery costs due to COVID-19	-	1,716	1,296	2,570
HCS COVID-19 recovery			6,476	

Source: Jersey Audit Office analysis of States of Jersey Accounts and Government Plans

Economy

The Co-Funded Payroll Scheme (CFPS) was the Government's primary response to the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CFPS represented the biggest economic intervention made by Government in Jersey's history. At its peak, the CFPS supported more than 15,000 jobs and 3,500 businesses at a monthly cost of £21 million. One of the key objectives of the CFPS was to support a robust economic recovery with the aim of enabling nominal Gross Value Added (GVA) in each of Jersey's sectors to return to pre-crisis (2019) levels by 2022 at the latest.

Other economic recovery schemes were also put in place to support businesses. These included the Fixed Costs Support Scheme, the Business Disruption Loan Guarantee Scheme and sector-specific schemes.

On 18 November 2020, the States agreed to establish a £50 million Fiscal Stimulus Fund to support economic recovery. The Fund was intended to provide targeted, temporary funding for projects at no more than £5 million per project. It was expected that the projects would be completed by December 2021. The Fiscal Stimulus Fund was reduced to £29,641,000 in an amendment to the Government Plan 2022-25.

Social

COVID-19 Health and Social Recovery plans were developed in recognition of the wider health and wellbeing impacts of the pandemic. A Political Oversight Group was convened to select projects for 2022 and 2023.

Projects identified for support include:

- early years support for 0-5 year olds and their families whose normal development has been negatively affected by the pandemic
- Children and Young People's Education, Health and Wellbeing projects aimed at working to ensure children who have been impacted by changes in learning do not fall behind
- children's dental health: access for children who had dental care delayed while these services were closed
- targeted adult learning for those most impacted by isolation, disconnection and employment disruption; and
- access to appropriate treatment, community services and self-help support for those with Long COVID.

Health-related

In early 2021 the Health and Community Services department (HCS) produced a recovery plan for all services materially affected by COVID-19 disruption. All HCS services were reviewed and those that had been particularly impacted by COVID-19 outlined their plans to return to pre-COVID business as usual positions.

The Functions of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG)

Article 11 of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Jersey) Law 2014 requires the C&AG to:

- provide the States with independent assurance that the public finances of Jersey are being regulated, controlled, supervised and accounted for in accordance with the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2005
- consider and report to the States on:
 - the effectiveness of internal controls of the States, States funded bodies and funds
 - the economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the way the States, States funded bodies and funds use their resources; and
 - the general corporate governance arrangements of the States, States funded bodies and funds; and
- make recommendations to bring about improvement where improvement is needed.

Objectives of this review

The review will evaluate:

- whether clear and measurable objectives were set out for schemes and funds established to achieve economic, social and health-related recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic
- whether appropriate controls were put in place to implement the schemes and funds in an effective way
- how the Government managed and monitored the delivery of the schemes and funds; and
- whether the schemes and funds have achieved their stated aims.

Scope

The review will build on previous C&AG reports relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular the review will include a follow up on the recommendations made in the following C&AG reports:

- *The COVID-19 Related Emergency Support Scheme (June 2021)*
- *Government support to businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic - Co-Funded Payroll Scheme (November 2021); and*
- *Government support to businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic - other schemes (November 2021).*

The objectives and/or scope of the review may be amended in the course of the review in the light of emerging findings or other matters arising.

Approach

The review will commence with an initial documentation request. The findings of the document review will be followed up by interviews with key officers and potentially with other stakeholders.

The review will commence in March 2023.

The detailed work will be undertaken by affiliates engaged by the C&AG.



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