



**The Offices of HM Greffier,
HM Sheriff and HM Sergeant
and Bailiff's Chambers**



BUSINESS PLAN 2020-2023

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Section 1 - Introduction

The generic term “Royal Court” is used to denote the activities undertaken by the Offices of H.M. Greffier, H.M. Sheriff and Sergeant, and the Bailiff’s Chambers, the specifics of which are available on the Royal Court website: www.guernseyroyalcourt.gg

The functions undertaken by the Bailiff, Deputy Bailiff, Jurats, and Judiciary are not included in this document.

The Royal Court has a part to play in the future success of Guernsey’s financial and business economy and the services that we provide must take in to account these needs. Our services also touch upon the lives of all inhabitants of the islands as they range from the registration of births, marriages, and deaths, to the conveyancing of properties and registration of wills of realty. Decisions of the States are published by the Greffe and affect all islanders. The courts exist to deliver justice for all, and to provide effective dispute resolution.

Our Mission Statement

Justice

To provide a professional and secure infrastructure, with the appropriate facilities to enable the delivery of justice and associated court services

Parliamentary

To support the States of Deliberation and the States of Election through the provision of facilities and administrative services; and to record and publish decisions of the States of Deliberation and the States of Election.

Registration

To deliver an efficient service for the registration of births, deaths and marriages, as well as conveyances, bonds, legalisation of documents and the collection of the duties and fees applicable.

Civic

To provide support to the Bailiff and Deputy Bailiff in the discharge of their civic responsibilities.



Our Vision

It is recognised whilst all member of the public will, at some point, have cause to use at least one of the Royal Court services, it may only be a few occasions in their lifetimes. Requiring the use of Royal Court services for whatever reasons, can sometimes be daunting for people, given the nature of the matters which we deal with, It is important that our processes are simple and straightforward so all members of the community are comfortable with them.

The Royal Court is on a journey of reform, due in part to the opportunities available through digital technology. The technology age is driving change across all elements of everyday life, and the Royal Court is no different in needing to determine how it can improve our ways of working. The focus of the next three years is not on solely digitalising our processes, but to reviewing and modernising all our processes. Part of our Vision is very much to have “end to end” digital processes in place for all Court proceedings. The opportunity exists to go further than this however and fundamentally reform what we do. We want to ensure

- Accessibility for all users
- Efficient processes that simplify matters
- Value for money

We will, using modern technologies, aim to improve accessibility for all Court users to our services, and simplify them. We will achieve this by developing the systems we have now, and engaging with key stakeholders to determine the best methods forward, whilst ensuring we obtain value for money. Utilising the ideas and suggestions of existing staff will empower our employees, and ensure reform is born from experience.



Our Vision – Further Opportunities:

With the work being undertaken around reform and digitalisation, further benefits and opportunities will present themselves for consideration as these work streams come to fruition. Whilst our focus is on improving what we do for service users, the impact on our staff and building cannot be forgotten.

Increased use of online services will enable different ways of working to become more prevalent. It will alter staff roles and responsibilities including what training and skills they will need to develop. The office environment may well alter and change, as the public engages with us in different ways. The move from paper to digital for all things will also diminish hardcopy storage requirements.

All of these changes will mean ensuring the evolution of our workforce as we progress. There will also be a need to review the required work space.

As we change how we work, we will monitor developments to see what other opportunities present themselves to make Court provision even more accessible and efficient for all. The intention is for this to become a rolling programme of reform, constantly reviewing and improving how we work, by continual engagement with key stakeholders.

Our Values

We will:

- Act with **integrity**, reliability and responsibility at all times;
- Show **trust** and **respect** to colleagues and service users;
- Show **teamwork**, providing support to our colleagues and respecting one another's views;
- Make a **commitment** to deliver the highest level of service;
- Develop a working environment which encourages **innovation** and embraces positive change;
- Take **responsibility** for the provision of our services;
- **Cooperate** with other agencies and service users involved in the delivery of justice.

Our Strategic Priorities

The following are areas identified as being of importance in being able to achieve our vision:

- **Finance** – we need to continue prudent fiscal habits, with close monitoring of budgets whilst ensuring we are providing value for money services.
- **Digital Services** – creating a platform where we have the right technical capability to provide modern accessible systems to our service users, allowing us to work more efficiently, changing the way our service areas function, improving the automation of data collection to provide management information, automating processes wherever possible to reduce non-value adding activity.
- **Stakeholder engagement** – ensuring that stakeholders are at the centre of the design and delivery of the services that we provide, developing that understanding and insight and using it to drive organisational change to improve the services we provide;
- **Resource management** – building on good practice to strengthen our people and performance capability. Ensure there are sufficient performance indicators in place across the functional areas which are regularly collected and analysed to support the strategic and operational decisions made;
- **Reform** – examine all Court processes, and determine how the modern Court should work for the benefit of the service user.

Section 2 – Our Priorities 2020

The below stated programs of work demonstrate practically how each Service area is going to link in with our Strategic aims, to create a “SmartCourt” which is fit for the future.

All Service Areas

Having spent time in 2019 mapping and examining our processes, we are now taking that work forward. We are engaging with internal and external stakeholders to determine how the Royal Court is going to work in the future. The goal is through digitalisation and simplification of our processes users will be able to interact with us online, including making claims, ordering and paying for certificates, searching for records and giving notice of marriage. This will be a programme of reform work with the aim of having significant progress evidenced by the end of this 3 year cycle.

Stated Aim:	Target date
Create a Reform programme to lay out how we will work, and begin building it	2023

A fundamental review of charges and fees levied by the Courts will be undertaken in the 2nd quarter of 2020. Whilst a similar process is undertaken every two years, this is intended to be a much deeper review of what is charged and why. As we move forward we need to ensure charges remain fair and proportionate to the work being undertaken.

Stated Aim:	Target date
To make a fair, proportionate and robust charging system	Q1 2021



Bailiffs Office

The retirement of the existing Bailiff, Sir Richard Collas in 2020, will be followed by the swearing in of the new Bailiff, Richard McMahon in May 2020. The Island will also welcome a new Deputy Bailiff, Jessica Roland. Work will be required to bring about this change as seamlessly as possible, whilst maintaining business as usual.

Stated Aim:	Target date
Seamless transition between office holder	May 2020

Close liaison and working will be required with the Parliamentary Priorities detailed below, to ensure the implementation of a new States, through a new election methodology, and then ongoing support.

Stated Aim:	Target date
Work alongside Parliamentary staff to ensure a robust new election and States	June 2020 and onward embedding

Clients Services Team

After several years of work the new Guernsey Legal Resources website will be launched in 2020. This will be an upgraded site from the existing website, providing a wider range of functionality, and access to more legal information than ever before. It will also allow for charges to be levied on certain professional users, this money will be used to maintain the website and provide enhancements to the service.

Stated Aim:	Target date
Launch and run the new site	Q1 2020 and onward management thereafter

A new Marriage Law is planned to come into force early in 2021, which will change much of the work of the Deputy Registrars. Work will be undertaken to embed this legislation and ensure all processes and training is in place ready for the enactment.

Stated Aim:	Target date
Have procedures in place to comply with the Law and seamless transition for users	Q1 2021

Work is being undertaken to change existing, and implement new legislation to better enable the HM Sheriff and HM Sergeant team to enforce debts, alongside the effective and efficient delivery of summons. This is in the context of a review of the Royal Court Civil rules which will link in with this.

Stated Aim:	Target Date:
Enact new legislation to increase effectiveness of HM Sheriff	Q4 2020

A program of work is beginning around the Strong room, with the introduction of an archiving system, so that the cataloguing of historic documents in the Strong room can be undertaken. This will provide more efficient access for the public, and allow for better management of ancient fragile documents. As this is being undertaken, a further program of work will be commenced to look at the long term storage of the historic fragile documents which need a climate controlled environment to protect them for future generations.

Stated Aim:	Target Date:
Populate archiving system allowing better decision making	2023

Parliamentary

The work stream to deliver the structure and policies for Guernsey's first Island-wide election in June 2020 will continue throughout the first half of 2020. Significant work has already been undertaken, and this will need to be brought to fruition to ensure fair and robust elections take place.

Stated Aim:	Target Date:
Deliver a robust system for the new Island-wide electoral system	June 2020

An on boarding and ongoing development programme will be created for States Members to ensure all members are given the support they need to undertake their roles, to assist in creating an efficient and effective States body.

Stated Aim:	Target date
Create an Induction pack for States Members	June 2020 onwards

With items important to the lives of islanders often being debated at States Meetings, we want to improve the accessibility to records of States meetings. We are investigating the possibility of making all States Debates available online in "Live" play and for the first time provide the ability to "Catch Up" by making the recordings available online to be listened to at the user's leisure.

Stated Aim:	Target date
Explore the possibility of States Debates being available online and on catch up facilities	Q3 2020

Introduction of a new States Greffier, who will act as Clerk to the States of Deliberation and advise on all matters relating to the States of Deliberation, and see to modernise and extend the parliamentary services provided.

Stated Aim:	Target date
Appointment to the post and commencement of role	Q2 2020

Court Services

The digitisation process of Court papers has continued, with upgrades planned and drafted to the existing document management system to allow for the expansion of this. Phase 2 to allow a better user experience has been planned and sent for funding. Phase 3, which is intended to provide key statistics, not just for the Court but for other interested parties is now being planned and scoped.

Stated Aim:	Target Date:
Collate and disseminate key business statistics for use in house and outside bodies	2021