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AJC report calls for stronger partnerships between Jersey charities and Government

A new landmark report published this week by the Association of Jersey Charities (AJC) has called for more effective collaboration between the Government and local charities, longer-term funding mechanisms, and greater political recognition of the value charities add to society.

The report, *The Power of Partnerships – A review of how Government and Charities work together*, examines the vital relationship between the Government of Jersey and the Island's charity sector.

Based on in-depth research involving almost 90 local charities, the report highlights the current state of partnerships between charities and government as well as areas for improvement and key opportunities to enhance more effective collaboration for the benefit of Islanders.

In particular, the report makes the case that successful partnerships between charities and Government are essential to addressing Jersey's most pressing social issues. It argues that charities are highly trusted institutions, with unparalleled expertise and insight into community needs, while Government holds the resources, influence, and policymaking ability to enact change.

The report argues that more effective collaboration is needed - built on trust, respect, and long-term strategic planning - to maximise impact and drive positive outcomes for the community. The AJC invites charities, Government representatives, and stakeholders to engage in dialogue about the report's findings and work collaboratively to implement its recommendations.

Structured into three key areas - Funding, Partnerships, and Opportunities – the report presents an honest and balanced assessment of the current state of Government-charity relations. Key findings include:

- **Funding Challenges:** Short-term, annual funding cycles create financial instability, stifle innovation and are inefficient. Government funding confirmations are often delayed with some charities receiving notification of million-pound grants as late as December, and others having funding withdrawn at late notice. These current practices expose charities to financial risk and operational strain.
- **Strong funder relationships equal good partnerships:** Charities with strong working relationships with their Government funding contact feel more valued as partners, they feel that their expertise is respected, they have adult-to-adult dialogue and that their Government contact will advocate for them.
- **Inconsistencies in Commissioning and Grants:** A lack of clarity and uniformity in Government funding processes creates inconsistent funding experiences for charities. Government is making progress in this area but more needs to be done.
- **Stronger Political Support Needed:** Charities call for greater political recognition and a dedicated ministerial role to drive development of the sector. More political focus is needed on championing the sector's value and involving it more in policy development.
- **Barriers in Government Systems:** While some charities report excellent partnership experiences, others report systemic challenges, including slow decision-making, lack of accountability, and difficulties navigating Government structures.
- **Power Dynamics and Trust Issues:** Charities often feel undervalued, with concerns about speaking out due to potential repercussions.
- **Opportunities for Social Value and Procurement:** Government can better leverage its procurement power to support charities, creating a more circular economy that benefits both public services and the voluntary sector.

Pointing to the UK Government's recent commitment to a "new beginning" in its relationship with the third sector, recognising the "dynamism" and "trusted reach" of charities, Marcus Liddiard, Chair of the AJC, said:

"This report provides balanced and honest feedback as to the current state of the partnership experiences that local charities have with the Government. It praises those areas where the partnership is going well whilst also recognising where improvements could, and should, be made. The AJC hopes this report will serve as a catalyst for meaningful development. It aims to inform Government policy, support the Public Accounts Committee's scrutiny review into procurement, and help shape the development of the cross-Government Commissioning and Partnership Strategy.

"The relationship between Government and charities is crucial for our Island's success. This report outlines clear steps for improvement and provides a roadmap for genuine collaboration that maximises impact. Charities and the Government both have a part to play in delivering on more effective

collaboration and by working together strategically and equitably, we can ensure better outcomes for all Islanders.”

Key recommendations for next steps set out in the report include:

1. **Adopt Multi-Year and Index-Linked Funding** to ensure financial stability for charities.
2. **Increase Political Recognition and Advocacy** for charities to drive development of the sector and improve partnership experiences. Consider a Charity Minister role.
3. **Address Power Imbalances** and commit to transparent, respectful, and trust-based partnerships.
4. **Develop a Standardised Approach to Measuring Social Value** and support charities in tracking their impact.
5. **Improve Procurement Access for Charities** by providing training to enable charities to become Government suppliers.
6. **Improve Government Funding Mechanisms** by implementing capacity-building funding, cross-departmental funding, and a centralised grants portal.

After reviewing the report, the Chief Minister, Deputy Lyndon Farnham, said:

“We warmly welcome this report and the positive suggestions for how charities and the Government can improve the way they work together. Jersey is immensely fortunate to have such a broad range of charities, many supported by teams of volunteers and we recognise the value of this to our community.

‘Not only are they essential to Island life, but charities also provide excellent value for taxpayers’ money. Last year more than £30 million of public funding was distributed to the sector, through the Government, as donations or grants for the many vital services charities deliver to islanders.

‘We look forward to working with the Association of Jersey Charities and its members.’”

The full report is available at

[https://www.jerseycharities.org/site/userfiles/The%20Power%20of%20Partnerships%20March%202020%25\)%20FINAL.pdf](https://www.jerseycharities.org/site/userfiles/The%20Power%20of%20Partnerships%20March%202020%25)%20FINAL.pdf).

Ends.

For more information please visit www.jerseycharities.org or contact the administrator, Lyn Wilton on 01534 840138 or lyn@jerseycharities.org

Notes to Editors

Methodology

Research for *The Power of Partnerships* was conducted in November and December 2024. The review used a mix of research techniques, including interviews, a questionnaire and desk research. 87 charities participated in the research, including 28 one-to-one interviews, 4 written responses to interview questions, and 83 questionnaire responses, with 28 charities completing both an interview or written response and the questionnaire. The majority of participating charities were small to medium in terms of income. The most common charitable purposes recorded were health (31%), community (22%), children and young people (25%).

About the AJC

- The AJC is the representative body of charitable organisations operating in Jersey. Please visit www.jerseycharities.org, FB @ajcjersey or Twitter.
- Its 250+ members represent a wide and diverse section of island life and range from large organisations providing essential services to smaller organisations representing the needs and concerns of particular groups within Jersey
- The Association's objectives are to encourage and facilitate charitable and community work in Jersey; to encourage co-operation and co-ordination of activities between members and prospective members; to administer the distribution of funds to members, principally made available as a result of the Jersey share of the Channel Islands' Lottery profits; to develop and administer a programme of education and information to benefit members and to assist and represent its members, both individually and as a whole.