

The Power of Partnership

A review of how Government and Charities work together



The Association of Jersey Charities (AJC) is an independent charity and member organisation that advocates on behalf of its charity members and the sector. The AJC has 250 member charities, representing a wide and diverse section of Island life and ranging from large organisations providing essential services to smaller organisations representing the needs and concerns of particular groups within Jersey.

The AJC'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.

This report can be found on the Association of Jersey Charities website: www.jerseycharities.org

All information contained in this report is current at the date of publication. This report has been written by the Association of Jersey charities, the questionnaire and interview data included was collated by the Association of Jersey Charities. All other external sources have been referenced.

This review would not have been possible without the organisations and individuals who shared their experiences with us. Their involvement does not in any way indicate their endorsement of the report's conclusions or recommendations.

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Report by Association of Jersey Charities: 7 March 2025

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Introduction

Government and charities need each other, their relationship is crucial to addressing the most difficult social issues that Islanders face. Charities are often best placed to deliver services on behalf of Government and our community. Charities are the most trusted public institutions in Jersey¹ and have unparalleled access to the views and needs of Islanders. Charities can be more agile than Government, and the people who work for them are skilled experts in their field, driven by passion.

Government is, of course, the most influential institution on our Island and it has extensive reach. It makes political decisions and drafts laws, policies and strategies that impact the whole community. It is a key funding partner for charities and has responsibility for regulating the sector. As one charity we spoke to said: “We [must] work with government because they have so much control and influence...for us to make maximum impact on the Island, we have to work with government.”

UK Prime Minister, Keir Starmer, recently announced a “new beginning” in the relationship between UK Government and the Third Sector to “tackle some of society’s most pressing issues”. He spoke of the “dynamism” and “trusted reach” charities have, and how effective partnership working can “[help] to deliver the defining missions of [the] government, driving economic growth and opening up opportunity for all”.²

The same principles apply in Jersey and getting the relationship right between Government and charities is key to a healthy, vibrant and progressive Island, and the timing has never been more critical.

The impact of the rising cost of living and spikes in inflation is being felt across our community. Charities and Government are operating in the most challenging of economic circumstances and both are facing higher demand for services. The solution is effective partnership working based on principles of mutual trust and respect.

While there is evidence of some strong Government and charity partnerships in Jersey, there are many that could be more effective. The Association of Jersey Charities (AJC), on behalf of its members and the sector, decided the time was right to address this.³ The AJC has set out to provide a balanced and transparent view of the current partnership experience: what is working well; where there can be improvement; and, where the opportunities are to create more impact by working together.

We want this report to influence policy and systems change. We hope it helps inform the Public Account Committee’s Scrutiny Review into procurement and the Government’s drafting of a cross Government Commissioning and Partnership Strategy. There are a number of recommendations in the report that, if implemented, will improve Government-charity relations and ultimately lead to better results for our community. It is also hoped the report builds on the momentum of *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* report, and that of the charity Health and Care CEO Forum.

There is an opportunity in Jersey to make significant impact by Government and charities working better together. We hope this report provides the scaffolding and focus to accomplish this.

We extend our warmest thanks to everyone who has contributed to our review. We hope this report is received in the spirit with which it has been crafted, to support the development of Government-charity relations to benefit everyone – politicians, officers, charities and most importantly, the community we all serve. We welcome a response from Government to our recommendations and hope we can work in partnership to address some of the key issues detailed in this report.

¹ Statistics Jersey (Dec 2024) *Jersey Opinion and Lifestyle Survey Report 2024*. Jersey. Pg.76

² Department for Culture, Media and Sport (17 Oct 2024) *Press release: Government Partners with Civil Society to Transform Lives Across the UK*. UK Parliament.UK.

³ The Association of Jersey Charities is an independent charity and member organisation that advocates on behalf of its charity members and the sector.

Executive Summary

This report is structured into three main chapters: Funding, Partnerships and Opportunities. This Executive Summary outlines the key findings in each chapter.

It should be noted that this report captures a moment in time. Relationships are dynamic and things can change quickly. We hope to have captured is an overview of the key issues and opportunities relating to Government-charity relations as they are now.

Funding

In Chapter One we review the experience of 30 charities funded by Government. We found that Government-charity partnerships face challenges, particularly with short-term funding cycles, lack of multi-year commitments, and inconsistent commissioning practices. To address these issues, we recommend that multi-year, index-linked funding arrangements be standardised, and that a more transparent approach to funding is adopted. We also suggest exploring cross-departmental funding processes and the creation of a grants portal to streamline funding access for charities.

Funding partnerships - Key Findings

Multi-year and index-linked annual uplifts should be standardised for charities to ensure financial sustainability.

More definition and guidance is needed around different types of Government funding.

Charities need more support in how to negotiate funding arrangements.

There is a need for a variety of Government funding mechanisms and models for charities, including capacity-building funding, cross-departmental funding and a grants portal. This will support innovation and sustainability.

There are many reasons why Government procure services from charities. Charities are often best placed to deliver services, they offer value for money, social value and high-quality service delivery. As not-for-profits, charities direct their funding to charitable activity and not into the pockets of shareholders. Providing funding to charities supports a local, circular economy where funds stay within our community. Charities are different from other suppliers, they offer different value, and in many cases, we would argue, should be the preferred Government supplier for that reason. However, the funding experience for charities is inconsistent and could be improved.

One of the biggest causes of frustration and stress among charities is around the processes of short-term funding cycles, with some charities reliant on annual grants of over £1million, not receiving confirmation until December the year before the funding is due. This exposes charities to significant financial risk in a sector where cash flow is so critical, and can deter those who would otherwise fund or work for the charity. Multi-year funding arrangements must be standard, and an index-linked annual uplift must be included for charities to be sustainable.

Attention needs to be given to the inconsistent approach to commissioning and grants across Government. There is confusion among funded charities around what is commissioned and what is a grant. The Comptroller and Auditor General says that several local grant awards “could arguably fall within a definition of commissioning services”.⁴ It is hoped the forthcoming cross Government Commissioning and Partnership Strategy will provide more clarity.

A number of charities spoke of agreed funding arrangements being withdrawn last minute, or funds taking months to be received. They spoke of operating skeleton staffing structures while waiting for funding confirmation, of pending redundancies or even insolvency risk. No organisation can work effectively in this way. It puts charities under significant pressure and exposes them to financial risk.

⁴ Comptroller and Auditor General (July 2024) *Commissioning of Services Jersey*. Jersey Audit Office. Pg.12

Charities are key delivery partners for Government and should be treated with more respect than the current funding practices demonstrate.

Government and charities need to work together to ensure charities have the financial security to be a good partner. One way is through capacity-building funding. Funding of core costs can help charities focus unrestricted income towards building reserves and financial security. Levels of reserves across the sector are alarmingly low and charities are eating into these to address current cost of living pressures. Four charities we spoke with had received funding from Government that had enabled them to build stronger financial foundations. This approach works and should be considered more widely.

There needs to be a process for cross-departmental Government funding. Several charities we spoke with were not Government funded because they sit across multiple departments. Cross-departmental working should be possible, and Government are moving towards this, although more needs to be done. Charities also spoke of the opportunity of Government establishing a grant portal to support cross-departmental funding bids, innovation and transparency.

Partnerships

In Chapter Two we review the experience of 52 charities which work in partnership with Government via cluster groups, workshops, sitting on boards, strategy development and other mechanisms. Charities value relationships with Ministers but report challenges, including poor communication from officers and a lack of clarity in Government systems. We recommend fostering political championing of charities and a strategic shift to recognise charities as equal partners, not just vehicles of relief. Additionally, addressing power imbalances and creating more opportunities for charities to be involved in policy development will strengthen Government-charity relations and ultimately benefit the community.

Other partnership working - Key Findings

Charities need more political recognition and advocacy to develop the sector, its relationship with Government and the societal impact that can be made through effective partnerships.

Charities should be involved in policy development and identifying need.

There are barriers to success in how charities and Government work together, that if addressed, would free up charitable time to drive innovation in the sector.

Charities need more understanding of who to approach in Government for what. They need a single point of contact or a Partnership Hub, that has accountability for partnership experiences and can facilitate decision making.

Government and charities should address their partnership relations, including power dynamics, inequalities and how to demonstrate they value each other.

We recommend the development of a partnership strategy or framework that supports positive partnership working.

Charities greatly value access to Ministers and the relationships they can build with politicians. There was a strong feeling that more needs to be done politically to recognise and champion the value that charities provide and to politically sponsor reports like this one, perhaps with a Charities Minister role. Charities need to help Government shift its perspective from charities as “vehicles of relief” to that of strategic partners.

Charities are rarely engaged in supporting policy development or identifying need. Charities are the most trusted institution in our community, Government and the States Assembly are much less trusted.⁵ Charities can support Government to enhance public trust in policy making, they have unparalleled access to the most marginalised and vulnerable on our Island and are a gateway for determining need and developing solutions. They can connect those with lived experience directly with policy design or

⁵ Jersey Opinion and Lifestyle Survey Report 2024 (Dec 2024) Pg.76

can advocate on behalf of their service users. Government should work more closely with charities to better understand need and create policies informed and trusted by the communities they support.

There are some very strong working relationships between charities and Government. The Director of Local Services and his team were recognised by many charities as key advocates and supporters. However, charities felt more was needed to understand and navigate Government systems and bureaucracy. They also spoke of barriers to success, including a working culture where over-stretched officers don't reply to emails or meeting requests and of a lack of accountability, decision making, and transparency. These barriers stall projects and put strain on partnerships.

The power dynamic between Government and charities was evident in our research. Charities spoke of a fear of saying anything negative and walking on eggshells. Charities spoke of not being treated as equals, of professional opinions and charitable time not being respected, or of being treated as an extension of a Government department. This must be addressed. Government needs charities because of their expertise, agility and connections, as well as their efficiency and efficacy. Good partnerships are built on mutual trust, respect, equality and transparency. We recommend charities and Government actively address partnership inequalities.

Government and charities could achieve much more together if partnership working was supported at a strategic level. We recommend looking at the work that is being done in the UK towards a Civil Society Covenant and consider the development of a partnership strategy or framework to support working together to maximise partnership impact and address society's most pressing issues.

Opportunities

Chapter Three identifies opportunities for increasing the impact of Government-charity partnerships. There should be more consideration of social value and how charities can help the Government achieve its social, environmental and economic goals. We recommend that Government embrace a broader definition of value for money that includes social value, work with charities to standardise social value measurement, and provide more opportunities for charities to engage in Government procurement. Additionally, Government can leverage its procurement power to support charities financially.

Opportunities - Key Findings

Charities and Government need a standardised approach to measuring and reporting social value. This should be supported with training.

Government should consider expanding its definition of 'Value for Money' to focus on overall value as opposed to the lowest cost.

There is an opportunity for Government, charities and charitable funders to work together to better position charities as procurement suppliers for Government contracts. This will help Government grow its social value impact and support financial sustainability in the sector.

As well as providing excellent value for money through partnership working, there is significant opportunity for charities and Government to work together to harness the power of social value for social good.

Social value is about moving away from the idea of price and cost, towards overall value for money around social, environmental and economic impact. Charities we interviewed felt there was still far too much emphasis on cutting costs in current Government funding arrangements and not enough emphasis on value and impact. This undermines trust and negatively impacts partner relations. We recommend that Government consider a wider definition of value for money, to include social value.

Charities need support to effectively measure social value. We recommend that charities, Government and charitable funders work together to create a standardised approach to measuring and reporting social value, and how charities can consider social value when business planning.

There is an opportunity to link the social value activity of Government suppliers with existing and timely community needs. By involving charities at the outset of designing the social value element of each tender specification, Government can ensure it is asking suppliers to respond to the most pertinent needs. Government can also broker relationships to match suppliers with existing charity initiatives, either via a matching portal or another process.

Another significant opportunity is to involve charities more in other Government procurement activities. Awarding charities procurement deals helps Government meet its social value objectives. It contributes to a circular economy, benefitting the community and helping financially sustain charities. Very few charities are Government suppliers (outside of commissioning and grants). Barriers are a lack of awareness about how to find opportunities, a lack of experience in bidding for work, and a lack of capacity for completing processes. Charities also speak of a tension between commercial and charitable activities. The Government's Social, Economic and Environmental (SEE) Enterprise Pathway is one potential solution to this. We also recommend that Government considers dropping the current social value contract threshold from £100,000 to incorporate social value more broadly in its procurement activity. We also recommend that Government works closely with charities to inform them of procurement opportunities. Charities will need support to develop as suppliers and this should be done through training.

Finally, Government can support charities through its own procurement buying power. Government has a significant buying power. It has preferential procurement arrangements with a number of suppliers that could extend benefits to charities such as PPE, DBS and insurance. We recommend Government and charities work together to pilot how this could work.



Top recommendations

We invite Government, charities and charitable funders to work in partnership with us to set the priorities and to create a roadmap for addressing our recommendations. We have suggested some priorities and time frames below.

For immediate attention:

- Multi-year and index-linked annual uplifts should be standardised for charities to ensure financial sustainability.
- Charities need more political recognition and advocacy. There are multiple recommendations in this report that need political sponsorship to succeed. There is an opportunity to really enhance partnership working for the benefit of the Island with political focus and drive and to change the perception of charities as “vehicles of relief” to strategic partners and agents of positive social change. Consideration should be given to a Charity Minister’s role.

To be addressed - 6 month suggested time frame:

- Government and charities should strive towards mutual trust, respect, equality and transparency in their partnerships. To support this Government and charities should develop their partnership relations by having an open and transparent conversation about the power dynamic held between the parties, what this means and how it can be addressed. Also look at understanding and nurturing the things that makes charities feel like valued partners. This is essential to building mutual trust and respect.
- Government, charities and charitable funders to work together with external experts to create a standardised approach to social value reporting and business planning. This should be supported with training. This will make it easier for Government and charities to celebrate the full benefit of their partnership endeavours.

To be addressed - 12 month suggested time frame:

- Government, charities and charitable funders to work together to better position and support charities to become procurement suppliers for Government contracts. This will help Government enhance its social value impact and support charities with much needed funds.
- Government must adopt a variety of funding mechanisms and models that support charities’ diverse needs, including capacity-building funding, cross-departmental funding and a grants portal. Capacity-building funding will help charities with financial stability by supporting core costs and building reserves. Cross-departmental funding is needed to support charities which cover several Government areas. A grants portal will support cross-departmental funding bids, innovation bids and will increase transparency and equity in the Government grant-award process.

There are 59 recommendations made in this report. For a full list of recommendations, including our suggested priorities and owners, please see the [Recommendations summary](#) (pg.58). We recommend reading the full report to understand the detail and context behind each of the recommendations. We welcome the opportunity to work with Government and the charity sector to create an action plan around our recommendations.

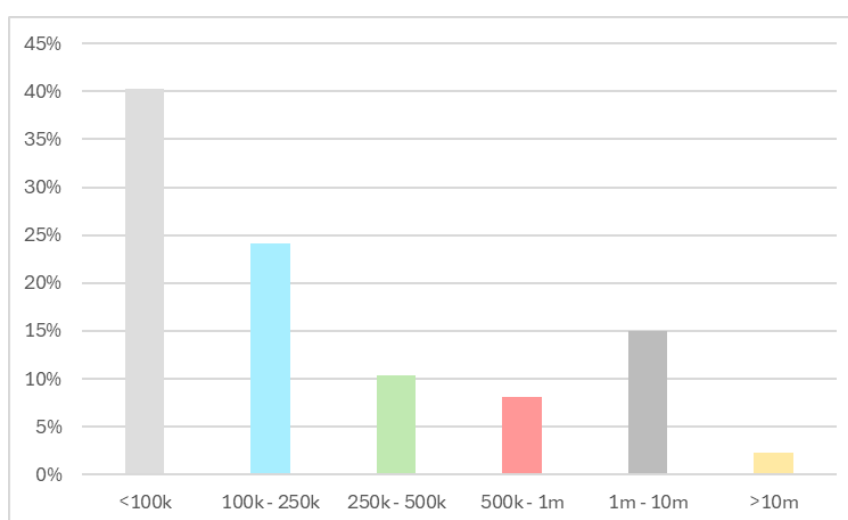
Methodology

We chose a mix of research techniques, including interviews, a questionnaire and secondary research. 87 charities participated in the research, as follows:

- One-to-one interviews: 28
- Written response to interview questions: 4
- Questionnaire: 83
- 28 charities completed 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%).⁶

Q: What was your income in 2023?



Interviews

The project had 30 hours of one-to-one interview time available. We approached 42 charities for interview, of these:

- We interviewed 28
- We received written responses from 4
- Of the remaining charities, we either didn't hear back, couldn't arrange a suitable time for interview, or the charity declined to participate.

As we wanted to focus a part of our report on Government funding, we firstly identified the Government departments that awarded the highest levels of funding to charities. These were Health and Community Services (HCS), Customer and Local Services (CLS), Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES) and the Department for the Economy.⁷

⁶ Others: Arts, Heritage and Culture (9%), Religion (1%), Environment (7%), Animal welfare (1%), sport (3%).

⁷ As noted in Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (2024) *Grants and Subsidies – Follow-up. Project Specification*. Jersey. Pg.2 and *Commissioning of Services* (Jul 2024) Pg.11

It was difficult to collate a list of all funded charities as availability of this information varies depending on department. As such, we accept there may be Government-funded charities that we did not include in our research:

- The HCS list of funded charities came from Health Advisory Board papers.
- The CLS list of funded charities came directly from the department.
- We could not get a list of charities funded by CYPES but knew of some through existing relationships.
- We selected two charities that we knew were funded by The Department for the Economy.⁸

Once we had an established list of funded charities, we then collated a list of charities that work on other Government-led partnership work. This list was taken from those charities involved in the cluster groups, but partnership working may also include attending Government workshops, working on Government-led strategy design, sitting on Boards and other activities.

We worked as much as possible to ensure we had a balance of small, medium and large charities in each area and to balance charitable purpose to be as widely representative as possible. This was skewed slightly by the focus on the departments we had chosen and the Government-funded charities.

Department	Total charities approached for interview	Total charities interviewed (inc. written responses)	Total % of all interviews	Government funded charities interviewed	Government partnership-only charities interviewed
HCS	19	12	38%	7*	5
CLS	11	9	28%	6	3
CYPES	8	7	22%	5	2
Economy	4	4	13%	2	1

** We spoke with two additional health-focused charities that also receive Government funding that were not included in the HCS Advisory Board paper list, perhaps because of the nature of their agreement. They are included in our number here.*

In total, Government funded charities accounted for 63% of interviews (original target, 60%), with 34% of charities interviewed not funded by Government.⁹ It should be noted that the number of charities which participate in other partnership work is higher than 34% listed as a number of funded charities are also involved in other partnership initiatives (original target, 40%).

Questionnaire

We circulated a questionnaire inviting all charities to participate. The questionnaire was open for submissions for one month. It was circulated via the Association of Jersey Charities newsletter and social media channels, and via the Jersey Community Foundation. The researcher also contacted charities directly to encourage completion.

Of the 447 registered charities eligible to take part¹⁰, 83 completed the questionnaire, including 28 of those which were also interviewed. This represented a 19% questionnaire response rate (original target, 20%). 32% of questionnaire respondents were funded by Government. 61% had been involved in Government-led partnership work.

⁸ From the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (2022) *Grants to Arts, Heritage and Culture Organisations*. Jersey.

⁹ One charity interviewed had previously participated in Government partnership working but does not currently.

¹⁰ Jersey Charity Commissioner (Apr 2024) *Jersey Charity Commissioner Annual Report 2023*. Jersey. Pg.8

Due to the lack of data received about charities' partnership experiences with regulators, we have excluded this from the final report.

With thanks to Sean Dettman at Jersey International Centre of Advanced Studies for his guidance on our research methodology.

Chapter One: Charities and Government funding

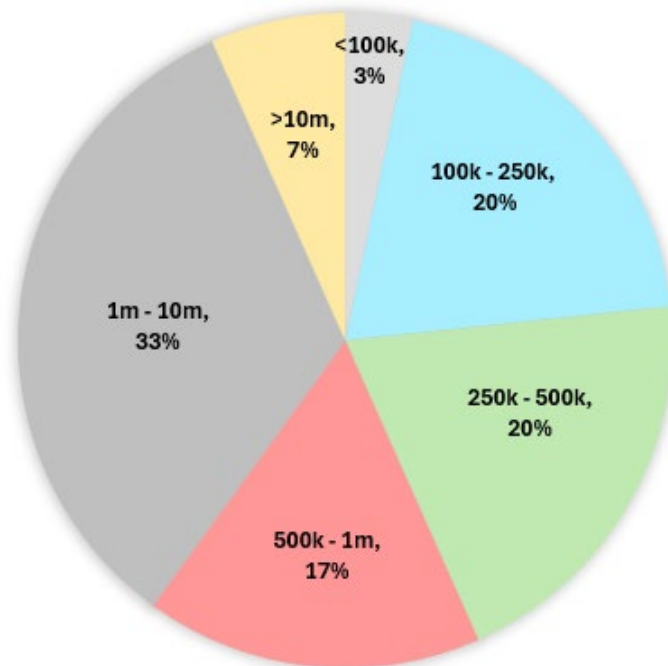
Funding relationships with Government

Charities provide enormous value to Government. Charities are often best placed to deliver services on behalf of Government and Islanders. The people who work for charities are experts in their field, driven by passion and laser focused on their cause. Charities are lean, agile, and efficient. They are not-for-profit, meaning money invested goes directly to the cause it is addressing and not into the pockets of shareholders. Charities are the most trusted public institutions in Jersey¹¹ and have unparalleled access to the views and needs of our community. If charities did not exist, the Island would be spending a significant amount more on delivering public services and would struggle to match the service quality provided by charities. Government relies on charities to meet its objectives.

Charities also rely on Government, for its influence, reach and funding. Government funding, comprising commissioning and grants, is a key pillar of Jersey’s Third Sector, according to PwC: “Government contracting is material to the financial performance of the sector.”¹² It is clear from the questionnaire and interviews we completed that Government funding and the relationships surrounding it are critical to the health of charities. We heard some very positive experiences and a number of areas that were highlighted for improvement, these will be detailed throughout this report.

In this chapter we analyse data gathered from 30 charities which receive some form of Government funding. The data includes questionnaire and interview responses.¹³ These charities vary in size from small to large. However, it should be noted that 40% of respondents have a total income of more than £1million suggesting that Government funding is directed slightly more towards larger charities.

Government funded Questionnaire and Interview respondents’ total annual income for 2023



¹¹ Jersey Opinion and Lifestyle Survey Report 2024 (Dec 2024) Pg.76

¹² Jersey Community Foundation and PwC (Oct 2024) *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector*. Jersey. Pg.39

¹³ 17 Government-funded charities completed both the questionnaire and interviews. 10 completed only the questionnaire. 3 completed only the interview.

The majority of respondents are funded by Health and Community Services (HCS, 37%), Customer and Local Services (CLS, 20%) and Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES, 20%). These are the primary funding departments¹⁴, with other contributors including Economy, the Cabinet Office, Infrastructure and Environment, Property Holdings, Public Health and Justice and Home Affairs. Funding arrangements of respondents vary between commissioned services and grants, with the value ranging from £2,000 to £10 million.

The results from the questionnaire we issued were largely positive regarding the funding experience. Responses to the interviews were much more mixed and detailed.

In the questionnaire we asked those respondents in receipt of Government funding to rate their overall experience with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent. The weighted average results were:

- Overall relationship - 3.84
- Levels of mutual trust - 3.6
- Expertise being respected - 3.7
- Perceived community impact of the funding partnership - 4.4.

See Appendix 1 for data chart.

Funded charities said:

“As far as HCS commissioning is concerned...we are valued, and I think we feel valued because they most definitely see us as partners and the experts.”

“They do come to us for advice and information...I think we are recognised as somebody who has a voice around a particular specialism. That’s how it feels.”

“I value the fact that we’re seen as a credible, knowledgeable and influential partner, and I do feel sort of heard and listened to, for example on those steering groups that I sit on. So, it feels like we are able to influence policy making and influence change.”

One area that shone positively in the interviews was the strength of interpersonal relationships with designated Government funding contacts. Charities said:

“I would say that we have we’ve got a well-developed and mature and trusting dialogue with our interlocutors in the department...we can have really good context-based, quite free-range conversations.”

“[Previously] we had a commissioner who really saw her role as to robustly hold us to account, as she should, but also to be our advocate within the system, to enable people to access what we offered, and to remove systemic blockers, and that was a really healthy, functional relationship and we shared the same goal.”

“I’ve got a long-term relationship with [my funding contact] and I would say that you know, it’s a really positive engagement, it’s supportive, as far as I know it’s an honest relationship.”

“Our relationship with commissioning is now really, really strong. I think they know they can trust us to deliver, we have good to and fro. They challenge but we are able to answer their questions...So, it’s fair to say the commissioning relationship has been challenging in the early relationship but for the past year or so it’s been incredibly strong, partly I think because of the challenges we went through.”

“[Our commissioning team] all of them are absolute enablers.”

¹⁴ As identified in *Commissioning of Services* (July 2024) Pg.11

“The commissioning person that we work with is really supportive and understanding and very positive about what we’re doing.”

There was a correlation between good relationships and some charities feeling valued as partners. One charity said: “I do feel valued because we have a good relationship...without doubt it is about the relationship.”

Charities noted how long it takes to establish these positive working relationships and how important continuity is to that. They also valued having a single point of contact who could help navigate Government’s systems.

The charities which had less positive experiences of interpersonal relationships cited Government culture, a lack of leadership, changes in personnel and bureaucracy. This includes relationships outside of the commissioning and grant arenas, which is explored further in Chapter 2.

This chapter will explore the themes that have emerged through our research with regards Government funding and our recommendations. It is clear that while positive relationships are key to successful partnerships, these often sit within inconsistent and challenging Government systems. Systematic issues include a lack of clarity around grants and commissioning, inconsistent contracts and reporting, approaches to index-linked funding, funding delays, short-termism and Government funding mechanisms.

Grant or commissioning?

The Comptroller and Auditor General’s report into commissioning of services (July 2024), identified that there is a lack of consistency regarding commissioning and grants across Government.¹⁵ For example, it notes that while CLS does not recognise that any of the activity it manages is commissioned, several of its’ grants “could arguably fall within a definition of commissioning services”.¹⁶ This lack of consistency was echoed in our research.

Of the Government funded charities we researched roughly 33% considered themselves to be commissioned and 43% received grants. Remaining charities receive both.

One interviewed charity said: “Our [government] contacts refer to themselves as part of the commissioning team, I don’t class us as being commissioned.” Another charity was moved from a commissioning to a grant arrangement while delivering the same service over the space of a few years. Another charity said they had something “like a commissioned based service” which includes multiple grants that sit under an overarching service level agreement.

The main understanding of what constituted a grant between respondents seemed to relate to the charity’s unique position to deliver the service requirements and/or the lack of an open tender process.

“A grant agreement...it’s when the government recognises you are uniquely placed to do the work, so there’s no need to tender, it can sometimes be marked by fewer KPIs.”

The definition provided by the States of Jersey is:

“Grants are assistance from a States Entity in the form of transfers of resources to an individual or entity in return for past or future compliance with certain conditions relating to activities of the individual/entity.”¹⁷

The Comptroller and Auditor General notes that this definition “is both broad and ambiguous.”¹⁸

¹⁵ *Commissioning of Services* (Jul 2024) Pg. 4

¹⁶ *Commissioning of Services* (Jul 2024) Pg.12

¹⁷ States of Jersey (2013) *Financial Direction No 5.5 Management of Grants*. Jersey. Pg.2

¹⁸ Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (2017) *Grants and Subsidies*. Jersey. Pg.6

As outlined by the Comptroller and Auditor General, the forthcoming cross Government Commissioning and Partnership Strategy, expected in 2025, will be key to standardising and streamlining the commissioning process. It is vital that clarity is also given around grants and that this strategy supports a diverse funding ecosystem that fosters innovation.

The findings of our research demonstrate how variable the Government-funded partnership experience can be for charities. For example, the terminology around grant awards is inconsistent, including base grants, top-up grants, bridging grants, decreasing grants, ad hoc grants, grants awarded due to Government departmental underspend, grants with contracts and KPIs, and grants without.

We support the move towards a more consistent experience with more transparency and accountability.

In 2023, HCS turned all its grants into contracts, reflecting a national shift from grant-based funding to procurement.¹⁹ While we agree with a move to properly define and administer funded services across Government, we believe that its important that grants are still part of the funding ecosystem.

The move away from Government grants in the UK has led to a two-tier charity system with larger charities benefitting more from commissioned contracts and smaller charities often losing out.²⁰ Grants play an important role, supporting “the ability to change; invest in local economies; support communities...nurture innovation and sustain services.”²¹ We agree with the Comptroller and Auditor General that there are currently local grant-funded service provisions that should be commissioned, particularly as we know that a handful of charities deliver services that either are or could be considered statutory.

We urge Government to maintain a healthy balance of funding mechanisms and to look at how each can be developed to best support the community via the capabilities of charities.

The UK Cabinet Office created an agreement with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) called *The Compact* in 2010, it outlines the partnership principles that Government and CSO’s commit to. The Compact references the importance of Government maintaining diverse funding mechanisms: “Consider a wide range of ways to fund or resource CSOs, including grants, contracts, loan finance, use of premises and so on.”²²

Recommendations – Grants or commissioning:

- 1.1 Government to review current grants to identify opportunities where a commissioning model better suits the funding arrangement.
- 1.2 Charities to work with Government to understand which funding mechanisms may be available to them and which may work best for both parties.

Contracts

Most charities we spoke to felt they had some form of contract in place, however, the terminology around this varied considerably from contract for services, agreement for services, service agreement, partnership agreement, and service level agreement. One charity said: “We signed a contract that is called an SLA and other people refer to it as a grant, I’m not really sure what the differences are.” Another said: “it’s an agreement for services, somewhere between a grant and a contract.”

¹⁹ Select Committee on Charities (2017), “Chapter 4: Funding: Grants, Contracts and Commissioning”, *Stronger Charities for a Stronger Society*. UK Parliament. UK.

²⁰ NCVO in “Chapter 4” *Stronger Charities for a Stronger Society* (2017) 181

²¹ Directory of Social Change, “Grants for Good Campaign”, NCVO, in “Chapter 4”, *Stronger Charities for a Stronger Society* (2017) 260

²² Cabinet Office, (Dec 2010), *The Compact*, London

The contracts, or grant agreements, received by charities vary from a single page with a vague outline, to a 120-page detailed contract. Charities recognise the importance of contracts, with one charity attributing their positive partnership experience to the robustness of their contract. There is, however, a feeling among charities that the contract length and content should be proportionate to the value of the contract:

“The agreement should be proportionate to the work being done.”

“[The contract] some parts are irrelevant and unworkable...it’s such a broad thing to cover so many organisations, it just isn’t appropriate for so many.”

Jersey’s Public Finance Manual states: “The format and complexity of the [grant] agreement should be proportionate to the value of the grant and the risk involved.”²³ The UK National Audit Office also recommends proportionality, stating: “Make sure the scale and complexity of the procurement process is in proportion to the amount of money it involves.”²⁴

All commissioned services are subject to a legally binding contract and all grant arrangements to a Service Agreement; whether the latter is legally binding is unclear. We recommend as part of the cross Government Commissioning and Partnership Strategy that terminology around commissioned contracts, service level agreements and grant service agreements are better defined and standardised. We also recommend that the different types of grants are defined and that agreements are proportionate to the value awarded.

It is important that Government funding – commissioning or grants – takes account of any costs incurred to the charity to complete the partnership agreement and the work agreed. One respondent spoke of the expense incurred by their charity to meet its contractual requirements around cyber security with no additional financial support from Government to meet these costs. Charities also referenced the time taken to negotiate contracts and the costs, including legal costs. One charity spoke of a nine-month negotiation period. Another expressed concern that changes to funding arrangements to comply with the Comptroller and Auditor General incurred unexpected legal costs for funded charities.

The National Audit Office speaks of the importance of Government understanding and meeting the “full cost recovery” of any partnership agreement.²⁵ Charities are not businesses but there is a need for charities to be more commercially minded in funding negotiations. We recommend that charities are supported to capture the full cost recovery in any partnership agreement and that there is an agreed approach to this with Government.

There is a balance to be struck in Government and charity funding relationships between commerciality and partnership equality. One interviewee spoke about the tone of the contracts, saying “it feels like [it] is solely working to support one part, one agent in this, and it doesn’t really think about the charity’s needs at all”. This individual cited the three month’s contractual notice period given for early termination of services and the punitive tone of the contracts, including the recurring references to ‘The Authority’ (Government). They said: “it just does not feel like it represents a good partnership approach...contracts have to be much more sympathetic and partnership focused.” This echoes recommendations made by the UK Parliament, which states: “Public sector commissioners need to embed a genuine partnership approach in their structures, processes, contracts and cultures to ensure that the best possible results are achieved.”²⁶ We would recommend Government work with charities to improve the tone and content of partnership contracts.

Recommendations – Contracts:

- 1.3 Government to ensure commissioning contracts and grant service agreements are proportionate to the value of the agreement.
- 1.4 Government to standardise terminology around contracts, service level agreements and grant

²³ Government of Jersey (2020) *Public finance manual*. Jersey.

²⁴ National Audit Office (No date) “Competition” *Successful Commissioning Toolkit*. UK.

²⁵ “Cost recovery FCR” *Successful Commissioning Toolkit* (No date)

²⁶ “Chapter 4” *Stronger Charities for a Stronger Society* (2017) 207

- service agreements. Ensure a clear differentiator between commissioning and grants. Define and standardise different types of grants.
- 1.5 Government and charities to work together to create more 'partnership-friendly' contracts.
 - 1.6 Charities to think more commercially in funding negotiations. Charities to be supported in capturing the full cost recovery in any partnership agreement. Government and charities should agree an approach to this, possibly supported with training.
 - 1.7 Charities to seek training and support in understanding and negotiating funding arrangements where there is a lack of knowledge and expertise. Training and support to be provided.

Reporting and monitoring

Most charities we interviewed had quarterly reporting meetings with their Government funding representatives, whether commissioned or in receipt of a grant. These were largely regarded as positive and important to the relationship:

"We've come up with a reporting mechanism and timeframe that fits for us and fits for them. So, it is very much a partnership."

"We've reached a point where we have the quarterly meetings with the commissioners, it really is a dialogue, it's not a challenge, it's a dialogue where we've had some difficulties in some areas, there's a desire to understand those difficulties and even to tweak the targets, so I think that's a really good thing"

"In the last three years it has been scrutinised more, and that's not a criticism. I think it's more that the people who are doing the SLA review meetings every quarter...are more knowledgeable...and they will ask what I would call 'the right questions', to make us think as well sometimes."

However, some charities feel their Government funding representative does not understand or value what they do. They said:

"They don't show huge amounts of interest in what we do."

"They don't ever really ask any questions about the service. They never have a view about it."

"It's difficult to talk to people who are quite corporate and perhaps don't have a background in relating to what I say...Asking me questions and I'm thinking...maybe do a little bit of a background read and understand what we provide. So, you spend some of the meetings just explaining what we do, and it just seems to me like that's why we can't move forward with things... because we're still constantly justifying what we do."

"Is [government] really intelligent of the services that it is commissioning? Not really. Has it got the right people, has it got the right processes, are the staff informed and trained and developing in the areas that they're supporting? Not really."

"They could come in and meet with the team and get to know, get to understand what we do ...you know if you're gonna provide funding for somebody, and at the level that you think is appropriate, then you need to see the services that we're providing and the benefits."

We would recommend that all Government funding contacts spend time visiting and observing the services they are funding. This builds relationships and it helps determine appropriate levels of funding.

It was noted by two charities that note keeping from quarterly review meetings was not always accurate and there were times where additional Government representatives would attend meetings with little notice, sometimes, very senior people, and sometimes those in meetings were not introduced. These relationship management shortfalls are easy to rectify.

Most charities are comfortable with their KPIs and those which do not have them, provide regular impact reporting through their own initiative. One charity spoke of KPIs being like submitting homework that

keeps everyone on track. A number of charities spoke of the importance of Government KPIs aligning with their own management KPIs to be as efficient as possible, and we recommend that Government align with this to minimise the reporting burden on charities. A few charities said they had too many KPIs. One charity sought to collaborate with Government to review their KPIs but felt that Government did not support this partnership approach.

It is important that reporting is impactful. One charity said: “We spend a lot of time on our reporting, It’s a brilliant report...Does anybody actually read it? I’m not quite sure how valuable the stats are because I don’t know where they end up.” The National Audit Office recommends that commissioners are clear on the purpose of reporting: “Tell the provider what you will do with the information you ask for...sending information into a ‘black hole’ is demotivating.”²⁷ Communication is key around reporting.

It was noted that there is a cost involved with effective reporting and this needs to be reflected in the funding provided. This should be considered as part of the full cost recovery.

It is often the case that Government funding does not cover the full costs of the service being commissioned. According to *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* report 53% of organisations delivering services to the public sector cross-subsidise this with income from other areas.²⁸ Yet we spoke to charities which still report on the totality of their service delivery rather than the element the Government funds. This gives an unrealistic view of value for money which sets a dangerous precedent for funding expectations.

Recommendations – Reporting and monitoring:

- 1.8 Government needs to invest in communicating with its partner charities, in visiting and observing services in action to really get to know the services it is funding and to ensure both parties are clear on reporting impact.
- 1.9 KPIs to be developed in partnership (already partially being done but not consistently). Should there be a need for KPIs that are not included in charity management reports, charities and Government to negotiate these on a case by case basis.
- 1.10 Reporting costs to be written into full cost recovery proposals.
- 1.11 Both partners should be clear on how much of the service provision included in reporting is funded directly by Government.

Confirmation and receipt of funds

One of the biggest causes of frustration and stress among the charities we interviewed was around the confirmation and receipt of Government funding.

“We get 12 months at a time, often confirmed in December. The grant is 75% of our income.”

“I did my business plan in February and it’s November and I don’t know what my grant’s going to be this year.”

“Previously it has got to March, end of March, nearly April and we still haven’t had our grant and didn’t know how we were gonna pay staff the next month and it got to emergency point.”

“We received our email confirmation a few days before Christmas and the official letter a few days after the new year. It doesn’t help with planning.”

“And we’re left with no understanding of when a decision will be made, and it’s incredibly difficult to manage a charity like that. I mean nobody in their right mind would run a business like this, but we’re expected to as charities.”

²⁷ “Monitoring” *Successful Commissioning Toolkit* (No date)

²⁸ *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* (Oct 2024) Pg.6

There is an appreciation within charities that funding cycles are determined by the timing of the Government Plan, and the subsequent pressure this puts civil servants under, with what one charity referred to as “that scramble at the end of each year.” However, the impact felt by charities due to delays in either formal confirmation or receipt of funds, puts many organisations at risk in a sector where cash flow is so critical. It directly contradicts Government’s values around respect and delivering, it also affects Government’s relations with other charitable funders, as one charity said:

“Because of the lack of security from government, we end up going to funders sometimes to fund posts that should potentially fall under a government umbrella...so actually government’s reputation outside with funders, isn’t always positive.”

Many charities referred to how obstructive delays in annual funding confirmations are to successful planning. One charity spoke of being without key staff but being unable to recruit due to the uncertainty of promised funding. Another spoke of impending redundancies in January if they did not receive the promised funding, and they were still awaiting confirmation in December. Another spoke of the 12 months it took from submitting a business plan to finalising the contract for services. Another spoke of this being the fourth year in a row where they have faced becoming an insolvent business due to the lack of clarity around Government funding.

In terms of a more supportive process, one charity recommended: “Government need to allocate budget for partnerships at least 3 months before year-end for smaller projects and at least 6 months for more meaningful grants.”

Part of the frustrations among charities is the lack of clarity around Government funding cycles. This is particularly true for charities that need to submit bids as part of the Government plan process. They said:

“Something that would be really beneficial, which we’ve never really received and we’ve asked many times, is ... the government plan process...I’ve never been given a date. I’ve never been given a plan of the process, of what’s expected, of what even can go into a government plan.”

“I think some more transparency in how things work and how funding cycles are managed and communications about realistic expectations. It is just like some complete mystery how it all works.”

Another charity spoke about the importance of equity being built into the process: “I think it’s just about transparency and equity, about everybody having an equal opportunity.”

We recommend that Government creates a guide to the Government Plan funding cycle and process and what charities are expected to do and what they can expect in return.

Partnerships are built on respect and Government funding arrangements do not always support this. Charities spoke of how you cannot rely on funding commitments. One charity said: “If we get some money through, because respectfully, you’re never 100% sure, no matter how much it’s promised, until it hits the bank.” We heard examples of promised funding being withdrawn, with one charity receiving written notification of the withdrawal of critical funding at 1730 on a Friday by someone who then put their out of office on for two weeks, meaning the charity was left in further limbo regarding an explanation. We spoke to a charity who had arranged a partnership project costing £80,000 per year with part funding from Government. In the third year of the project the charity was told that the contract signoff was delayed but that the money would be coming. After the costs were committed by the charity for the final year, they were told that funding was withdrawn because the department had overspent.

“The repercussions may seem small to someone in government, but they are huge to a charity. When you commit to deliver something, you have to go through with it...it has a huge impact on the charity’s status as a going concern.”

The *Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* report notes that:

“Government spending is directly linked to economic conditions so, therefore, as spending fluctuates those third party organisations will experience volatility and uncertainty in their

income streams which will make it more difficult to plan for the future and overall lower financial security across the sector.”²⁹

Uncertainty is exacerbated by short-term funding cycles. Of the 20 Government-funded charities we interviewed, 10 received annual funding arrangements. Of these six were grant awards. The challenges of short-term funding echoed across our interviews, charities said:

“I can't go out there and hire somebody for a short-term project, by the time I've trained them you're talking six months training and then the project's done.”

“I haven't been able to make a strategic plan this year because if I don't know if I've got funding in six months' time, I might be closing services, not building on a nice strategy. That's a big issue.”

“[Annual funding] precludes any long-term planning because you can't guarantee that what you have, you will hold, or indeed, whether it will be increased.”

“Short-term funding contracts tend to focus on short-term outcomes, making it difficult to plan long-term.”

“In 2021 there was talk of it being a three-year funding cycle and then it was ‘the government can't commit to that one’ and then it was that a new government was coming in and they can't commit to it and it's always no commitment for whatever reason.”

Short-term funding is blocking charities' ability to function effectively and deliver for Islanders. The lack of notice gives the impression that this funding is discretionary spend. There are examples of longer funding commitments made by Government such as staff contracts and property leases proving that it is possible to operate on a longer term basis. There is a commitment to multi-year contracts detailed in the draft Jersey Commissioning Framework and we are seeing a move towards this already on the commissioning side.³⁰ Grants, however, are much more likely to be awarded annually. Within those charities we spoke to that receive annual grants or top-ups, five of them are valued upwards of £1 million. To award such high value agreements on such a short-term basis, for ongoing service provision, puts these charities at significant financial risk. Particularly when notice of awards is often not given until the end of the year, which may put the viability of the required service at risk.

We recommend that Government reviews its grant portfolio and determines which of the services it funds are likely to be long-term services or projects. These should get moved to a commissioning model, particularly the higher value awards. Or, if Government wishes to continue the grant mechanism for these awards, that it considers a more supportive grant approach that prioritises the sustainability of its partners, for example, Camden Council offer “strategic partner funding” for the sector for up to seven years, to “provide unprecedented security.”³¹

Short-term funding has a place, but what we repeatedly see locally is short-term funding for longer-term need. The National Audit Office states:

“Giving short-term awards for long-term projects is likely to add to the burden of administration of the fund for public body and the third sector organisation. This is unlikely to be cost effective.”³²

The short-termism culture within Government is driven by the political cycle. As one charity said: “What we would like to see is that long-term planning and one of the natures of Government is that there is going to be a lot of short termism, because with the greatest will in the world, people want to get re-elected.”

²⁹ *The Value of Jersey's Third sector* (Oct 2024) pg.39

³⁰ Government of Jersey (Jul 2024) *Jersey Commissioning Framework DRAFT*. Jersey. Pg,7

³¹ “Chapter 4” *Stronger Charities for a Stronger Society* (2017) 246

³² “Value for money” *Successful Commissioning Toolkit* (No date)

It is essential for charities that Government funding moves to a longer-term model to insulate the sector from the volatility of the annual Government Plan process and to stop the time wasted on both sides on negotiating annual funding cycles. This may require consideration of financial commitments potentially beyond the current term of office. The benefits are not only continuity of service provision but sustainability of the charity sector. As one charity said: “Sustainability is the magic word...if you can give us some sustainable funding, then we can do that job and we can progress that job.”

The move to longer-term funding cycles and earlier funding confirmation is not only important for the health of the sector but also those who work in it. Several CEOs spoke about not only the impact the delays have on their organisation but on their own wellbeing:

“You know this constant holding on and uncertainty is really detrimental to peoples’ health, let alone the organisation’s health and strategic ability to develop a plan.”

“It takes its toll on you. And I do quite frequently think, I don’t know how much more of this I can do. And it leaves you feeling the way that no other funder leaves you feeling.”

There is also an impact on the community:

“What [is happening] is actually harming our community...because you know, we’ve got massive waiting lists, so every time you delay anything it’s actually our community that’s suffering.”

This is an area that requires attention and change.

Recommendations – Confirmation and receipt of funds:

- 1.12 Government to work to insulate the sector from the volatility of annual financial planning cycles by committing to multi-year agreements. This will not only reduce the organisational risk for charities but also avoid the wasting of valuable resources on both sides of annual negotiations.
- 1.13 Government to consider funding commitments that span election cycles.
- 1.14 Government to discuss with charities the moving of large grant awards for ongoing services to a commissioned model.
- 1.15 Government to issue guidelines to the Government Plan funding cycle for charities.
- 1.16 Government and charities to explore possibility of a strategic partner funding arrangement to support those charities which receive grant awards.
- 1.17 Government needs to be cognisant of the impact last minute funding decisions and delayed payments have on the people who work in charities and the communities charities serve. Work to address this.

Index-linked funding

Most charities we interviewed did not, or had not, historically received index-linked funding. There is evidence that this is changing with many charities reporting a Retail Price Index (RPI) uplift last year and many of the newer contracts or awards now include RPI, which increases funding in line with expected rises in goods and services.

It was noted by a few charities, that while they see the departments they work with receive RPI as part of the Government Plan, it does not always get passed on:

“We are told we need to apply for consideration of an uplift but there is never communication about a deadline to apply. Regardless of when or if you try to apply, it’s knocked back. There has only been one occasion a government budget uplift has been applied, but it was not the full % increase received by the department from the government plan.”

The impact of not awarding RPI on an annual basis, is that Government funding loses its value to charities year-on-year, meaning the charities pick up more of the costs themselves as their funding does not cover it.

“Over the three years inflation was about 25% but our grant’s gone up by 5%.”

“We’ve had years where we haven’t seen the RPI rise whatsoever, we’ve had our grant stagnated, which has meant we as a charity have absorbed much more of the overheads and the costs.”

“That’s the biggest barrier for all our money, nothing has RPI or any uplift at all included, and hasn’t had, so that makes it nearly impossible to survive and deliver the service. That’s probably the biggest challenge.”

Recommendations – Index-linked funding:

- 1.18 It is imperative that charities receive an annual index-linked uplift in all Government contracts and grant payments.

Reserves

Charitable reserves need urgent attention. *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* report stated that 37% of third sector organisations currently have less the three months’ reserves and 50% only have up-to six months, which means that “short term funding issues could quickly become problematic”.³³ The report also draws a correlation between those organisations with lower reserves and their dependency on grant and earned income, suggesting that those charities that receive a significant amount of their income from grants (both charitable funders and Government grants) are at a higher financial risk.

This is exacerbated by the fact that 53% of Jersey charities providing services to Government report needing to source other forms of funding to deliver the contract.³⁴ We spoke with three charities which had used reserves to manage shortfalls in Government funding, with one stating they had used half of their reserves and another stating they only had enough reserves to sustain their approach for five years. This is clearly unsustainable and in fact often serves to discourage others from assisting the charity financially.

The increasing use of reserves to meet costs is directly linked to the increased cost of living and is impacted by the fact that Government funding has not always been index-linked. This trend was reported by the Association of Jersey Charities at the end of 2023 which noted that 66% of charities were using their reserves to meet increased costs or expected to do so throughout 2024.³⁵

It was noted in our interviews that the lack of charitable reserves guidance leads to a lack of understanding around appropriate reserve levels and what reserves should be used for. It was noted in interviews that reserves are often viewed by Government and other funders as dispensable funds and in some cases are the reason that funding requests are declined.

The Charity Commission for England and Wales issues guidance on reserves for charities. This guidance notes that “A good reserves policy gives confidence to stakeholders that the charity’s finances are being properly managed and will also provide an indicator of future funding needs and its overall resilience” and that “There is no single method or approach to setting a reserves policy. The approach adopted will vary with the size, complexity of activities, legal structure and the nature of funds received and held by a charity.”³⁶ We recommend that the Jersey Charity Commissioner works with the sector to publish reserves guidance that assists charities and funders in understanding the purpose and considerations around charitable reserves.

³³ *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* (Oct 2024) pg.34

³⁴ *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* (Oct 2024) pg.8

³⁵ Association of Jersey Charities (2023) *Cost of Living Survey*. Jersey

³⁶ Charity Commission for England and Wales (2023) *Charity Reserves: Building Resilience*. UK.

Supporting charities to build adequate levels of reserves is critical to the sustainability of the sector. With fundraising and donations decreasing year-on-year, charities have less unrestricted earned funds to direct towards their reserves. One way the Government could help with this would be to consider how their funding may help charities build their capacity. The National Audit office says:

“One reason public bodies give grants to third sector organisations (TSOs) is to build their capacity to deliver public services...in such cases the public body may decide on a capacity building grant...At the end of the period the TSO will be more able to take part in an open competitive process for money.”³⁷

There is some precedent of this in Jersey. The introduction of the 1% Government spending commitment for Arts, Heritage and Culture charities was brought in as “stabilisation funding” for the four major Arms Length Bodies in the Sector.³⁸

We spoke with four other charities that had benefitted from Government funding in a similar way.

“The grant we have received means we can focus on building our reserves...we can get the foundations of the charity in a much stronger position.”

“Because of [government] support...with the extra funding that came in, it allowed us to build those reserves...it's only because of that we are stronger now. It's only because of that intervention.”

“Government have given me the opportunity to be able to run the charity successfully.”

“By receiving a grant, the government offers stability.”

One way the Government could approach capacity building would be to allocate more funding for core costs. Charities are finding it increasingly difficult to raise funds for core costs, which can include staffing, project management, office costs, accountancy and regulatory compliance.³⁹ The UK Parliament Select Committee's review of charitable funding said:

“Charities cannot operate unless their core costs are met. We recommend that public sector commissioners should be expected to have regard for the sustainability of the organisations which they commission to deliver services.”⁴⁰

One charity we spoke to felt that if Government could provide more core funding for the sector that this would increase efficiency and performance, particularly among small to medium sized charities. They said:

“There's an awful lot of hugely valuable small-medium size charities out there, doing wonderful work, but...they're not big enough to be able to afford a fundraiser, [so] the chief exec spends half their time fundraising, but it's not necessarily their area of expertise to begin with. If only you could provide a bit more core funding to the best of those charities to release the chief exec from having to fundraise, then the chief could do more of what they're best at, and you get even more value out of the sector.”

We recommend that in developing the cross Government Commissioning and Partnership Strategy that Government works with charities to create an approach to how Government funding can help build capacity in charities, supporting charities to fund core costs, to build their reserves and support the sustainability of the sector.

³⁷ “Capacity Building” *Successful Commissioning Toolkit* (No date)

³⁸ *Grants to Arts, Heritage and Culture Organisations* (2022) Pg.6

³⁹ “Chapter 4” *Stronger Charities for a Stronger Society* (2017) 232

⁴⁰ “Chapter 4” *Stronger Charities for a Stronger Society* (2017) 239

Recommendations – Reserves:

- 1.19 The Jersey Charity Commissioner to work with the sector and funders to publish reserves guidance.
- 1.20 Government to work with charities to create an approach to how Government funding can build charity capacity and financial resilience.

Government funding mechanisms

Several of the charities we spoke to said that they struggled to secure Government funding as they did not neatly fit into one department, and that despite their activity often benefitting several areas of the Jersey Performance Framework, that there was no mechanism to secure cross-departmental funding. Charities said:

“So, I think our big issue is that we don't neatly fit into any one department and there seems to be an inability to commission or provide grants across departments within the government and then it just becomes passing the buck.”

“They are all working as individual departments, not collectively.”

“Different people have different budgets, and those budgets get agreed at different times.”

“I've shown a lot of people around [my service] and the feedback is always wonderful, off every politician...but many of them end the visit by saying 'that won't come out of my pot'.”

Our interviews clearly demonstrated that there is a silo working culture in Government when a cross-departmental funding approach is needed. It is clear from steps taken by Government that this is a direction they are moving in, including the Commissioning Framework draft, the Jersey Commissioning Academy, the cross Government Commissioning Function for health and care, and the upcoming cross Government Commissioning and Partnership Strategy. The question is how will cross-departmental funding arrangements work into practice. We spoke with one charity which is making headway with a cross-departmental contract involving three departments. Should this progress, it may set-out a positive blueprint for this approach.

A cross-departmental funding approach could also be of benefit to charities which receive funding from long-term care (CLS), but require additional top-up funding from Government, as this additional funding often comes from HCS. The Comptroller and Auditor General notes that “The planning and procurement arrangements for long-term care are fragmented between HCS and CLS and are not embedded within a commissioning process.”⁴¹ We spoke with a charity which was in receipt of benefits from long-term care, but because of their set-up, it was not enough to fund their entire service. It, therefore, had to go to Government regularly for top-up grants, with no formal agreement surrounding them. This not only caused a significant amount of stress to all involved, but also meant the charity was regularly under financial strain. It is unacceptable that a charity that delivers public services on behalf of Government finds itself in that position. We spoke with another charity which did not qualify as a care provider but offered life changing programmes to individuals who were eligible for long-term care. This organisation ultimately saves the Government money on care costs but cannot benefit from the long-term care provision. This same organisation had to approach Government for emergency funding last year.

The Comptroller and Auditor General made a recommendation within her report that the Government “Establish clear responsibility and accountability for the planning and commissioning associated with long-term care”.⁴² While it is noted in the Executive response to this report that there is senior Government accountability for long-term care and top-up funding, the Public Accounts Committee notes that more work is needed to increase the effectiveness of existing processes.⁴³ Government already plans to address this recommendation in the cross Government Commissioning and Partnership

⁴¹ *Commissioning of Services* (Jul 2024) Pg.18

⁴² *Commissioning of Services* (Jul 2024) Pg.20

⁴³ Public Accounts Committee (Nov 2024) *Commissioning of Services Executive Response*. Jersey. Pg.4

Strategy, we suggest that when doing so Government works with charities to understand their experiences of long-term care and how this impacts their wider finances.

To support cross-Governmental funding, and to increase the equity of Government funding across the sector, it was suggested by one charity that a funding application portal, similar to those run by charitable funding bodies, could be considered by Government. One charity suggested that the Connect Me programme should be better funded to support more partnership initiatives. The funding mechanism behind this is proof that it is possible to run a funding portal in Government. The Connect Me scheme could either be expanded to include funding opportunities with different remits, or it could be used as a blueprint for another Government funding portal. Whichever route is taken, providing more opportunities for charities to apply to Government for funding would benefit Government by providing innovative solutions to real-time community need, and would mitigate any risk of the funding system being based on who you know, not what you know. It would provide a One Gov solution to a cross-Government problem.

In terms of other successful Government funding mechanisms, one respondent spoke of the success of the Island's agricultural plan and the grants system behind it as an example of best practice. They said:

“[It has] been put together in a way that is really complementary to the industry and is pushing it forward in a very positive direction. It's a very well thought through mechanism for government money getting delivered to the private sector, in a way that works towards the social good and that inspires change. It's completely transparent, you know what you're going to get, you also know what you need to do to get it, and it doesn't matter who you are.”

It was clear from our discussions with charities that those with existing relationships with Government often had easier access to the 'right people' with whom to discuss ideas for new initiatives. Those charities without those relationships often didn't know where to start. This creates a two-tier system within the sector of those with advantage and those without. One charity said: “For better working together, there is a need to ensure equity across the system for everyone, so that everyone knows what is available and how to access it.”

We recommend that as part of the development of the cross Government Commissioning and Partnership Strategy that Government consider a centralised grant portal, with a clear and transparent centralised process that can support cross-departmental funding arrangements and can act as an innovation generator for charities and their observations of needs in the community.

Recommendations – Government funding mechanisms:

- 1.21 Government to develop a wide range of funding mechanisms for charities including commissioning and grants.
- 1.22 Government to design processes and systems that support cross-departmental funding.
- 1.23 In agreement with the Comptroller and Auditor General, Government to combine long-term care payments and required top-ups into a wider commissioning process. We recommend Government work with charities to understand their experience of long-term care to shape this.
- 1.24 Government to consider how to fund those organisations which are not eligible for long-term care but are clearly saving the wider care system money.
- 1.25 Government to consider a centralised grant portal and process to support cross-departmental funding arrangements and to improve transparency and equity of access.

Different funding models

We spoke with seven charities that provide funding or resources to Government to deliver joint initiatives. These charities receive no Government funding in return. One of the key blockers in successful partnership working in this way is the delay in getting paperwork approved, and often this has led to charities incurring additional costs.

One charity was fully funding their part of a joint-service provision but needed data sharing agreements in place with Government. They waited nearly a year for the paperwork to be signed off. The charity, not expecting such a lengthy delay, had already employed a team to deliver the service but couldn't begin until the paperwork was in place. This cost them significant charitable funds.

This experience was echoed by another charity, which again was funding the work, but needed a data sharing agreement with Government. The project was due to start mid-2024, the individual left their part-time job at the end of July for family reasons and to be ready to commence the service provision as soon as they were able to. When we spoke to them in December, they had still not had the paperwork finalised by Government. The impact of the delay not only affected the charity and individual, but those eligible for the service too. This particular service is only open to individuals for a period of time after their hospital treatment, meaning a cohort of originally eligible individuals will no longer be able to benefit from the service once it is launched.

Another challenge for charities which have secured independent funding for joint initiatives is the resistance by Government to make decisions, one charity, delivering a project involving two Government departments, said:

"To set up the agreement between [department A] and [department B] was possibly one of the most difficult things I've ever done in my career...There was meeting after meeting after meeting when nobody could make a decision. The results of most meetings were another date for a meeting and potentially another person that we could invite. So, the meetings got bigger with more people, none of whom could make a decision."

Other challenges noted were a lack of responsiveness, a lack of communication, difficulty navigating Government systems and delays in receiving invoices for the charity-provided funds. Our respondents also spoke of the difficult position Government delays had on their relations with those that had agreed to fund the work.

These delays on the side of Government have impacted the charities and individuals involved and their feelings towards Government. They said:

"I don't feel valued when people don't bother to get back to you, tell you how busy they are, sort of laugh at a lack of progress. It makes me consider if this is a good use of the charity's time and resource."

"It's just chasing, chasing all the time, or you don't get a response. It takes a huge amount of charitable time. It's just a shame it's got to the point you feel like you're harassing people all the time...It's deflating, you question why you're doing it. It's almost making me look stupid now...people will start questioning my integrity because we've not done what we've said we'll do."

"From a financial perspective. I sometimes [don't feel valued] ...it's been a huge financial commitment for us to implement this service...and it was being held up by the government department. So that certainly wasn't recognised."

We also heard some very good examples of joint working, where charities and Government both brought resources to the partnership, no funding changed hands, and there was no formal paperwork or agreement in place. One charity was offered public space by Government, which they used at no fee, in return they assisted members of the public, from the Island and elsewhere, visiting that space. Another charity spoke of a combined activity and education programme run in partnership with Government. A third charity spoke of a highly successful therapeutic gardening project:

"It's been set up very much as a partnership and we're fairly equal in that partnership. So we have the land and the expertise in the horticulture side of things and hospitality and that low-level people stuff that we do day-to-day and then the government have psychologists, nurses, occupational therapists, occasionally speech and language therapists...it's a really beautiful example where a charity and the government with medical professionals can work together really well to deliver something really good."

One charity also suggested that matched funding and proportional grants (when Government and a charity contribute to a project) provided a great incentive to encourage investment and to leverage Government money, they said:

“Where we can help government and where we’ve been successful in the past has been matched funding. At a time when government is really struggling with their own finances and looking to cut back, charities can help maximise return on government investment by delivering social cause and bringing their own fundraising capabilities to grow the pot. By using our resources and by matching government’s money we can do a lot more and achieve a lot more than government could do alone and we can help leverage government funds.”

It is evident that there is a huge opportunity for charities and Government to work together through different funding models to better support Islanders. The draft Jersey Commissioning Framework acknowledges this potential: “By taking an asset/strengths based approach incorporating self-help and financial contributions from outside government, e.g. charitable funding, system resources can be maximised.”⁴⁴ One charity we spoke to reinforced this, saying:

“What is needed is to be funded appropriately...the collaboration by government with funders and the third sector would be a much stronger, a much better system. And it would allow much more innovation and agility than we currently have.”

While we encountered examples of good joint working, three charities we spoke with which were pioneering this approach spoke of how challenging delays caused by administration, Government systems, a lack of decision making and communication are, and how ultimately that will affect the viability of this kind of joint working. One charity said: “I have to think about whether it’s worth any further charitable funding, when the Government isn’t keeping their side of the bargain.”

We recommend that the Commissioning team, or an alternative partnerships post, takes accountability for ensuring the delays and blocks detailed here are navigated more easily to maximise the opportunities of different funding partnerships between Government and charities. This should include relationship building between Government and charitable funders.

Recommendations – Different funding models:

- 1.26 Maximise alternative funding models and partnerships between Government and charities. There needs to be a relationship management focus that enables this kind of working by removing barriers to it and building relationships across the funding landscape. Government and charities to work together to develop this.

⁴⁴ Jersey Commissioning Framework DRAFT (Jul 2024) Pg.9

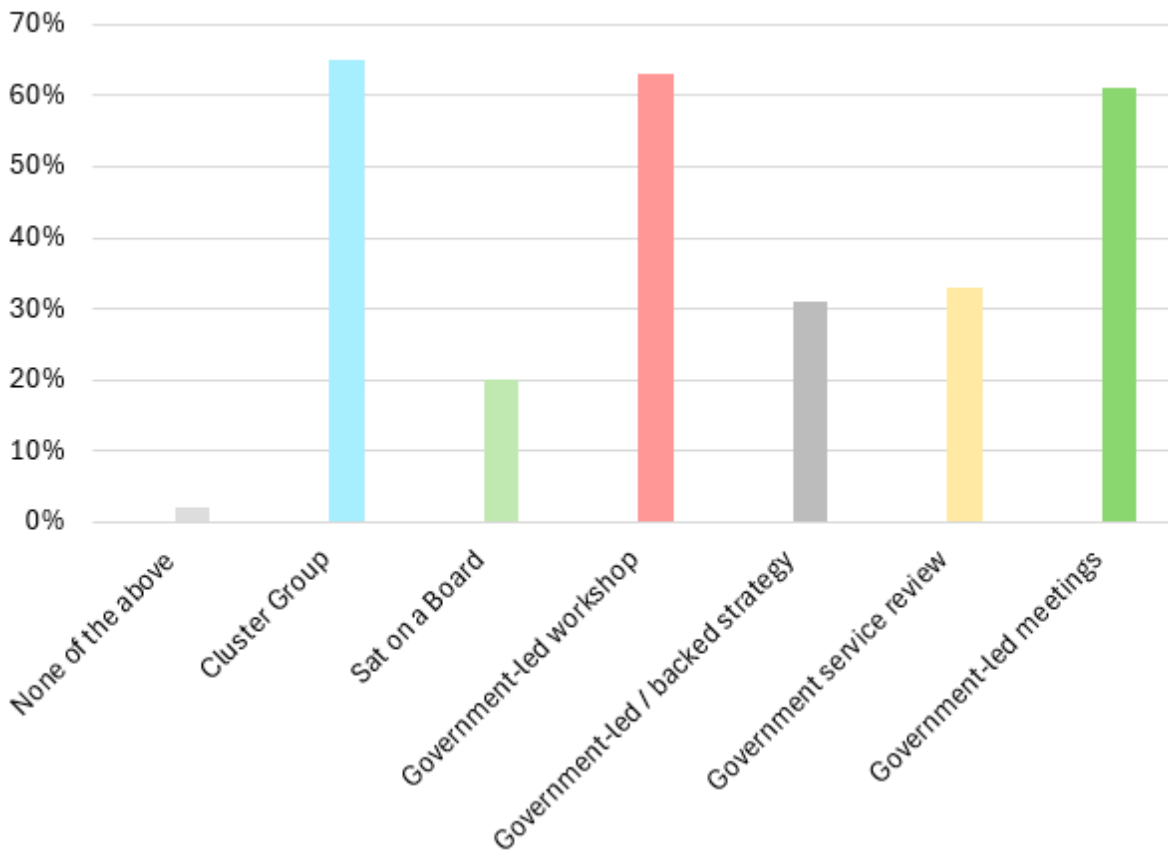
Chapter Two: Partnership working with Government

Partnership working with Government

One of Government’s five values is that “We are better together: We share knowledge and expertise, valuing the benefits of working together”.⁴⁵ This chapter explores how this plays out in practice with charities.

Of all charities involved in our research, 52 worked with Government in a partnership capacity outside of a funding relationship (several of these charities are also Government funded organisations). This includes participation in cluster groups, Closer to Home events, policy consultations, strategy development, service reviews, workshops, working groups, pilots, and framework design; sitting on boards, steering groups, forums, or sub-committees (strategic, partnership, oversight, advisory); and joint service delivery. Several interviewees also referenced the need to work operationally in partnership with Government on behalf of their service users, particularly with regards housing, benefits and mental health.

Q: Which pieces of Government-led strategy design, service reviews, cluster groups, boards or other meetings/workshops have you been involved in since the start of 2023?

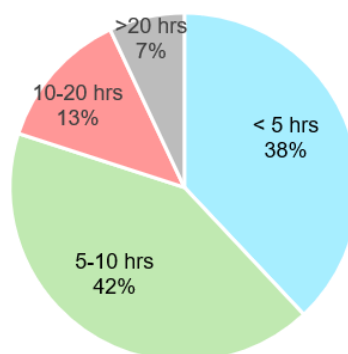


⁴⁵ Government of Jersey (May 2024) *Common Strategic Policy 2023 - 2026*. Jersey.

Time spent on Government-led partnership work

The majority of respondents spent up-to 10 hours a month participating in Government led partnership work (80%), with a small number of charities dedicating upwards of 20 hours a month (7%).

Q: How many hours a month do you estimate you and your team spend on Government-led strategy design, service reviews, cluster groups, boards, partnership forums or other meetings/workshops?



Of the nine charities that spent more than 10-hours per month on Government partnership work, the majority spent that time participating in cluster groups, Government-led workshops and Government-led meetings. Only 22% spent time sitting on Boards or working on strategies or service reviews.

Only seven charities which responded to the questionnaire were remunerated for their time on Government-led partnership work, this work included leading on strategy developments, running consultation events, board representation, and co-production participation. Interestingly, none of the charities that spend significant time on Government partnership work (20 hours plus) are remunerated for their time.

Charities are overwhelmingly supportive of partnership working. However, some charities noted the time commitment required was not always feasible. And others noted the cost involved. One charity said: “Every time [government] call us to a meeting that’s our time, money.” Another said “We are asked to participate but we don’t always feel supported and there is no financial compensation for doing so. So, we have this ongoing dilemma, where we are asked to support government but actually it’s a kind of one-sided equation.”

The formalisation of payment for certain kinds of partnership working is a positive step forward, particularly for those charities taking on significant responsibilities such as leading strategy developments. However, there needs to be equity and transparency in this approach. We recommend that Government develops guidelines which outline the thresholds for paid partnership working.

Recommendations – Time spent on Government-led partnership work:

- 2.1 Government to develop guidelines which outline the thresholds for paid partnership working.

Partnership experiences

Satisfaction rates from our questionnaire showed slightly lower scores for partnership working than for funding relations, particularly with regard to perceived community impact which dropped from 4.4 to 3.5 (1 being poor, 5 being excellent).

Other weighted average results for partnership working were:

- Overall relationship - 3.39 (funding - 3.84)
- Levels of mutual trust - 3.02 (funding - 3.6)
- Expertise being respected - 3.15 (funding - 3.7)
- Perceived community impact of the funding partnership – 3.5 (funding – 4.4).

See Appendix 1 for data chart.

We noted several different partnership dynamics between charities and Government in our interviews, including Government funded organisations and those that are not:

“The partnership runs so deep that our focus as a charity is completely aligned with what the Island’s sector is trying to achieve, and we try to support development in most facets of our work, [that’s what we] are focused on trying to achieve, it’s difficult to disentangle.”

“The entire partnership agreement only works with meaningful partnership...ours is interesting because it’s an uneasy sort of marriage...our role is to hold them to account. We can’t perform our role if they don’t open the gates.”

“I guess we tend to approach them the majority of the time but we’ve kind of reached a point where they do come to us to ask for our input...but it’s still kind of very much on their terms as to when we’re involved...I always feel like I’m walking on eggshells slightly, and I’m quite aware that if we were to push too hard or say anything too far then that contact would stop, and we wouldn’t be able to continue to present those views.”

“I manage to enjoy quite a good partnership approach...I’m quite lucky, I say lucky because I think at the moment the priorities are aligning...but I can imagine though, if for whatever reason, other areas become bigger priorities, I think I’d probably get less attention...I do appreciate that it’s probably good timing that has resulted in me feeling this way.”

This chapter explores the range of partnerships experiences, including working with politicians and officers, barriers to success, power dynamics, how valued charities feel as partners and the opportunities partnership working presents.

Working with politicians

Several charities we spoke with emphasised how much they value the relative ease with which they can access politicians in Jersey:

“If you were you or I were walking down the street in London, if we did happen to pass Keir Starmer or Rishi Sunak, you know you’d probably have throngs of security people between them and you; you’re not going to be able to speak to them. Here you can speak to your elected representatives on the streets. I’ve got numerous politicians’ numbers in my phone and you can contact them...We do have a good, different type of access to politicians compared to most jurisdictions.”

“There’s a long civil servant chain, but you can go straight to the top and to politicians.”

Charities spoke of how important these Ministerial relations are:

“Having that close relationship with these ministers and the civil service is so critical because you know you’ve got to constantly remind them of what you’re doing.”

“It’s really important that the ministers spend more time in charities because the minister filters down through government, through those government departments.”

There was some concern among charities about the dynamic between politicians and civil servants with several charities noting that officers are often blockers to political progress. They said:

“It’s not actually those at the very, very top that hold any power, it’s those civil servants that are in the top layer that then stop everything.”

“The civil servants tell the minister what to do, which is wrong.”

“There are still a lot of officers who don’t want things to change, so one of the problems all the ministers have is getting officers to run with their ideas.”

There was an acknowledgement, however, that this seemed to be changing with the new Council of Ministers, and that some charities feel that the current Council of Ministers is showing more interest in charities than previous Governments. Charities said:

“I would’ve said previously a lot of power was with officers... But that has changed now... I don’t know all of them, but generally speaking, the [politicians] I do know do seem to know where they want to go and are working hard to affect change, so I think the balance is definitely shifted towards the ministerial team, at the moment.”

“The politicians right now are very involved with going out there and meeting the community and talking to charities.”

“So how I see the difference between the two councils of ministers; [the previous council of ministers] never came anywhere near us, Lyndon Farnham and others in his ministerial team were in our office within two weeks and visiting our service. The old group talked about what they would do but actions didn’t follow, the new group take action but don’t use as much spin.”

“I think the government have more empathy with the sector as a whole, in terms of recognising the value that the whole sector provides for the island.”

One particularly positive example of Ministerial engagement that was highlighted by a number of charities was the Homelessness Forum. This is a forum that is chaired by the Minister for Housing, administered by the Local Services team and includes a number of charity partners. The power of this forum is the cross-departmental political representation. The forum is attended by the Minister for Health and Social Services, the Minister for Children and Families, the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, and the Minister for Social Security. This cross-system approach means that responses to homelessness can be joined-up. It also demonstrates the value politicians place on the work being done in this area, which empowers and motivates the charities involved.

However, not all charities benefit from positive political relations. *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* report notes that 37% of organisations never or rarely engage with elected members.⁴⁶ And a large number of our charity respondents felt that Government as a whole (Ministerial and officer level) did not understand what their charity does or the value the sector brings to the Island.

“The government could do better in understanding the sector.”

“Talk to charities, understand more about what charities are doing, why they are doing it, what the need is out there, because sometimes they don’t understand.”

“The biggest opportunities for government is to recognise what talent lies within the third sector...government to wake up and say, ‘there’s a very valuable sector here and we should do something more to support it’.”

“If I have a complaint about government at all, it is that there may be a lack of respect for the kind of knowledge and skill set and insight that [charities have].”

⁴⁶ *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* (Oct 2024) Pg.35

The Value of Jersey's Third Sector report reinforces this: "There is limited understanding in both government and amongst the public of the positive contributions made by the third sector as a whole."⁴⁷

Misunderstandings and misconceptions about the Third Sector also exist in the UK. It is noted in a report by the Charity Reform Group and Sheila McKechnie Foundation (2024) that charities are often limited in public perception to mere service providers and are not recognised for their incredible potential as agents for social change, which results from their expertise, their connection with the communities they serve and the level of public trust in them.^{48 49} Charities are noted as having played a crucial part in radical social reform "from abolishing slavery to securing the Living Wage, to equal marriage".⁵⁰

The report notes that the move towards more commissioned funding models over the past two decades has led to the "chilling" of the Third Sector in terms of campaigning, and the weakening of the democratic space as a result.⁵¹

What is needed is a shift in the way charities tell their story. From communicating about "their own needs and the needs for funds" to their wider societal mission.⁵²

"Charities should be re-cast as agents of social change who sometimes provide relief – not vehicles of relief who sometimes campaign."⁵³

We will discuss the untapped potential in the sector surrounding impact reporting in Chapter Three. For now, our note is that charities need to change their positioning to help Government see their impact more clearly and to encourage more trust in their views and expertise. It is then that true political partnerships for change can happen (see public policy section below).

The sector will need help to achieve this and a receptivity from Government towards it. This, plus several other strategic opportunities mentioned in this report, require political focus and support. Political leadership is critical to developing partner relations. The think tanks, the Future Governance Forum (FGF) and NPC, state:

"Structural solutions on their own are insufficient; better partnerships require close attention to culture and leadership. Expectations of civil servants to partner effectively can be formalised through ministerial and civil service leads for civil society."⁵⁴

At present, the Minister for Social Security and the Customer and Local Services Department have responsibility for 'promotion of the third sector and voluntary groups', while the responsibility for 'charity registration and regulation' sits with the Minister for External relations and the Department for the Economy.⁵⁵ It is questionable how widely known this is in the sector. And with responsibilities for the sector sitting within such busy Ministerial departments, it begs the question as to whether the sector receives the attention it requires, particularly at this current time when the sector is facing significant financial challenge and there is such untapped potential of how much more charities could contribute to the Island. Areas such as social reform, public service delivery, innovation, and policy development are all areas where charities can offer greater value.

The Value of the Third Sector report sets out a series of recommendations for Government in relation to the Third Sector:

⁴⁷ *The Value of Jersey's Third Sector* (Oct 2024) Pg.2

⁴⁸ Charity Reform Group and Sheila McKechnie Foundation (Nov 2024) *Focus for Good. Vision for a New Partnership Between Charities, Government and Businesses*.UK. Pg.3

⁴⁹ Davis, L. Neild, A. Hatcher, C. Wring, M. (Jun 2024) *NPC: Partners for change*.UK. Pg.7

⁵⁰ *Focus for Good...* (Nov 2024) Pg.8

⁵¹ *Focus for Good...* (Nov 2024) Pg.9

⁵² *Focus for Good...* (Nov 2024) Pg.14

⁵³ *Focus for Good...* (Nov 2024) Pg.25

⁵⁴ Ali, H. Brazell, S. Somerville, J. Wyld, G. Future Governance Forum and NPC (2025) *Mission Driven Partnerships with Civil Society Organisations*. UK. Pg.5

⁵⁵ States Assembly (2024) *States of Jersey Law 2005: Article 30a – Ministerial Responsibilities*. Jersey.

- Champion the sector in public policymaking.
- Proactively nurture and support the third sector.
- Engage with the sector and build strong, long-term and collaborative partnerships.
- Consider longer-term funding commitments.⁵⁶

This needs dedicated focus and political support to happen. One charity we spoke with said that “There could be an argument for a Charities Minister.” We certainly would recommend more political focus on the Third Sector, whether that is in the shape of a new Ministerial role, or it is done in another way, the sector needs political support to grow and thrive and to untap its potential as a key agent for social change:

“Charities do much more than just provide relief: they reach under-served communities; tackle complex social problems; provide evidence-based insights; build social capital; and play a vital role in democracy.”⁵⁷

Recommendations – Working with politicians:

- 2.2 Government and charities should replicate the Homelessness Forum structure where possible to support cross-system solutions to societal issues. Areas for consideration would be employment and health.
- 2.3 The sector needs more political recognition and advocacy to drive forward the recommendations in this report. The Council of Ministers to make a commitment to this. Consideration to be given to a Charities Minister role.

Charities, public policy making and needs analysis

One of the strengths of the charity sector is how closely charities work with the communities they serve. Charities have access to the most marginalised and vulnerable on our Island and they are a gateway for determining need and developing solutions with their communities. Several charities feel this presents huge opportunities for policy making. They said:

“[There is] tremendous potential, for people’s lived experiences to directly shape and inform practice, policy and law and then for that practice, policy and law to be further refined by reviewing the impact of that on lived experience and creating a sort of a positive flywheel of change.”

“There should and could be a real opportunity to get direct patient voices heard through our charity. We see so many people; we have a large support network...our surveys are responded to by the majority of the patients under their care.”

“As a small island community, it’s just such an amazing opportunity for us to get it right.”

“Opportunity [is]...having a fuller picture and understanding of need.”

The NPC, a Think Tank and consultancy for the social sector, said: “Charities are embedded in communities and have trusted relationships with people. When the voices of these communities aren’t embedded in decision-making, policies fail.”⁵⁸

The Compact, a partnership framework agreed between Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and UK Government (2010) emphasises the importance of charities in policy development. It says: “[That

⁵⁶ *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* (Oct 2024) Pg.7

⁵⁷ *Focus for Good...* (Nov 2024) Pg.3

⁵⁸ *NPC: Partners for change* (Jun 2024) Pg.7

government] should work with CSOs from the earliest possible stage to design policies, programmes and services.”⁵⁹ This is echoed by the CEO of the RSPCA, Chris Sherwood, who says:

“Charities have the power to change policies, practices and lives, but we need to be part of the solution from the start. We need a strong relationship with government, one of mutual respect, trust and collaboration, open to tackling the biggest problems together.”⁶⁰

Pockets of policy partnership work do exist in Jersey. One charity we spoke with holds their own Question and Answer event every few months where politicians are invited to hear from their service users. A homelessness charity we spoke to highlighted how successful good social policy has reduced people sleeping rough in Jersey:

“Jersey government and [charities] have come together to provide a service which gets people off the streets. So those kind of social policy wins should be more widely acknowledged by Government, and saying ‘you know, when we get it right, we get it right’.”

One charity voiced a concern regarding how the personal experiences of their service users, that they share with Government, are often ignored. They said:

“We take peoples’ very personal experiences forward, they open up to us, share their very difficult experiences, but it feels like they aren’t being listened to or acted on. And there’s only so many times you can keep asking people to share their personal story, you don’t want them to lose confidence in the charity either.”

Any organisation that benefits from the voice of lived experience must respect that and act upon it, whether that’s the charity or the Government by proxy.

The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector report identified policy making as an area of partnership opportunity between charities and Government. It notes that currently only a third of those charities that engage with elected officials or public policymakers believe their engagement makes a difference.⁶¹ The report also states: “This underlines the need to put the third sector on an equal footing with the private sector which is routinely consulted and involved in policy making.”⁶²

Our research also highlighted some charities’ views that there is a need to improve strategic needs-analysis to support policy work and commissioning. They said:

“I think probably we don’t have enough focus on the need and assessing what are the needs of our islanders, as well gathering the right data... more collaboration about what are the needs, so coming together, whole sectors together.”

“I’ve been a bit disappointed...with this recent mental health commissioning framework. The evidence base and data they are basing that framework on is the existing commissioning arrangements...they’re not bearing in mind any of [the existing strategic needs analysis], that evidence and that data.”

The launch of a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) hub on the Gov.je website is a positive development, offering an accessible resource for understanding community needs. It includes detail of what the JSNA is, how needs assessments are completed and provides links to existing public health data. A Steering Group has been established to help drive the development of the JSNA which has, to date, published a Strategic Needs Assessment on Women’s Health and Wellbeing. Encouragingly three charity representatives sit on this group. It is essential that charities play an active role in identifying need, it is, therefore, important that there is a role for those individuals to represent the views of the wider charitable sector. How this is administered requires thought and is something we discuss later in this chapter.

⁵⁹ *The Compact* (Dec 2010)

⁶⁰ In *Focus for Good...* (Nov 2024) Pg.20

⁶¹ *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* (Oct 2024) Pg.35

⁶² *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* (Oct 2024) Pg.42

One observation is that existing needs analysis that have been completed as part of the development of recent strategies, such as the End of Life Strategy and the Dementia strategy, are not included as yet on the hub. We would recommend they should be.

The JSNA is a step forward in enabling charities to contribute to the local needs agenda, supporting future policy and service development with the insights and expertise of charities. We feel even more can be done to harness the value charities can bring to policy development. Charities, and their service users, should be involved as early as possible in policy development, and where appropriate, should be active in the design process.

We already have pockets of experience to draw on, one of which is the partnership approach taken when developing recent strategies, which have been incredibly successful examples of partnership working. One charity said of their experience working in partnership with Government on a strategy: “[Joint strategy development] is probably partnership working at its best when it comes to government and charities, because there is a real sense of co-authorship.”

If we can harness the partnership potential between Government and charities for the development of needs analysis and policy development, we will have the opportunity to create more meaningful and powerful social change.

Recommendations – Charities, public policy making and needs analysis:

- 2.4 Government to capitalise on the expertise and insight charities can bring regarding policy development and identifying needs, and involve charities as early as possible in research and policy development.
- 2.5 Ahead of every funding arrangement, Government to look broadly at all available data, including existing needs analysis, and speak with charities about the needs in their areas of expertise.
- 2.6 Engage charities in the development of a Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA). Charity sector representatives who sit on the Steering Group to represent all charities. The JSNA hub should include needs assessments completed as part of existing strategy developments.

Working with officers – Points of contact

As with all Government relations, there was a repeated viewpoint among charities that success and progress depends on who you know. This focus on singular relationships leads to inconsistency of experience. Charities said:

“It’s all about personal relationships and you hope you’re asking the right questions to the right people but if that line of enquiry then just stops dead, you have nowhere else to go.”

“I get the impression it depends which way the wind blows and who you are talking to.”

“That’s the risk of it all being about relationships, which I guess for Jersey, that’s been a strength and also a challenge.”

The Director of Local Services is a key officer contact for the sector and facilitates cluster groups, relations with charitable funders, Closer to Home events and the Connect Me funding mechanism. The Local Services Manager supports with this work.

A number of charities referenced and praised the Director of Local Services and his team:

“There’s a lot of people I see in the government, on the ground people, like [the Director of Local Services] and [the Local Services Manager] and they are passionate about serving the Island and making a difference. And it is really lovely when you can get on, you’re passionate about the same thing.”

“[The Director of Local Services] and his team are very good at working between the two [charities and government].”

However, others spoke of their perceived lack of a single point of contact to help resolve issues they had with Government with regards to funding bid issues and operational support. One charity spoke of being passed between nine different people to try and secure some support for one of their clients. Others said:

“There would be a big difference if there was somebody or a team somewhere in government that was able to assist charities all the way through these processes.”

“Not having a named person you can go to. Someone who can hold your hand throughout the process and direct you, someone who owns it. Who you can agree a deadline with, who will have a commitment to it. Some accountability.”

Charities spoke of the difficulty in navigating Government contacts, exacerbated by constant changes of staff. This was identified as a significant barrier to success when working with Government, both at the political and officer levels. One charity spoke of having to navigate a change in Ministers, change in the Government Plan process and then a change in Chief Officer during a critical funding negotiation period. Other charities spoke of agreed partnership projects with officers being abandoned as the Government individuals involved left their posts, one said “You start these conversations then it falls away, which I’ve seen with a lot of things unfortunately.” It should not be the case that partnership success is so dependent on individual people and not the teams in which they sit.

The changes in staff lead to a lack of decision making around partnership projects, lost charitable time and effort on abandoned pieces of work, delays in sign off, and the need to ‘start again’ with bringing the new people up-to-speed:

“I think continuity is important, and I think the amount of new faces coming and going at the government end...it makes people less sure, and less confident and less stable.”

“Constant reorganisation over last few years makes it difficult to know who you should be speaking to. And sometimes they don’t know who is responsible for what.”

“When we’re coming up to a change of government, and you know that the ministers will change, senior civil servants change, if you lose that primary contact that’s probably a big challenge, because then you’ve got to rebuild that relationship with somebody new and explain the whole process again.”

“I guess the hope is that somebody [won’t] come and say well that may well be what you were doing but we’re not doing that now. I guess that’s the risk.”

“Change in personnel, changing governments, where they have different ministers come in with different ideas and different areas they all want to concentrate on. Those are the barriers.”

It is clear that there is a need for relationship continuity and for a single point of contact for charities. This is partially already delivered by Local Services and commissioning/grant contacts. However, from the charities we spoke with, it seems more is needed. One possibility is the creation of a ‘Partnership Hub’, something recommended by the FGF and NPC as a Government front door for charities, a centre of excellence and “a coordinating and enabling function...to assist in embedding partnerships in civil society.”⁶³

If Local Services are the hub of charity relationships with Government, this should be communicated clearly across the sector. It should also be clear what remit Local Services, the commissioners and grant contacts have and when charities should look elsewhere for support. Consideration should be given as to how to improve the partnership experience for charities and how to grow the partnership potential with Government including policy involvement and procurement, more on this in Chapter Three.

⁶³ *Mission Driven Partnerships with Civil Society Organisations.* (2025) Pg.5 and 9

Recommendations – Working with officers, point of contact:

- 2.7 Government to consider a single point of contact or the creation of a Partnership Hub, that can help charities navigate the machinery and structure of Government. If this is to be the Local Services team, this needs to be communicated to all charities along with clear guidelines on who else they should approach for different requirements.
- 2.8 When officers change roles Government to issue clear updates on new points of contact and ensure handovers with their team.

Working with officers - Barriers to success

As well as regular changes in personnel, charities also identified the culture within Government as a barrier to success. This includes working culture, leadership, and communication.

Charities spoke of how the working culture in Government impacted their ability to progress partnerships. Officers who are stretched and have limited capacity are harder to engage with and make it difficult to see conversations through to conclusion. It was noted by one charity that officers were unable to commit to longer partnership projects because of how busy they were, another said it impacted how much time officers could dedicate to building relationships with their partner charities. Several charities spoke of emails not being replied to and a difficulty in securing meetings. They said:

“Departments are often busy and stretched, making it harder to engage or respond quickly.”

“There's a tardiness sometimes with the officers and with government. When you work in the private sector, you tend to reply to people quite quickly. We are all under pressure but it's quite difficult sometimes to get meetings with some of these guys, you know, you won't get a response to an email.”

“Government should move more quickly...I can't see why, on certain things, why they shouldn't happen almost immediately.”

One charity had been unsuccessfully trying to set-up a meeting for five months (as of November 2024) to discuss a partnership project for 2025. Another said: “I know you're busy, I know you're working hard, but so are we and you are not even replying to my emails.” The lack of response and the delay this causes leads to charities feeling undervalued and, as noted in Chapter One, can also impact their financial security and delay service provision for Islanders. It also means charities often need to spend significant amounts of time chasing emails and meeting requests. This can lead to a strain on the partnership dynamic, as one charity said: “I do feel sometimes, quite often that we are an irritant and a bit of a thorn in their side.” Another said, “I think to be considered actually as a valued partner, rather than a nuisance would be nice.”

The lack of capacity also leads to lack of forward thinking and often results in charities being given very short notice to collate and submit information required by Government. Charities said:

“It's very last minute, like literally within two days, two days' notice, and you're expected to drop everything. Well, we're running an organisation, you wouldn't expect the chief exec of government to suddenly drop everything just to do a business case with two days' notice. It just wouldn't happen, but they do expect that just to be the case.”

“You get asked again for all the same information again and again and again. When information is required by government it's fairly instant that it's needed. Which leaves CEO's being contacted on holiday you know, or on a Friday for 'we need this now'.”

“What typically happens is I don't hear anything from them until they want something and then it needs to happen within a day, and I find that very frustrating because it's quite difficult to plan and manage things.”

These short notice demands do not reflect well on Government systems, culture or efficiency and cause unnecessary stress on charity CEOs. It communicates a lack of respect.

Charities are impacted by a culture of risk aversion within Government which leads to a lack of ownership and decision making. Several charities noted this culture of fear is embedded throughout Government, up to the highest levels and is partly a result of the hierarchical structures within Government which often disempower officers from making decisions. Charities said:

“The problem is most people won't do anything if they think they could get into trouble for it.”

“I think they're fearful of stepping out of line or doing the wrong thing, putting their head above a parapet. Jersey is tough, Jersey is quite ruthless in some areas, and I think that fear stops people.”

“Government are so risk adverse.”

“I've described people as Teflon, like no one takes accountability for a decision, to the highest, highest level you know literally, directors, group directors.”

We reported examples from charities in Chapter One of where this lack of decision making caused delays in service provision for Islanders and often cost the charities money. One charity said: “we were batted from pillar to post for over 12 months...No one was either able to or wanted to make a decision.” Another charity spoke to us of the painful experience of securing an immigration visa for a new member of staff. The charity had to recruit off Island due to the skills needed, they found a candidate that was perfect for the role but to qualify for a visa they had to pass an English test. This was despite their English A Level, a degree studied in English and the charity having vetted the person's English as part of their recruitment and interview process. The charity was advised of the wrong test by Government, so the candidate had to take two tests costing the charity double money, time and the potential of losing the candidate to the process. The charity said: “That would never happen in our team because a sensible person would make a decision.”

Charities noted that leaders in Government need to remove some of these decision blockers and address ‘the computer says no’ mentality by empowering officers and giving them permission to make decisions.

The lack of ownership and accountability can translate for charities as a lack of leadership, and this means that often there is a perceived lack of drive and clear direction from Government for partnership initiatives.

Charities spoke of a lack of transparency from Government regarding their planning, which makes it difficult to support initiatives and affects mutual trust. Charities said:

“The most important thing is communication about cause and aims...I know government has it's kind of strategic priorities which are outlined. But I think that needs to be communicated and also presented in a way that charities can understand their contribution. Because it's only if we're all walking in the same direction that we will achieve maximum value.”

“The problem is getting government to tell you what they're going to do.”

“[Government could improve] transparency on their side...keeping us up to date on what their plans are”

“I think having a clear plan makes it easier to work together because you can support the plan.”

One charity spoke of how they had worked with Government to align their strategy and measurement with wider Island objectives. This was a huge motivator for their team and went a considerable way in strengthening the relationship between the charity and Government. They said:

“When you see it within how that's contributing to [island objectives], I'd say that's motivating. It's important for the team as well...working in a charity is usually because people are drawn to it. It's different [from working in the private sector...It's something more [than profit]. It's all about narrative, isn't it? We're all so lead by stories...it's a story of how this is feeding into work that's being done elsewhere. I say it's quite important.”

The Value of Jersey's Third Sector report notes how few charities have long-term strategic plans⁶⁴. As mentioned in Chapter One, this is partially the result of short-term funding cycles and the long-term insecurity these bring. However, it is also the result of a reluctance by charities to push forward on priorities until Government priorities are understood. One industry expert we spoke with said there is a significant opportunity for charities to address this themselves:

“Charities are experts in their field. They have the insight and knowledge to identify gaps and step into leading positive change. Government is often less able to do this with longer-term strategic visions as they are driven by their own political cycle, priorities can change with changes in government. Charities can offer longer-term strategic stability. As such, charities should look at where they can align with Island Outcomes, but they should not be afraid to step into the lead on setting a strategic direction, creating working groups and plans to get there, and helping everyone, including government, be really clear on what good looks like.”

This sentiment is echoed by the Charity Reform Group which says that charities lack confidence in their role as drivers of social change and that they should be the ones “helping make the political weather.”⁶⁵

There is a role for both Government and charities in improving leadership in partnership working. Government can be more transparent with charities surrounding their plans, this will not only keep everyone better informed, it will help build trust. Charities can be more proactive in leading on strategic direction. As the FGF and NPC say: “To play a worthwhile role in the delivery of national transformation, civil society organisations themselves will need to raise their sights above their own field and sector-based challenges.”⁶⁶

Communication is critical in good partnership working and in breaking down barriers. Several charities spoke of their wish to have more genuine, honest, transparent communication with Government, relating it back to trust and respect:

“If it's honest and it's transparent, communication is only a positive, regardless. Because you can work through things, you can clarify misunderstandings, you can get the same page even if you don't agree. Communication really does just break all the barriers down.”

“The values are very much about building that trust with somebody, being able to be honest and I suppose the bit that I would value the most is the transparency...just be honest.”

There is definitely a need for Government to work towards more transparency in its partnerships with charities. But communication is a two-way street and charities have a role to play in creating a more trusting space for Government. The FGF and NPC say: “Civil society organisations in turn must keep the trust of civil servants when given, recognise political risk, and step up to conversations about transformational change which may stretch beyond organisational boundaries.”⁶⁷

The Charity Reform Group notes that the relationship between charities and Government is one of creative tension. “[Charities] want to be able to speak truth to power but also want a seat at the table.”⁶⁸

⁶⁴ *The Value of Jersey's Third Sector* (Oct 2024) Pg.45

⁶⁵ *Focus for Good...* (Nov 2024) Pg.15

⁶⁶ *Mission Driven Partnerships with Civil Society Organisations*. (2025) Pg.5

⁶⁷ *Mission Driven Partnerships with Civil Society Organisations*. (2025) Pg.5

⁶⁸ *Focus for Good...* (Nov 2024) Pg.17

It notes that charities are currently sometimes too close and too adversarial and it recognises the need for charities to be supportive of Government while also holding their independence as a critical friend.⁶⁹ There is great skill in navigating this dynamic and we would recommend some training for both parties in how to hold this tension in a constructive and positive way.

If it is done well it can lead to much more collaborative relationships, as one charity we spoke to which seems to be part-way there, said:

“It’s relationships, it is all about relationships and we know that we can tell the commissioners what we think, and we will have a genuine debate with them.”

Recommendations – Barriers to success:

- 2.9 Government to address the working practice of asking charities for information at short notice, being more considerate of charity CEOs time and demands.
- 2.10 Government and charities to work together to identify decision blocks within Government and work to rectify these. There is a role for leaders in Government to give officers more permission to make decisions.
- 2.11 Government to communicate its plans and intentions more clearly with their charity partners.
- 2.12 Charities to identify opportunities to lead Government and other partners in strategic planning and direction. The charity Health and Care CEO Forum input would be valuable.
- 2.13 Charities and Government to be offered training to navigate the complexities of being working partners and critical friends.

Power, respect and value

One of the blockers to honest and transparent communication from charities to Government, is caused by the perceived power dynamic between the two parties. Charities spoke of a fear of saying anything negative or walking in eggshells in what they say to Government. One charity described a “visceral fear” of speaking out, adding that: “they say we are equal partners but they hold all the trump cards. They are not interested in debate or dialogue.” In order to have truly transparent communication, the power dynamic needs to be acknowledged and addressed in the partnership, as charities said:

“An awareness of the power that the government holds as the funder, and the relative powerlessness, however which way you cut it, that a third sector organisation holds as the funded organisation, and due consideration to what that means in practice.”

“Government knows that it is our only customer, so you know it puts them in a kind of position of power in the relationship really.”

“It doesn’t really feel like a partnership, it still feels a bit parent and child. And I feel a little bit sort of like you, you’re at the whim of the commissioner.”

“It’s that feeling slightly unsettled all the time, feeling like perhaps as a service you are not as valued as we could be. It’s almost like we’re justifying ourselves, where it should almost be a 50-50.”

“It seems a little bit stealth. You know, you don’t really know what’s going on behind the scenes with them, but they wanna know everything that goes on behind the scenes for us.”

The power dynamic isn’t restricted to funding, one charity spoke about their engagement with Government, saying “we have the knowledge, they have the power” referencing how they are often asked for information but have very little influence on how that knowledge is put into practice. Another charity spoke of their frustration at their professional opinion at times being disregarded by Government

⁶⁹ *Focus for Good...* (Nov 2024) Pg.17

employees in respect of the charity's service users. They said: "We sometimes feel as though mutual respect is missing in these interactions".

Several charities talked about the power divide with regards to sharing data. One charity spoke about a project they had funded in partnership with Government on a three-year basis. The charity reported on the immediate impact of the project throughout its tenure but required longer-term impact data on the project's participants. The Government took over the project but has not provided the longer-term data to the charity, despite this data being available. This means the charity cannot see the full extent of the impact their service intervention had, and they cannot include this success in future charitable funding bids. Three other charities reported asking Government for health data to inform their own strategies and services, only to be stalled, ignored or declined.

We noted in Chapter One that the finalising of data sharing agreements by Government had caused significant delays to two charitable funded joint initiatives. We know that Government is aware of the difficulty surrounding data sharing. Data sharing was a workshop theme at the *Delivering Best Outcomes for Islanders* commissioning conference, and the draft Jersey Care Commission Standards for Health and Community Services details the importance of having "Assurance systems and data sharing arrangements [that] support effective collaboration and management of internal and external relationships".⁷⁰ We recommend this continues to be addressed until a beneficial solution is reached for both parties as ultimately it will benefit service users and our Island community.

As mentioned at the start of this chapter, mutual trust scored low on our questionnaire, with a third of respondents scoring it as poor. This is unsurprising when charities report not feeling that they are considered as equals to their Government counterparts. Charities said:

"We've always felt like the poor country cousin to the government, and sometimes I think that there is a lack of respect from certain people, in power in the government."

"In terms of you know feeling valued, I would say no, I think we are taken advantage of, I think as humans and individuals in all of this the government behave incredibly badly towards us. I think any other types of suppliers can choose to walk away and go take their business elsewhere. We as charities don't have that option."

"They don't always treat charities professionally...the language they use portrays it, so they often say what can we use you for? How can we use your service?"

"Government think charities are there to do government work and as such treat charities not as an equal partner, but more like employees."

Two charities gave examples of their names being used on Government literature without their knowledge or consent. The impact this had for one charity was unmanageable spikes in service demand and for the other it was having to repair reputational damage with their service users, who on the whole are untrusting of Government.

Charities also spoke of a lack of recognition within Government of the time wasted by charities on poor partnership experiences. This includes navigating conflict, applying for annual funding cycles, chasing emails and meetings and spending time on joint initiatives that are later dropped by Government. There was also reference to the time taken to participate in things like scrutiny reviews.

Government values include "We are respectful: We care about people as individuals and show respect for their rights, views and feelings."⁷¹ Unfortunately for many charities working with Government, this respect is not forthcoming.

We asked charities what they valued about their current partnership experiences with Government, for those charities which were funded, their funding featured strongly in their answers, with two charities feeling particularly positive when Government had assessed and increased their level of funding.

⁷⁰ Jersey Care Commission (2024) "Standard 33: Partnerships and Communities" *Care Standards for Health and Community Services and Jersey Ambulance Service*, Jersey. Pg.86

⁷¹ *Common Strategic Policy 2023 - 2026* (May 2024)

Another charity said: “I look at the amount of money they give us and I feel we must be valued”. This also worked inversely with several charities feeling that the lack of funding, or the level they receive is indicative of a perceived lack of value from Government of their services.

Several charities spoke of how they value the enhanced impact that they can make in partnership with Government. They said:

“I value the fact that as a small local charity we are limited to the amount of change we can bring about, so I value having the opportunity to work with government, for them to make changes.”

“We value the partnership as a whole in terms of for some time we wanted to partner with [government], because we know that we will have a greater impact on the community if we do. So, I value that we're now in a position to be able to support people in a more effective way. And I value their expertise.”

“There’s strength in alignment.”

“I think that you can do something really impactful together.”

“Working alongside [government] gives [our service] credibility with members and supporters. It helps people trust what we do.”

“I think we need to work with government because they have so much control and influence. And so, I think you know for us to make the maximum impact on the island, we have to work with government.”

Other things that charities valued were accessibility to politicians and senior officers, their expertise being coveted and respected, feeling heard, relationships with their funding contacts, and individuals within Government advocating on their behalf: “With some individuals you know that you are valued, they are trying their hardest to advocate for you.”

We asked all charities that we interviewed if they felt like a valued Government partner. 65% said yes, or partially. Those that answered ‘partially’ (31%) often had a good relationship with someone in Government that they valued but had mixed experiences elsewhere. Those that answered ‘yes’ (34%) felt they had sufficient levels of funding from Government, they reported collaborative and equal partnership relations with Government, feeling heard and listened to and having good working relationship across departments. Charities said: “Being treated as equal to them”; “It is like pushing on an open door.”

28% of charities said they did not feel like a valued partner.⁷² Reasons included insufficient funding arrangements, a lack of engagement with the service by commissioners, a perceived lack of respect from Government, overemphasis by Government on costs of service delivery indicating a lack of trust, and poor treatment by Government representatives. Some charities spoke of being treated like an extension to Government departments and their independence not being respected. They spoke of feeling used by Government for resources and funds, and they spoke of having to plug gaps in Government service shortfalls with no recognition or funding.

We recommend that Government and charities work together to build upon the parts of their relationships that make charities feel valued and address some of the barriers to building trust and respect detailed in this section. In particular, addressing the power dynamic, data sharing, and respectful working practices.

Recommendations – Power, respect and value:

⁷² Do you feel like a valued Government partner? Yes (34%); No (28%); Partially (31%); one charity is currently not involved in partnership with Government, another said it wasn't important to them (totalling 6%).

- 2.14 Government and charities to strive towards mutual trust, respect, equality and transparency in their partnerships. To support this, Government and charities, to have an open and transparent conversation about the power dynamics held between the parties, what this means and how it can be addressed. Also, look at understanding and nurturing the things that make charities feel like valued partners.
- 2.15 Government to prioritise establishing data sharing protocols with charities, where data can pass both-ways to improve system knowledge.

Partnership opportunities

Several charities spoke about the untapped potential of Government officers supporting the sector through volunteering. They noted that there is much more potential for Government to support charities with skills and time than currently takes place. One charity spoke of their need for volunteers but how they didn't know how to access the Government volunteer scheme. The Government offers 22 volunteering hours per year to each employee, more for Jersey Overseas Aid. However, there is a lack of awareness in the sector as to how to match volunteering needs with skills on offer. We recommend Government clearly communicates how charities can request and benefit from its volunteering scheme. This will not only benefit the charities but the individuals who volunteer as they become more connected with the communities they serve as public servants.

Another opportunity is the potential of the charity Health and Care CEO Forum as a point of partnership expertise for Government and a conduit of change. The Forum is made up of 33 charity CEOs from health and social care charities and combines significant experience to drive partnership working and efficiencies across the sector. One charity CEO spoke of the potential to formalise the relationship between Government and the Forum. Much of the Forum's remit extends beyond health and care and is relevant to the whole charity sector. This strategic partnership could be particularly powerful when Government looks at a partnership strategy. The UK Prime Minister recently announced the creation of a 'Civil Society Covenant' designed to "usher in a new era of partnership between government and civil society to help tackle some of the country's biggest issues".⁷³ The Covenant is being designed in consultation with the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations. This demonstrates the potential of similar working.

Recommendations – Partnership opportunities:

- 2.16 Government to clearly communicate how charities can request and benefit from its volunteering scheme.
- 2.17 Government and charity Health and Care CEO Forum to strengthen relations and consider how best to work together to drive a strategic approach to partnership work.

Charity representation on Government-led Boards

There is often a requirement for charities to be represented on a Government-led Board or Steering Group by a representative role. For example, the End-of-Life Partnership Board, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Steering Group, the Mental Health Strategic Partnership Board, the Heritage Advisory Partnership and the upcoming Health and Care Partnership Board. How the selection and participation of charities is undertaken is important to building mutual trust between Government and the sector. It is encouraging to see the intention of the Health and Care Partnership Board to "[appoint partners] through agreed, sector-based processes."⁷⁴

Charities spoke of the challenge of these 'sector wide' representation roles:

"I've been voted on, on behalf of many other people, many of the charities that work in the...space, so I'm there just trying to think of the wider system and the system-wide approach,

⁷³ Press release: Government Partners with Civil Society to Transform Lives Across the UK (17 October 2024)

⁷⁴ Government of Jersey (Oct 2024) *Health and Care System - High Level Integration Arrangements (Work in Progress)*. Jersey.

so largely speaking I'm keeping quiet [about my own service concerns], because I don't want to be known as the person that's always talking about [that], when I'm meant to be thinking more broadly."

"The [Health and Care Partnership Board] plan that was presented. They want one person to represent the third sector, who needs to have an overall kind of understanding of the charity sector. And I'm thinking, you look at the diversity of our sector, that includes family nursing that are literally midwives to everything else, that's a full-time job for about two people or three."

"But 'representing the third sector' I would always go to those thinking really broadly around charities...not every representative has done that in the past."

We recommend that charities and Government work together to agree a transparent and standardised approach to the appointment of charity representatives to these Boards, the expectations of their contributions, the mechanism around gathering and feeding back charity viewpoints, and any consideration of remuneration. This is where the charity Health and Care CEO Forum could be a great resource. We would also recommend the development of some training for representatives to ensure that individuals can best represent the sector.

Recommendations – Charity representation of Government-led boards:

- 2.18 Charities and Government to work together to agree a transparent and standardised approach to the appointment of charity representatives to boards, the expectations of their contributions, the mechanism around gathering and feeding back charity viewpoints, and any consideration of remuneration.
- 2.19 The development of some training for charity representative board members to ensure that individuals can best represent the whole sector.

A strategic approach to partnership working

Throughout this chapter and Chapter One we have identified areas where there is room for real progress in terms of partnership working. We hope that many of the funding issues we have raised can be addressed in the cross Government Commissioning and Partnership Strategy.

We feel there is scope for a wider partnership strategic approach, where the Government can be an enabler and true champion of the success of the sector. This will require political focus, and a consideration around where the responsibility for driving positive change will sit within Government, whether this will be part of Local Services, or whether it should sit somewhere else. We do believe it would be beneficial to be kept separate from funding relationships to avoid confusion and potential conflict. It will also require a strategy or framework, or both, to support the development of partnership working and deliverables on the Island.

In the UK there is a focus on supporting the development of positive, collaborative and societally-beneficial relations between the Third Sector and Government. The UK Government and the voluntary sector published *The Compact* in 2010 as a framework:

"Which helps guide the relationship between government and the sector at every level. It recognises that government and the sector fulfil complementary roles in the development of public policy and the delivery of services, and that government has a role in not only providing legitimacy to civil society, but also in respecting its independence in all areas of society."⁷⁵

⁷⁵ NCVO quoted in Select Committee on Charities (2017), "Chapter 8: Regulation and the Role of Government, in *Stronger Charities for a Stronger Society*. UK Parliament. UK. 467

The Compact originally had a commission which oversaw its monitoring; however, this was abolished in 2011, and it is noted that despite the positive intentions of The Compact that “their principles were not always adhered to in practice, and that awareness of them was not always high.”⁷⁶

The new Labour Government in Westminster announced a “new beginning” to the relationship between civil society and Government in October 2024, with a commitment made by the Prime Minister and Culture Secretary to create a ‘Civil Society Covenant’. While it is not explicitly said that this will replace The Compact, it seems the role of the Covenant is very similar. Its remit is to “harness the knowledge and expertise of voluntary, community, social enterprises and charities to better deliver better outcomes for communities right across the country.” The Covenant will “build a new partnership between government and civil society based on trust and mutual respect.” And “It will unlock the dynamism, innovation and trusted reach of civil society across communities.”⁷⁷ The Covenant is being developed in consultation with National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO).

The pillars of the Covenant are: transparency, recognition, participation and partnership.

The fact that the political sponsorship for this development comes from the Prime Minister and Culture Secretary implies its importance. The UK Government has long had a department with the remit to support the sector and its relations with Government. The Civil Society and Youth Directorate, previously known as The Office for Civil Society (OCS), sits under the Culture Secretary in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Although there are calls from some in the sector to relocate it back to the Cabinet Office, where it originally sat. The Directorate provides policy and support to charities.

In preparation for the Civil Society Covenant, the FGF and NPC make several practical recommendations to strengthen partnership working including the establishment of a ‘Partnership Hub’, the addition of external engagement in all written submissions to ministers, secondments between partner organisations, shared away days and the introduction of external engagement within performance appraisal arrangements for civil servants.⁷⁸

We recommend that the Government of Jersey looks to the UK for how to structure and support a more enhanced partnership ecosystem, including consideration of a strategy or framework, political ownership of this and where its execution should sit within Government. Robust engagement with the charity Health and Care CEO Forum, the wider sector, the Association of Jersey Charities and other charitable funders, will help ensure that charities shape, help manage and take accountability for this approach.

Recommendations – A strategic approach to partnership working:

- 2.20 The Island looks to the UK for how to structure and support a more enhanced partnership ecosystem, including consideration of a strategy or framework. To be developed in partnership with the whole Third Sector.
- 2.21 Consideration to be given to political ownership of this and where its execution should sit within Government.

⁷⁶ “Chapter 8” *Stronger Charities for a Stronger Society* (2017) 468

⁷⁷ *Press release: Government Partners with Civil Society to Transform Lives Across the UK* (17 October 2024)

⁷⁸ *Mission Driven Partnerships with Civil Society Organisations*. (2025) Pg.9, 10 and 11

Chapter 3: The Opportunity- Innovation, Social Value and Procurement

Innovation and efficiency

The Value of Jersey's Third Sector report notes the pressing need for charities to improve efficiencies to counteract their limited funding arrangements. By investing in innovation charities can “do more with less”. However, only 38% of organisations are investing in their innovation capabilities.⁷⁹ Our interview respondents linked this back to difficulties with funding:

“You are very, very constrained by the size of your team, the service you offer and your financial constraints.... Without financial support that allows you to grow, then you're a little bit in a straitjacket as a charity...[in a charity] everything is maxed and you do not have the capacity.”

As outlined in Chapter One there is an opportunity for Government to build charity capacity through funding. This would also support more innovation, which would help increase efficiencies.

One charity spoke of how helpful spark funding would be to help drive innovation. There is already evidence of this approach through the Impact Jersey funding scheme and it was encouraging to see several Third Sector organisations receiving awards in Impact Jersey's first Open Programme. However, other Government and ALO schemes and funding to encourage innovation, efficiency and productivity are not open to charities.

There are other non-funding support solutions that could help drive innovation. Charities believe that Government, through its inhouse expertise, could support the sector with streamlining some of its back-office functions, such as bookkeeping or administration. Or Government could pass on its procurement expertise and buying power to charities. This will be discussed later in this chapter.

Perhaps one of the most impactful things Government could do to support the sector with efficiency and innovation is to address some of the barriers to success highlighted in this report such as moving away from annual funding cycles and providing clearer points of contact within Government. This would free up charity time that could be redirected to innovation. As one charity said:

“Government can actually constrain our ability to be agile.... if I didn't have to deal with all the challenge of securing an adequate contract each year with government, which takes up so much time, I would be looking at what digital technology we could be using to enable greater efficiencies. Or I could then go and get funding for something really innovative that supports the needs of our islanders and pilot that.”

Charities are not alone in this. The *Barriers to Business* report published by Jersey Business (September 2023) states:

“The key to unlocking potential in the Island is to ensure that government interactions are simple and efficient for new and existing businesses...by removing or reducing barriers to doing business across government and related entities.”⁸⁰

There is an opportunity for charities and Government to work together on new approaches to innovation. However, a lot can be achieved through Government addressing the current barriers to success in its partnerships. This will also help rebuild trust with the sector which, as Jersey Business identifies, is a key contributor to increased efficiency: “In the presence of trust speed goes up and costs come down, in the absence of trust the speed slows and costs increase.”⁸¹

⁷⁹ *The Value of Jersey's Third Sector* (Oct 2024) Pg.49

⁸⁰ Jersey Business and Future Economy Programme (Sept 2023) *Barriers to Business Report*. Jersey. Pg.2

⁸¹ *Barriers to Business Report* (Sept 2023) Pg.2

Recommendations – Innovation and efficiency:

- 3.1 Charities and Government to work together to discuss how innovation can be supported and evolved in the sector.
- 3.2 Government to address the barriers to successful partnership working outlined in this report to free up charity time to be redirected towards innovation.

Social value

Social value is defined by the Government of Jersey as:

“The wider social, economic and environmental benefits of the commitments we make and how they will affect our Island and our people. Social Value shifts the focus from the bottom-line cost and asks the question: ‘If £1 is spent on the delivery of goods and services, how can we harness that £1 to deliver the most benefits for our Island?’”⁸²

Social value is about moving away from the idea of price and cost, towards overall value for money around social, environmental and economic impact. The Government recognises that it has a moral responsibility to “deliver positive social, economic and environmental outcomes for Jersey” and that any missed opportunity to do so through its procurement decisions, means a cost “that has to be absorbed elsewhere in our public services.”⁸³

Jersey’s embedding of social value into its procurement practices is relatively embryonic compared to the UK. For instance, unlike the UK, Jersey has no legal framework around social value. It does, however, have a dedicated Lead for Social Value and Sustainability; a Social Value Model which includes thematic examples of social value activities and how to measure these; it runs twice yearly Community in Practice events; and produces an internal social value impact report.

The Government of Jersey currently requires a 10% social value weighting in tender evaluations for bids over £100,000. This sometimes is extended to smaller contracts too. Jersey uses Future Jersey, UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Jersey Performance Framework to theme its social value approach.

We will argue in this chapter that there is significant opportunity for charities and Government to work together to further harness the power of social value for social good.

Social value - The UK landscape

Social value was listed as a principle in The Compact in 2010:

“Ensure that social, environmental and economic value forms a standard part of designing, developing and delivering policies, programmes and services.”⁸⁴

In the UK, the Public Services Social Value Act came into force in 2013, requiring commissioners to consider “wider social, economic and environmental benefits” to new contracts. In 2020 this was updated to require all major contract bids to be assessed for their social value contribution, with a minimum of a 10% weighting of the overall scoring to be attributed to social value.⁸⁵

In the coming month the UK Government’s commitment to social value will be reinforced again with the introduction of the New Procurement Act (2023). There is a drive to engage more Voluntary, Community

⁸² Treasury and Exchequer (Sept 2024) *Social Value External FAQs*. Jersey.

⁸³ *Social Value External FAQs* (Sept 2024)

⁸⁴ *The Compact* (Dec 2010) Pg,9

⁸⁵ Cabinet Office (No Date), *Social Value Act: Information and Resources*. UK.

and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations to bid for supplier opportunities with Government, precisely because of the social value they bring. The UK Government say:

“There should be a clear ‘golden thread’ from government priorities to the development of strategies and business cases for programmes and projects, through to procurement specifications.”⁸⁶

The new Act shifts the emphasis from “the most economically advantageous tender” to “the most advantageous tender”, meaning contracting authorities no longer need to award based on the lowest price which, according to a UK Solicitor, will mean that charities can “leverage their charitable purposes to gain competitive advantage in their tender process”.⁸⁷

The timing of the Procurement Act and the Civil Society Covenant, mentioned in Chapter Two, tells a story of the UK Government’s recognition of the potential value charities can deliver in addressing societal issues, it also demonstrates a shift in how we think about ‘value for money’, which is at the heart of all Government procurement. The UK Government is currently training 4,000 commercial buyers in how to integrate social value into procurement practices.⁸⁸

We believe there is huge potential for the evolution of the social value and procurement model in Jersey in partnership with charities, to help Government meet the Island’s Outcomes as well as providing sustainability for the sector.

Charities and social value – the current picture

We spoke to a number of charities which are exploring how to measure and demonstrate their social value. Four charities we spoke to have sought external support to determine their overall social value and social return on investment. Measuring social value involves capturing the full impact made by a charity economically, socially and environmentally. Measuring social return on investment involves evaluating the charity’s impact versus how much it costs them to do so. This is generally presented as the total cost savings to Government*, or the value delivered for every £1 invested.

**Cost savings are presented as a comparison of like for like service delivery, charity versus Government. Or the costs that would be incurred in other areas should the charity not provide the services they do. Or both.*

There is a strong emphasis on cost saving in current funding partnerships with Government and several charities we spoke with told us of the strain they felt justifying their costs and how this leads to them feeling undervalued by Government:

“If I talk to them, I feel pretty undervalued because I think that they feel that we are expensive.”

“The government never internally gets scrutinised to the same level as the third sector...I've been so scrutinised for value for money, when [we] are super value for money, even if you just compared pay and staffing structure alone. As a charity we have to be lean and as an example, we can't compete with government's pay structure, pension and terms and conditions. We're significantly better value for money and it would be nice to be recognised as such.”

“It feels like it's about the money, and rather than [you] are doing an absolutely incredible job well done, let's look at what you could be doing more of.”

“[Government] have the cost of everything, but they have the value of nothing.”

⁸⁶ Cabinet Office, Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (Sept 2020) “Guide to using the Social Value Model” *Policy Paper: Procurement Policy Note 06/20 – Taking Account of Social Value in the Award of Central Government Contracts*. UK. Pg.8

⁸⁷ Scown, S. (Nov 2024), *Procurement Act 2023 - What is Changing for Charities*. UK.

⁸⁸ *Social Value Act: Information and Resources* (No date)

“[Government] think charities are just there to help them save cash, and I think every charity experiences that.”

The emphasis placed by Government on reducing costs of charitable service provision undermines trust and negatively impacts the partnership relationship. The sector is inherently lean and cost conscious in the way it operates and yet, is often accused of being inefficient. Charities are not for profit, so are not looking for dividends for Shareholders, their costs are transparent, their accounts are public and they are the most trusted local institutions. And yet, the starting point from Government seems to be one of mistrust. Charities said:

“The constant querying about value for money...the third sector...is the hardest business to run, [harder] than any public sector or private sector...you never know where your funding is coming from, from one minute to the next, you're always chasing that next pound. And yet we're the ones consistently challenged. When you also then unfortunately see...poor spending within government. So, it's this disconnect, challenging us, but actually not getting their own house in order. So that in itself makes you feel like you're not really valued.”

“I think sometimes government think that everyone is out to get them.”

As outlined previously, charities are often restricted on increasing efficiencies due to restrictive funding models, time spent working with current Government processes and a lack of funds for innovation. Addressing these will free up charity time to redirect towards innovation and increased efficiency. We also recommend that Government follows the UK in considering a wider definition of value for money in procurement to emphasise social value and approaches each funding relationship from a position of trust.

In turn, charities need to start measuring and demonstrating their social value. If Government and charities work together in this way, there can be a powerful culture shift.

We know that of the four charities which have developed their social value reporting, two have successfully negotiated new funding partnerships with Government.

Social value reporting is a more mature way for charities to capture the impact of what they do, and it needs to be supported from Board level. NPC, a think tank and consultancy for the social sector, believes that considering impact should be written into charity trustee's obligations by the Charity Commission (UK).⁸⁹

We should note, however, that this kind of measurement is not easy. It is very difficult to quantify everything a charity does. The CEO of the NCVO says:

“Charities exist not only to help people survive, but to help people thrive. To add joy, build places of connection, instil hope. While economic contribution is important, it is this motivation, and the intrinsic need for society to hope and believe that things can be better, that makes civil society so invaluable.”⁹⁰

These things are very hard to measure. The Charity Reform Group states: “Many would say that understanding the full value that charities generate requires a new approach, more specifically tailored to how they work.”⁹¹

Developing new and bespoke measurement models can be expensive. One charity which is exploring this, said:

“It's quite complex work...we don't all have the luxury of the expense that the work costs to do...we have to find a more simplified version...But it's definitely the way forward for bids and funding, it's just so much more powerful.”

⁸⁹ NPC: *Partners for Change* (June 2024) Pg.4

⁹⁰ Sarah Elliott, CEO, NCVO, in *Focus for Good...* (Nov 2024) Pg 11

⁹¹ *Focus for Good...* (Nov 2024) Pg 8

We know that the Jersey Community Foundation and PwC are considering a simplified model for charities to capture their social value. Government has also started a piece of work to standardise social value and impact reporting. The closer we can get to a standardised approach and common language around social value and its reporting, the easier it will be for charities to help Government see the bigger picture in their partnerships. We recommend that Government, charities and charitable funders work together with external experts to create a standardised approach to social value reporting and that this is supported with training. For guidance, we can refer to the School of Social Entrepreneurs which runs a three-day training programme on Measuring Social Impact and another shorter course on Measuring Social Value.⁹²

Social value can also be considered in strategic business planning. One charity we spoke with has mapped their strategic aims against Island Outcomes and an Island-wide strategy. This has helped them develop and mature their funding relationship with Government as Government can see the value of their investment against its own objectives. This charity said:

“If there's a charity that is well placed to do something and has the expertise and can provide not a return on the investment, but it may be a social return on the investment, but it will achieve the objectives that...government feels it needs to achieve, that's good for the public, then it ensures value for money.”

Social Value is a way that charities can clearly communicate their overall value and impact, as well as the critical role they fulfil in our community. It presents an opportunity for Government to show the full value of its procurement partnerships. In order to embed this, there needs to be a change in how Government approaches value for money and charities need support to measure and demonstrate their social value.

Recommendations – Charities and social value:

- 3.3 Government to work with charities to consider a wider working definition of value for money that incorporates social value and to shift emphasis towards value added, away from cost cutting.
- 3.4 Government, charities and charitable funders to work together with external experts to create a standardised approach to social value reporting and business planning and support this with training.

Government and social value – the current picture

So far, we have referenced the social value that charities contribute to our community. There is also a significant opportunity for Government to support charities by better aligning its other suppliers with the local sector.

Every contract bid over £100,000 must detail social value as part of its tender submission. This is a commitment by the supplier to deliver additional benefit to Islanders should they win the contract. Best practice states that social value contributions should be aligned with the purpose of the contract wherever possible. The Government details its social value requirements for each contract within its tender specification.

We believe there is an opportunity to create even more impact through the Government's approach to social value. The social value objectives of each contract are aligned with Future Jersey, UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Jersey Performance Framework. We can optimise the impact suppliers can make to these objectives by focusing their efforts on existing and timely community need. Charities are a gateway for determining need and developing solutions. Charities can help translate each social value objective into an action where impact would be greatest. Suppliers can then make things happen. We would recommend that Government works with charities and suppliers at the outset of designing each tender specification to refine the social value element included. This aligns with UK

⁹² *Measuring Social Impact* (No date). School for Social Entrepreneurs. UK.

best practice. The UK Cabinet Office advises procurement professionals to engage with partners, including charities, at the earliest opportunity in defining their tender specification:

“As a first step, consult with your key stakeholders, supply market, and customer base, to reach a common understanding of what social value might look like for your contract. Many organisations want to be effective contributors to social value and will be happy to start a conversation with you.”⁹³

Another way of creating greater impact is to ensure that suppliers are aware of existing charity initiatives that require support. This will give the supplier choice in where they direct their social value efforts. It is also a way that Government can help enhance corporate support of charities. *The Value of the Third Sector* report stated that less than 1% of charitable income comes from corporate sponsorship.⁹⁴ Government can help establish corporate/charity partnerships through its social value initiatives. This is endorsed by *The Value of the Third Sector* report:

“When private sector businesses are tendering for contracts, further brokering support could be offered by government to connect them to priority funding needs of local third sector organisations as part of their social value commitments.”⁹⁵

Partnering corporates and charities in this way will also potentially help develop the quality of social value reporting by Government suppliers. If we reach a point where we have a standardised model of social value reporting, charities can use their experience to help suppliers submit social value reports in a standardised format, making it easier for Government to report on its collective procurement activities.

At present suppliers are currently pointed to the Association of Jersey Charities (AJC) to identify charities that they might work with. However, the AJC does not have a formalised list of opportunities for suppliers. This could be developed. Or the Government and the sector could invest in a matching platform such as ‘Match my project’ which is used by a number of UK local authorities to match suppliers with community projects.⁹⁶

Recommendations – Government and social value:

- 3.5 Government to work with charities and suppliers at the outset of designing each tender specification to refine the social value element.
- 3.6 The AJC, Government, charity funders and charities to work together to create a solution to match corporates with community projects.

Charities and procurement

For the purposes of this section, ‘procurement arrangement’ does not include commissioning or grant agreements.

The UK Crown Commercial Service (CCS) recognises that only 1% of all public sector suppliers are from the Voluntary, Community or Social Enterprise space.⁹⁷ Similarly, our research revealed that very few charities in Jersey have procurement arrangements with Government.

15 questionnaire respondents have a procurement arrangement with Government, this contributed £320,423 to those charities in 2023. Procurement included training delivery (total £32,350), room hire (total £51,000); and other, such as tree work, providing specialist equipment, tuition, catering, printing

⁹³ Cabinet Office (Jan 2024) *Social Value in Procurement - Procurement Essentials*. UK.

⁹⁴ *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* (Oct 2024) Pg.31

⁹⁵ *The Value of Jersey’s Third Sector* (Oct 2024) Pg.58

⁹⁶ *Match My Project* (No Date). Website.

⁹⁷ Cabinet Office (Jan 2024) *Crown Commercial Service Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE) Action Plan*. UK.

and project management (total £237,073). The majority of these arrangements were held with HCS and CLS (27% each).

The CCS believe that charities face the same barriers as SMEs in participating in Government procurement bids. The barriers are a lack of experience, a lack of awareness of where to find opportunities and a lack of capacity for completing the processes.⁹⁸ These themes were echoed in our research. We asked charities what the barriers were to participating in Government procurement opportunities. They said:

“Have there been many instances on island where third sector organisations or individuals have been considered on an equal basis [to private suppliers in government procurement]? No. I'm certainly not aware of any. So, what does that say? Were they not there to begin with? Or was the process not sufficiently publicised or opened out enough to get...in front of those people to begin with.”

“I guess it's competing against a bigger wider market, isn't it?...That's the biggest problem, competing, and the government will go for the cheaper price, won't they?”

“Complex applications – [it] often involves a lot of paperwork, which smaller charities struggle to manage.”

“Could our sector maybe be given a heads up of these things early so that maybe we get a chance to compete? I think that would be really interesting, when the government is tendering for somebody to cut its hedgerows of whatever, how is it advertised?”

“[If] charities [are to] invest time and money and efforts into something that perhaps they're not gonna be successful with, that's not the best use of charity funds, would be my view.”

The final point speaks to the tension inherent in charities pursuing commercial activities as a form of income. Charities must pass a charity test to become registered in Jersey. This status can be jeopardised if charities become too commercial in their activities. However, in a changing funding landscape there is a need for charities to diversify, including with self-generated funding models. One charity noted:

“It opens another question really doesn't it about the kind of commerciality of charities, and I think historically charities haven't been thinking of themselves as businesses or commercial bodies...But you know when is it commercial? When's it not? And I think understanding that better and having that clear framework would also help that procurement debate.”

Some of the charities we spoke with have circumvented the charity/commercial tension by moving their commercial activities into separate legal entities, which act as social enterprises. However, there is no legal social enterprise framework in Jersey.

The Government is currently piloting a Social, Economic and Environmental (SEE) Enterprise Pathway. This pathway will sit under the existing Companies (Law) Jersey (there will be no new legal framework) and will give organisations the opportunity to be accredited and to access a pathway which includes support from Jersey Business, guidance on how to prepare for social investment, links with social investors, and a designated point of contact to streamline Government administration processes.⁹⁹ In order to qualify as a social enterprise, Jersey organisations should:

- Have a clear social or environmental mission.
- Be independent and controlled/owned in the interests of [its] social mission.
- Earn more than half of its income through trading (or should be working towards this).
- Invest a majority (51%+) of any profits in achieving social purposes.

⁹⁸ *Crown Commercial Service Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE) Action Plan* (Jan 2024)

⁹⁹ Future Economy Programme. Government of Jersey (Nov 2024) *The SEE Enterprise Pathway DRAFT Presentation*. Jersey. Slide 17

- Commit that assets will be used for social purposes, in the event of company dissolution.
- Have robust regular reporting to be able to demonstrate how the social and/or environmental mission is being achieved.¹⁰⁰

The SEE Enterprise pathway is a great example of Government leading innovation in the Third Sector. We recommend that the results of the pilot are communicated widely to the charity sector, along with information about the benefits and challenges that might be encountered if charities were to become social enterprises, in full or in part.

Whether charities remain charities or become social enterprises, we believe that there is a significant opportunity for growing the number of charities which benefit from Government procurement arrangements. This will bolster the sector and help Government further embed its social value ethos. The incoming UK Procurement Act (2023) is designed to stimulate this exact kind of working. The Cabinet Office says:

“The more effectively the public sector normalises social value in our commercial activity, the more wholeheartedly the supply market will be able to adapt and respond. The result will be a fundamental cultural shift in behaviours and attitudes.”¹⁰¹

In order for more charities to become suppliers, consideration needs to be given to awareness of opportunities, charities as suppliers and their procurement experience.

Awareness of opportunities

The charities we spoke with did not know how to find out about different procurement opportunities. The Government publish all opportunities valued over £100,000 on the Channel Island’s Tender Portal. There were 11 listed opportunities at the time of writing. Charities, however, are more likely to be interested in smaller value opportunities. The UK Government’s Contract Finder portal lists contracts over the value of £10,000.¹⁰² The UK Government also hosts a Small and Medium Business Hub which provides guidance on Government procurement opportunities, including details of where organisations can find out about tenders and guidance on how to apply.¹⁰³ Perhaps this is something that could be developed locally. We recommend that the Government of Jersey consider how to raise awareness of these kinds of opportunities with the sector and would suggest it includes contracts less than £10,000.

Government can also raise awareness of how charities can become suppliers. It may be that there are preferred supplier frameworks in areas such as training delivery. The UK Government has several different mechanisms by which organisations can become suppliers, including its Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) which acts as an electronic framework that suppliers can join at any time and be notified about procurement opportunities.¹⁰⁴

We would recommend that Government design and deliver an information session to charities on different procurement opportunities for the sector and perhaps develop a page on Gov.je to host this information. This could also be supported by ‘meet the buyer’ events where Government can present upcoming opportunities.

There will also be a need to raise awareness within Government procurement channels that charities are viable contenders for Government contracts.

Charities as suppliers

¹⁰⁰ *The SEE Enterprise Pathway DRAFT Presentation* (Nov 2024) Slide 8

¹⁰¹ “Guide to using the Social Value Model” *Policy paper: Procurement Policy Note 06/20...* (Sept 2020) Pg.4

¹⁰² Cabinet Office, Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (Oct 2023) *VSCE: A Guide to Working with Government*. UK.

¹⁰³ Cabinet Office. UK Government (No date) *Small and Medium Business Hub*. UK.

¹⁰⁴ *VSCE: A Guide to Working with Government* (Oct 2023)

The Government's current approach to social value in procurement is focused mostly on contracts over the value of £100,000. We would argue that there is an opportunity to maximise social value impact at all levels of procurement, including smaller value contracts, with the degree of social value demonstration and reporting being proportionate to the value of the contract.

Our respondents felt Government should prioritise charities as suppliers wherever possible. This would enhance the wider impact of each procurement arrangement and support the sector. One charity which has a procurement arrangement with Government, said:

“It's that circular economy. The government's money is staying within that circle. And that is probably key to utilising charities and third sector for any procurement, is the money stays within the community, it's not going to commercial entities to make profit or off Island.”

Charities, however, need support to develop as suppliers. Firstly, they need to identify what they can sell and what price point they should consider. Then they need to establish the impact any procurement opportunity would have on existing resource and charitable services. We recommend that charitable funders and Government work together to develop a training programme for charities to become established and confident suppliers.

The Procurement Experience

The Public Accounts Committee are currently undertaking a review into procurement and have already received a large number of submissions from Government departments and other bodies. The themes of the submissions include a wish for Government to appoint more local suppliers; difficulties with the procurement system Ariba, particularly for small organisations, and a delay in supplier payments.¹⁰⁵ Our research suggests similar challenges.

Our questionnaire asked charities about their procurement arrangement experience. Of those charities that have a procurement arrangement with Government, the overall experience was scored at 2.79 weighted average, less than both funding and partnership experiences (1 being poor, 5 being excellent).

The two lowest scoring categories of experience were with Government payment terms (2.16 weighted average) and experience using Ariba (2.25 weighted average). Please see Appendix 1 for full data chart.

Questionnaire comments and interviews echoed this:

“[Ariba] It's a nightmare dealing with the procurement system.”

“We have had significant issues with invoices being paid. This would typically be for times when our centre has been used for room rentals to run government activities including counselling, conferences and training. There seems to be confusion between government departments on what is required by their own process in order for a payment to be made. This has led to some payments not being received by us, which totalled in excess of £20,000 at one stage. The amount of work to resolve this has been considerable and is ongoing as there are still a number of historic unpaid invoices. Moving forwards, the process seems to place all the admin responsibility onto us, with us as a charity having to access a government portal to raise invoices and purchase orders and then approve payments. We believe that these tasks should be completed by admin or finance staff employed by the government, but there seems a drive to push the cost of admin onto us as an organisation. If this does not improve, we will be forced to add administrative costs onto our pricing for government. The process leaves us feeling undervalued and unappreciated when we strive to work well in partnership with government services taking place in our building.”

¹⁰⁵ A review of submissions, Public Accounts Committee (June 2024) *Procurement by the Government of Jersey Review*. Jersey.

“Small charities do not have the administration staff and systems to produce sophisticated documentation.”

A number of charities spoke about the possibility of having slightly different procurement processes for charities, such as simpler tender and supplier onboarding processes to minimise the time taken away from charitable activities. The CCS in the UK recognises that “the VCSE sector faces distinct challenges when bidding for contracts and we are committed to developing practices and approaches that increase their participation.”¹⁰⁶ Charities are not businesses, they bring different value to Government contracts. We believe there should be consideration of how charities operate in any procurement processes and arrangements. We recommended that Government of Jersey works with the sector to understand its unique challenges to becoming a supplier and which solutions will help.

Procurement buying power

The Government is a significant buying power. It has preferential procurement arrangements with a number of suppliers that could extend benefits to charities. Two charities we spoke with identified this as an opportunity. One spoke of Government buying power on printer inks, paper, DBS certificates and insurance and wondered if Government could take a negotiation role on the sector’s behalf with its suppliers. Another charity spoke of cost savings around PPE when bulk buying.

The CCS run a similar programme for Government agencies and external suppliers. They call this ‘Aggregation’ where they bring customers with similar needs together “to achieve savings that would not be possible through individual buying... They’ll get you the best possible deal”¹⁰⁷. For instance, CCS offers NHS England a range of energy baskets through which NHS trusts can buy their gas and electricity.¹⁰⁸

We recommend that the Government and charities work together to identify such opportunities and pilot how this might work in practice.

Recommendations – Charities and procurement:

- 3.7 Communicate the results of the SEE Enterprise Pathway pilot with the charity sector, including benefits and challenges to becoming a social enterprise. To include Jersey Charity Commissioner.
- 3.8 Government to design and deliver an information session to charities on different procurement opportunities for the sector, including lower level procurement opportunities (less than £10,000) and how to access these.
- 3.9 Government to develop a page on Gov.je to host procurement information for charities.
- 3.10 Charitable funders and Government to work together to develop a training programme for charities to become established and confident suppliers.
- 3.11 Government to work with charities to understand their unique challenges to becoming a supplier and which solutions will help.
- 3.12 Government and charities to work together to identify opportunities for charities to benefit from Government’s buying power, and pilot how this might work in practice.

¹⁰⁶ *Crown Commercial Service Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE) Action Plan* (Jan 2024)

¹⁰⁷ *Crown Commercial Service* (Oct 2024) *Unlock the Power of Procurement*. UK. Pg.19

¹⁰⁸ *Unlock the Power of Procurement* (Oct 2024) Pg.16

Conclusion

This report captures a moment in time. We hope it provides a balanced account of the current partnership experience between charities and Government.

We believe there is tremendous power in capturing the views of so many charities and that this offers great insight and potential for improvement. We hope this report is received in the spirit with which it has been crafted, to support the development of Government-charity relations to benefit everyone – politicians, officers, charities and most importantly, the community we all serve.

The report includes examples of strong, productive and respectful partnerships and we should learn from these. It is also important to acknowledge where improvement is needed and to work together to achieve this. Oftentimes partnership dynamics evolve from the systems in which they are born. Poor systems stifle effective partnership working, and that is certainly evidenced in this report. We hope we have identified where changes to systematic barriers would support more effective partnerships.

There are significant opportunities for Government and charities to work more closely together to address societal issues, combining strength, expertise and knowledge for the greatest impact.

A reminder of the contents of the report:

- Chapter One examines the funding relationship between Government and charities, including an overview of grants and commissioning, contracts and reporting. We look at charities' experiences of Government funding processes; we review index-linked funding and the relationship between Government funding and charitable reserves; and we consider different funding mechanisms, including funding models where charities and charitable funders fund joint initiatives with Government.
- Chapter Two reviews the experience of non-funded Government partnerships including relationships with politicians and officers and how charities can be supported to navigate Government systems. It looks at the value charities can bring to policy development and identifying need; the role of charity representatives on Government-led strategic Boards; and, what the barriers to success are in current working relationships. It addresses power dynamics and the possibility of applying a more strategic approach to partnership working.
- Chapter Three looks at opportunities to maximise the impact of partnership working. We look at innovation and how charities can provide social value while supporting Government to meet its Island Outcome Indicators. We look at how charities can be supported to capture their social value and to become more involved in Government procurement opportunities. As well as how charities can potentially benefit from the Government's own buying power.

Top Recommendations:

- Multi-year and index-linked annual uplifts should be standardised for charities to ensure financial sustainability.
- Government must adopt a variety of funding mechanisms and models that support charities' diverse needs, including capacity-building funding, cross-departmental funding and a grants portal.
- Charities need more political recognition and advocacy. Consideration to be given to a Charity Minister's role.
- Government and charities should strive towards mutual trust, respect, equality and transparency in their partnerships. To support this Government and charities should develop their partnership relations by having an open and transparent conversation about the power dynamic held between the parties, what this means and how it can be addressed. Also look at

understanding and nurturing the things that makes charities feel like valued partners. This is essential to building mutual trust and respect.

- Government, charities and charitable funders to work together with external experts to create a standardised approach to social value reporting and business planning. This should be supported with training.
- Government, charities and charitable funders to work together to better position and support charities to become procurement suppliers for Government contracts.

All information included is current at the date of publication. With thanks to Beth Moore for conducting the research and drafting this report.

Recommendation summary

There are 59 recommendations made in this report. The recommendations listed below are for Government, charities and others. We have collated these recommendations under themes over the next few pages and provided suggested owners and a priority rating for each. The original recommendation number is included and we recommend reading the full report to understand the detail and context behind each of the recommendations. Click on the recommendation number and it will take you to the original recommendation. We welcome the opportunity to work with Government and the charity sector to create an action plan around our recommendations.

Key

Suggested owner*		Prioritisation	
Gov	Government	M	Must have - These are critical requirements for effective partnership working.
Charities	Charities	S	Should have - These are priority recommendations that are not as time-sensitive as the Must-haves.
Joint	Government and charities	C	Could have - These would enhance partnership working but are not essential in the short-medium terms.
Other	Other	W	Won't have - These features are the lowest priority.

* Where more than one suggested owner is listed, the first listed owner is the suggested lead.

Title	Recommendation	Suggested owner	Recommendation #	Prioritisation
Government funding				
More definition and guidance	Standardise and define contracts, service level agreements and grant service agreements.	Gov	1.4	S
	Clearly define the difference between commissioned services and grants.	Gov	1.4	M
	Define and standardise different types of grants.	Gov	1.4	S
	Issue guidelines on the Government plan funding cycle and process for charities.	Gov	1.15	M
	Jersey Charity Commissioner to work with the sector and funders to publish reserves guidance.	Other (JCC, funders and Charities)	1.19	S
	Consider a wider working definition of value for money that incorporates social value. To shift emphasis towards value added, away from cost cutting.	Joint	3.3	S
Contracts / Terms and conditions	Ensure contracts and service agreements are proportionate to the value of the award.	Gov	1.3	S
	Rework contracts to be more 'partnership friendly'.	Joint	1.5	C
	KPIs to be developed in partnership and reflect charity management reports (already partially being done).	Joint	1.9	S
	Be clear on purpose of impact reporting and how it is used.	Gov	1.8	S

	Be clear on how much of the service provision included in reporting is funded directly by Government.	Charities	1.11	S
	Multi-year and index-linked funding should be standardised for charities to ensure financial sustainability. Consider funding arrangements that span election cycles.	Gov	1.12 , 1.13 , 1.18	M
Negotiating funding arrangements	Agree an approach to full cost recovery in funding bids, including reporting costs.	Joint	1.6 , 1.10	M
	Charities to think more commercially in funding negotiations and to be supported in capturing the full cost recovery in any partnership agreement. Agree approach to this, possibly supported with training.	Joint Other (AJC?)	1.6	M
	Charities to seek training and support in understanding and negotiating funding arrangements where there is a lack of knowledge and expertise.	Other (AJC?) Charities	1.7	S
	Ahead of every funding arrangement, look at all available data, including existing needs analysis, and speak with charities about the needs in their areas of expertise.	Gov Charities	2.5	S
Funding models and mechanisms	Develop a wide range of funding mechanisms for charities to support their diverse needs, including commissioning and grants, capacity building funding and a grants portal.	Gov Charities	1.20 , 1.21 , 1.25	M
	Design processes and systems that support cross-departmental funding.	Gov	1.22	M
	Review current grants to identify opportunities where a commissioning model better suits the funding arrangement, particularly for larger annual grants.	Gov	1.1 , 1.14	M
	Charities to work with Government to understand which funding mechanisms may be available to them and which may work best for both parties.	Charities	1.2	C
	Explore the possibility of a strategic partner funding arrangement to support the sustainability of those charities which receive annual grant awards.	Joint	1.16	C
	Government to combine long-term care payments and required top-ups into a wider commissioning process. Work with charities to shape this.	Joint	1.23	M
	Consider how to fund those organisations which are not eligible for long-term care but are saving the wider care system money.	Gov	1.24	S
	Maximise alternative funding models and partnerships (i.e. charities funding joint working). Remove barriers and build relationships across the funding landscape.	Joint and Other (funders)	1.26	S
Relationship management	Commissioners and funding contacts to visit funded services and observe in action.	Gov	1.8	S
	Be cognisant of the impact last minute funding decisions and delayed payments have on the people who work in charities and the communities charities serve. Work to address this.	Gov	1.17	M

Partnership working				
Political focus	More political recognition and advocacy is needed to drive forward the recommendations in this report and to develop the charity sector. The Council of Ministers to make a commitment to this. Consideration to be given to a Charities Minister role.	Gov Joint	2.3	M
	Replicate the Homelessness Forum structure where possible to support cross-system solutions to societal issues.	Gov Joint	2.2	C

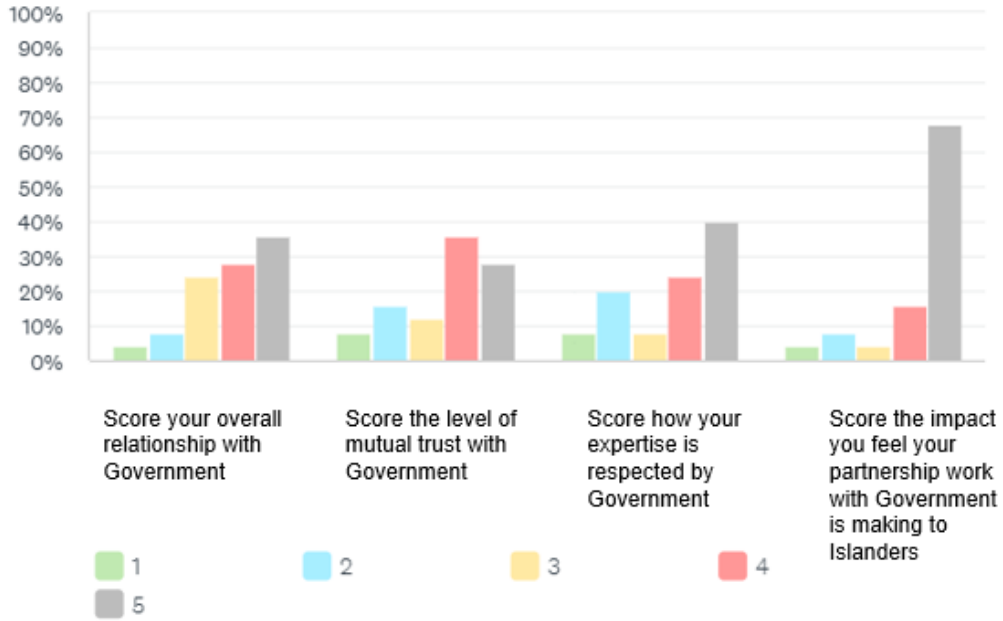
Policy and planning	Capitalise on the expertise and insight charities can bring regarding policy development and identifying need. Involve charities as early as possible.	Joint	2.4	S
	Engage charities as partners in the development of Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs). Charity sector representatives who sit on the Steering Group to represent all charities. JSNA hub to include needs analyses already developed in current strategies.	Gov Joint	2.6	S
	Charities to identify opportunities to lead Government and other partners in strategic planning and direction.	Charities Other (CEO Forum)	2.12	C
Addressing barriers to success	Develop guidelines which outline the thresholds for paid partnership working.	Gov	2.1	C
	Consider a single point of contact or the creation of a Partnership Hub for charities to help navigate the machinery and structure of Government. If this is to be the Local Services team, this needs to be communicated to all charities along with clear guidelines on who else they should approach for different requirements.	Gov	2.7	M
	Issue clear updates on new points of contact when officers change roles.	Gov	2.8	S
	Address the working practice of asking charities for information at short notice, being more considerate of charity CEOs time and demands.	Gov	2.9	M
	Work together to identify decision blocks within Government and work to rectify these.	Joint	2.10	S
	Communicate plans and intentions more clearly with charity partners.	Gov	2.11	S
	Establish data sharing protocols with charities, where data can pass both-ways to improve system knowledge.	Joint	2.15	M
	Clearly communicate how charities can request and benefit from Government's volunteering scheme.	Gov	2.16	S
	Address the barriers to successful partnership working outlined in this report to free up charity time to be redirected towards innovation	Gov Charities	3.2	M
Building stronger relationships	Government and charities should strive towards mutual trust, respect, equality and transparency in their partnerships. To support this Government and charities to have open and transparent conversation about the power dynamic held between the parties, what this means and how it can be addressed. Also look at understanding and nurturing the things that makes charities feel like valued partners.	Joint	2.14	M
	Charities and Government to be offered training to navigate the complexities of being working partners and critical friends.	Joint Other (AJC?)	2.13	S
	Work together to agree a transparent and standardised approach to the appointment of charity representatives to Government-led boards, the expectations of their contributions, the mechanism around gathering and feeding back charity viewpoints, and any consideration of remuneration.	Joint	2.18	S
	Development of training for board members to ensure that individuals can best represent the whole sector.	Other (AJC?)	2.19	C

Strategic approaches to partnership working	Government and charity Health and Care CEO Forum to strengthen relations and consider how best to work together to drive a strategic approach to partnership working.	Gov and Other (CEO Forum)	2.17	S
	Look to the UK for how to structure and support a more enhanced partnership ecosystem, including consideration of a strategy or framework. Consideration to be given to political ownership of this and where its execution should sit within Government. To be developed in partnership with the whole Third Sector.	Gov Charities Other (funders)	2.20 , 2.21	S

The opportunity				
Innovation	Charities and Government to work together to discuss how innovation can be supported and evolved in the sector.	Joint	3.1	C
Embedding social value	Government, charities and charitable funders to work together with external experts to create a standardised approach to social value reporting and business planning. Support this with training.	Joint Others (funders)	3.4	M
	Government to work with charities and suppliers at the outset of designing each tender specification to refine the social value element.	Gov Charities	3.5	S
	The AJC, Government, charity funders and charities to work together to create a solution to match corporates/Government suppliers with community projects.	Joint Others (AJC, funders)	3.6	S
Procurement and social value	Communicate the results of the SEE Enterprise Pathway pilot with the charity sector, including benefits and challenges of becoming a social enterprise. To include Jersey Charity Commissioner.	Gov Other (Jersey Charity Commissioner)	3.7	S
	Design and deliver an information session to charities on different procurement opportunities for the sector, including lower level opportunities (less than £10,000) and how to access these.	Gov	3.8	M
	Develop a page on Gov.je to host procurement information for charities.	Gov	3.9	S
	Charitable funders and Government to work together to develop a training programme for charities to become established and confident suppliers for Government contracts.	Other (AJC, funders), Gov	3.10	M
	Government to work with charities to understand their unique challenges to becoming a supplier and which solutions will help.	Joint	3.11	M
	Government and charities to work together to identify opportunities for charities to benefit from Government's buying power, and pilot how this might work in practice.	Joint	3.12	M

Appendix 1 – Charts

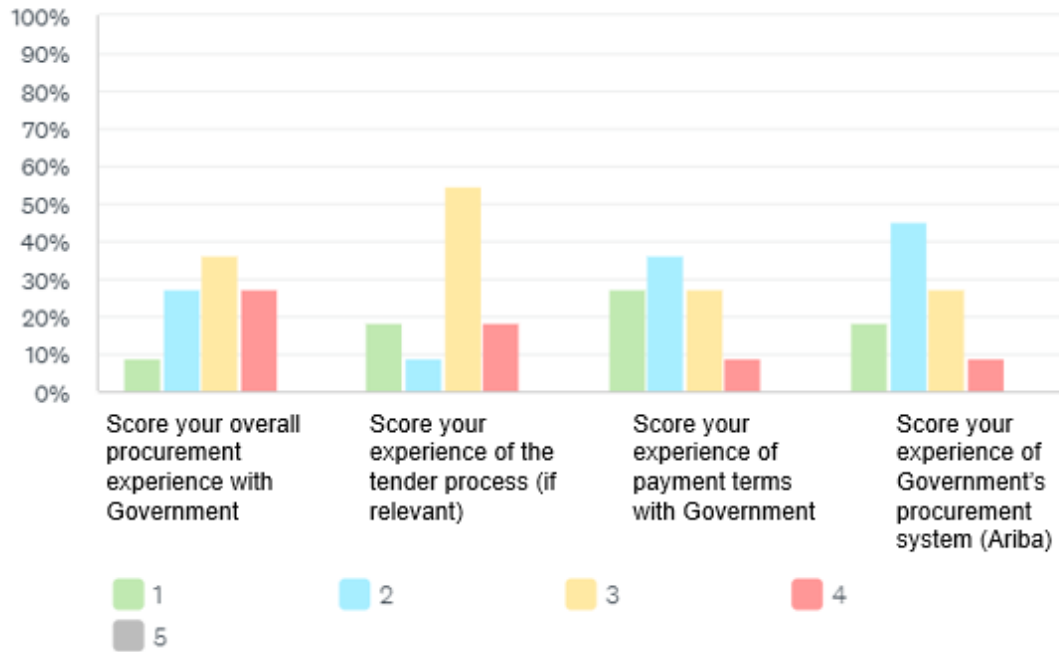
Q: On a scale of 1-5, 1 being poor, 5 being excellent, how would you score the following aspects of your commissioning / grants experience?



Q: On a scale 1-5, 1 being poor, 5 being excellent, how would you score the following aspects of your relationship with Government with regards to partnership work?



Q: On a scale 1-5, 1 being poor, 5 being excellent, how would you score the following aspects of your procurement experience?



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