

THINK-TANK

Education, population, poverty, tax...getting views on topics like those in Jersey isn't the difficult part – but have you ever noticed how many people sound eminently credible when talking about them, even though they may actually be basing their views on conjecture, false facts and blind guesswork?

There is a real danger in making the 'facts' fit the opinion, rather than the other way around – which is exactly the point at which someone with an eye on the latest buzzwords will smugly insert the phrase 'post-truth' into the conversation, imagining its actually helpful.

So, we've asked the Jersey Policy Forum to add some robust material to those crucial local debates – the point is not to provoke agreement or acquiescence; it is to provide reliable material on which others can build their views.

A topic for debate -
Where do you want to
go from here?



Gailina Liew, Director, Jersey Policy Forum

Think back a year. What were your priorities and your greatest worries? What were the world's most powerful nations and businesses focused on? Now think about the past few weeks. How would you answer those questions now? How has this globally shared experience of a rapidly spreading viral infection changed your thinking about how you will want to live and work going forward? About the role of community, business and government and what they might work together to strengthen our societal and

economic resilience while also protecting our natural environment? About our island's relationship with the rest of the world?

In 2018, the Jersey Policy Forum (JPF) (www.jerseypolicyforum.org and www.ourdemocracy.je) held an event to engage with Jersey's community and gather thoughts about Jersey's future. Over 140 participants across many different sectors of the community volunteered to participate in facilitated roundtable discussions

to explore a few questions. JPF asked participants about the top five things that would need to change for Jersey to be a place they would want to live 30 years from now. Those responses are shown in the table below (see next page) along with the top five areas for improvement from community participants in the 2016 Future Jersey consultation.

According to work done by PwC over the past few years and informed by many global surveys, the major forces which

	2018 JPF Event	2016 Future Jersey Consultation
1	Reducing inequality and tackling social inclusion	Sustainable resources
2	Changing the narrative about Jersey and what we stand for	Attractive business environment
3	Increasing government effectiveness and efficiency	Health and well-being
4	Improving sustainable use of natural resources	Affordable living
5	Improving leisure amenities	Built and historic environment

communities, business and governments were facing prior to the pandemic could be broadly described as follows.

- **Income and wealth inequality**
- **Disruption caused by the increasing use of technology**
- **Ageing populations**
- **Climate change**
- **Increasing distrust of globalisation leading to growing nationalism and patriotism**
- **Reducing trust in governments and institutions.**

The community feedback in Jersey from 2016 and 2018 show that these forces have been at work in Jersey as well. The impact, both nationally and globally, of the pandemic has highlighted the continuing vulnerabilities created by these forces that have been allowed to grow over the years without much constraint.

The ability of individual people, communities, business and government to deal with the consequences of the pandemic has been seriously impacted by the personal, financial and economic costs of the pandemic. The policy responses will be challenging and very difficult for

all nations but perhaps most difficult in democratic nations where all voices have a right to be heard and governments will need to make hard choices that cannot please everyone. This sounds like a tough place to be in and it is. But it also presents a rare opportunity, maybe the only truly global one in our generation, to create new paths into the future.

In 2018, community participants were asked at the JPF event to describe a vision for Jersey's future and here's what they said: (see diagram, left)

Now, as we support each other through the public health, societal, environmental and economic impacts of this pandemic, JPF is interested in your thoughts about your experience of the pandemic and what is important to you about the future of Jersey. As an independent and non-political entity, JPF is inviting participation from everyone who wants to share their views in a wide-ranging survey to gain some understanding of what is important to you as Jersey looks to the future. The results of the survey will be published and used to inform policy options for government and civil society to consider and debate in the coming months. Please go to the Jersey Policy Forum's website, www.jerseypolicyforum.org, to participate in the survey.

