

STATES OF JERSEY



PROPOSED BUDGET (GOVERNMENT PLAN) 2026-2029 (P.70/2025): THIRTY- FIRST AMENDMENT (P.70/2025 AMD.(31)) – AMENDMENT

**Lodged au Greffe on 1st December 2025
by Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement
Earliest date for debate: 8th December 2025**

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSED BUDGET (GOVERNMENT PLAN) 2026-2029 (P.70/2025):
THIRTY-FIRST AMENDMENT (P.70/2025 AMD.(31)) – AMENDMENT

1 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH 1 –

For the figure “£250,000” substitute the figure “£25,000”.

After the words “empty residential properties” insert the words “, such policy to be developed in-house with funding available for minor external input only if required”.

DEPUTY A.F. CURTIS OF ST. CLEMENT

Note: After this amendment, the amendment would read as follows –

After the words "Appendix 2 – Summary Table 5(i) and (ii) of the Report", insert the words –

“, except that, in “Summary Table 5(i) – Revenue Heads of Expenditure”, £25,000 of the Cabinet Office Head of Expenditure for 2026 should be reserved as a ring-fenced budget line for the development of policy mechanisms to address empty residential properties, such policy to be developed in-house with funding available for minor external input only if required, with this funding not to be drawn from the existing Housing budget within the Cabinet Office Head of Expenditure”.

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

- (a) In accordance with Article 16 of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019 (the Law) to approve an amendment to the Government Plan 2025 – 2028 (entitled “Budget 2025 – 2028”) to a reduction in the 2025 head of expenditure “Grants to States Funds” as included in Table 5(i) Revenue Heads of Expenditure of that Government Plan from £119,821,000 to £69,821,000.
- (b) To receive the Government Plan 2026 – 2029 (entitled “Budget 2026-2029”) specified in Article 9(1) of the Law and specifically –
 - i. to approve the estimate of total States income to be paid into the Consolidated Fund in 2026 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 1 to the Report, which is inclusive of the proposed taxation and impôts duties changes outlined in the Government Plan, in line with Article 9(2)(a) of the Law.
 - ii. to refer to their Act dated 24th June 2003 in which they approved that no new ‘user pays’ charges be introduced without any such charge receiving prior in principle approval by the States Assembly and accordingly to approve the introduction of two new charges, to

be levied by Health and Care Jersey to promote appropriate use of the Emergency Department and for repeated non-attendance of outpatient appointments, detailed in the section entitled “Departmental Income Sources” as set out in the Appendix to the accompanying Report.

- iii. to approve the proposed Changes to Approval for financing/borrowing for 2026, as shown in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 2 to the Report, which may be obtained by the Minister for Treasury and Resources, as and when required, in line with Article 9 (2)(c) of the Law, of up to those revised approval amounts.
- iv. to approve the transfers from one States fund to another for 2026 of up to and including the amounts set in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 3 in line with Article 9(2)(b) of the Law.
- v. to approve a transfer from the Consolidated Fund to the Stabilisation Fund in 2026 of up to £50 million, subject to a decision of the Minister for Treasury and Resources based on the availability of funds in the Consolidated Fund as at 31st December 2025 in excess of the estimates provided in this plan, or from budgeted underspends identified before 31st December 2026.
- vi. to approve a transfer from the Consolidated Fund to the Agricultural Loans Fund in 2026 of up to £5 million, subject to a decision of the Minister for Treasury and Resources based on availability of funds in the Consolidated Fund as at 31st December 2025 in excess of estimates provided in this plan, or from budgeted underspends identified before 31st December 2026;
- vii. to approve each major project that is to be started or continued in 2026 and the total cost of each such project and any amendments to the proposed total cost of a major project under a previously approved Government Plan, in line with Article 9(2)(d), (e) and (f) of the Law and as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 4 to the Report.
- viii. to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from the Consolidated Fund for 2026, for each head of expenditure, being gross expenditure less estimated income (if any), in line with Articles 9(2)(g), 10(1) and 10(2) of the Law, and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Tables 5(i) and (ii) of the Report, **except that, in “Summary Table 5(i) – Revenue Heads of Expenditure”, £25,000 of the Cabinet Office Head of Expenditure for 2026 should be reserved as a ring-fenced budget line for the development of policy mechanisms to address empty residential properties, such policy to be developed in-house with funding available for minor external input only if required, with this funding not to be drawn from the existing Housing budget within the Cabinet Office Head of Expenditure.**

- ix. to approve the estimated income, being estimated gross income less expenditure, that each States trading operation will pay into its trading fund in 2026 in line with Article 9(2)(h) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 6 to the Report.
- x. to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from each States trading operation’s trading fund for 2026 for each head of expenditure in line with Article 9(2)(i) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 7 to the Report.
- xi. to approve the estimated income and expenditure proposals for the Climate Emergency Fund for 2026 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 8 to the Report.
- xii. to approve, in accordance with Article 9(1) of the Law, the Government Plan 2026-2029, as set in the Appendix to the accompanying Report.

REPORT

This is a simple amendment to the [31st Amendment](#) to the [Proposed Budget \(Government Plan\) 2026-2029](#), lodged by the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure (EHI) Scrutiny panel, that seeks to ringfence funding for policy development to address vacant/empty residential properties.

I am a member of the EHI Scrutiny Panel and I personally support the policy direction that is proposed by this amendment – the reasons for bringing which are in the main amendment report. I also consider that a smaller ringfenced budget and a commitment to use existing officer resource for policy development is a clearer and pragmatic way to deliver policy in this area.

As stated in the amendment report, there is a mandate to deliver mechanisms to dissuade vacant residential property from [P.48/2022](#). There is further evidence the assembly should pursue this from the findings of the Jersey Youth Assembly (JYA).

That said, I believe that across Government (and other bodies like the parishes), we do have skill and knowledge in this area to develop and investigate the key options.

It is key that all States Members support a culture in Government of lean and proportionate working, to ensure we can deliver within our financial means. The allocation of £250,000 at this point appears disproportionate to the stated goals.

Since 2026 is an election year, it is inevitable that final policy direction and agreement will come from the next Assembly. It is appropriate they are given policy mechanisms to work with, but it is not worthwhile designing these in detail to the point of legislation (if needed) without a clear mandate on what mechanisms to achieve the goal of ‘dissuading vacant residential properties’ are politically supported by that assembly.

I have nonetheless left some money in - £25,000, that could reasonably fund a targeted piece of work on a specific area or mechanism that may need external support.

This is an opportunity to return to nimble, agile policy development. Constraining the ringfenced budget should encourage Government to be ambitious and creative in utilising existing resource, such as secondments, leveraging the public more, and using academics over consultants.

Financial and staffing implications

The direct financial implication will be to reduce the allocated ‘ringfenced’ funding for this policy development by £225,000 as compared to Amendment 31. It still retains an obligation on Cabinet Office or other departments’ officer resource to deliver policy work which will have a financial implication.

Children’s Rights Impact Assessment

I consider that this proposition (amendment) has no direct or indirect impact on children and that the duty to have due regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child does not arise. Accordingly, a Children's Rights Impact Assessment is not required under the Children (Conventions Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022.