

# Treasury and Exchequer Ministerial Decision Report



## RESERVE FUNDING FOR VARIOUS COVID-19 PRESSURES IN 2022

### 1. Purpose of Report

To enable the Minister to approve the allocation of up to £6,944,300 in 2022 from the General Reserve (Covid-19 Contingency) to the Covid-19 Response head of expenditure for the projects as detailed in the table below.

### 2. Background

While Jersey has now exited the 'emergency phase', Covid-19 continues to have a significant impact on Government services. The following financial requirements have been identified in order to ensure frontline services can continue to maintain service provision and respond effectively to pressures brought about by the pandemic:

IA Ref	Title	General Reserve	AO	HOE	2022
IA 22-028	Ambulance Services Improvements	General Reserve (Covid-19)	Kate Briden	Covid-19	£565,000
IA 22-033	HCS Covid Response 2022	General Reserve (Covid-19)	Caroline Landon	Covid-19	£6,379,300
					<b>£6,944,300</b>

### Covid-19 Contingency

**Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)** – Ambulance Service Improvements – up to £565,000

The Ambulance Service has been experiencing a sustained growth in demand. Prior to the pandemic, call volumes were growing at a rate of 3% to 5% annually but capacity within the service has remained static. While this had been managed in the period leading up to the pandemic, Covid-19 has resulted in a substantial increase in emergency 999 calls. Call volumes have increased by 20% since 2019, which is placing significant strain on the service and impacting on the delivery of organisational performance standards. To enable the Ambulance Service to respond to this increase in demand during 2022, additional staff are required to provide extra capacity during peak times.

**Health and Community Service (HCS)** – HCS Covid Pressures 2022 – up to £6,379,300

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an unprecedented challenge and the worst public health emergency for a century. Understandably, it has had a profound impact on the health and care system in Jersey. To enable HCS to continue to respond to the pandemic and its indirect impact on timescales for accessing health services, investment is required in the following areas:

- **Service Recovery** – to reduce waiting lists and address increases in waiting times for day surgery and screening services
- **Covid-19 Services** – to provide for the new pharmaceutical Covid-19 treatments, support Islanders suffering with long-Covid, and free up bed capacity within the General Hospital beds by supporting private care placements for patients no longer requiring hospital

treatment but are not yet able to be fully discharged from care services

- **Temporary Staffing** – to enable temporary staffing for services experiencing increased demand and to compensate for on-going recruitment challenges as a consequence of reduced labour market mobility
- **Infection Prevention & Control** – to introduce air purification systems for hospital wards and establish 5 new isolation rooms within ‘critical care’ and ‘enhanced care’ order to enable hospital services to transition back to a business-as-usual model while maintaining Covid-secure practices

### 3. Recommendation

The Minister is recommended to approve the allocation of up to £6,944,300 in 2022 from the General Reserve (Covid-19 Contingency) to the Covid-19 Response head of expenditure for the projects as detailed in the table above.

The Treasurer to notify the relevant Accountable Officers for JHA and HCS when the funds have been released in accordance with their Accountable Officer Responsibilities instruction letter from the PAO.

### 4. Reason for Decision

Article 15(3) of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019 states that the approval by the States of a Government Plan authorises the Minister to direct how an approved appropriation for a reserve head of expenditure in the plan may be spent (including on another head of expenditure) in the first financial year covered by the plan.

The current Policy for Allocations from the Reserve agreed by the Minister for Treasury and Resources on **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May** 2022 sets the requirement for all allocations from the General Reserve (Covid-19) once approved by the States Treasurer to be referred for information to the Council of Ministers and to seek comments from the Principal Accountable Officer (PAO) prior to submission to the Minister for approval.

This has been circulated to the Council of Ministers in accordance with the requirements of the policy.

The Investment Appraisal Team has reviewed the business cases for these requests. Following these reviews, the Treasurer, taking into account comments from the PAO, recommends that the Minister allocates funding from the General Reserve (Covid-19 Contingency).

### 5. Resource Implications

The General Reserve (Covid-19 Contingency) to decrease by up to £6,944,300 and Covid-19 response head of expenditure to increase by an identical amount.

This decision does not change the total amount of expenditure approved by the States in the Government Plan 2022-25.