

PM/SC/325

PRIVILEGES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

(20th Meeting)

14th November 2012PART A

All members were present, with the exception of Deputy K.L. Moore, from whom apologies had been received.

Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier, Chairman  
 Senator S.C. Ferguson  
 Senator Sir P.M. Bailhache  
 Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement  
 Deputy J.A. Martin  
 Deputy M. Tadier

In attendance -

Deputy J.M. Maçon (for item B3)  
 Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré (for item A3)  
 Deputy J.H. Young (for item A3)  
 M.N. de la Haye, Greffier of the States  
 Mrs. A.H. Harris, Deputy Greffier of the States  
 P. Monamy, Acting Clerk to the Privileges and Procedures Committee

Note: The Minutes of this meeting comprise Part A and Part B.

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| Minutes.  | A1. The Minutes of the meetings held on 27th September (Part A and Part B) and 17th October 2012 (Part A and Part B), having been previously circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed.  |
| Matter for information: audio recording of P&E Ministerial Hearings and Planning Applications Panel meetings. | <p>A2. The Committee was apprised by the Deputy Greffier of the States that Planning and Environment Ministerial Hearings and meetings of the Planning Applications Panel were being audio recorded on a trial basis from 9th November 2012.</p> <p>It was noted that audio recording of the proceedings (which were held in public) would enable audio extracts from the meeting to be provided to anyone requesting them (for a fee of £25) and also, in the event that a particular application were to be the subject of proceedings before the Royal Court (e.g. a Third-Party Appeal), for a transcript to be provided for the Planning Department and/or the Court.</p> <p>It was recognised that, to date, only one Planning and Environment Ministerial Hearing had been audio recorded and the Committee noted that this had been successful, with <i>inter alia</i> improved amplification of sound being provided to the audience. It was further noted that next to be audio recorded was the Planning Applications Panel meeting to be held on Thursday, 15th November 2012.</p> |
| Machinery of Government sub-committee.  | A3. The Committee received the draft interim report of the Machinery of Government Review Sub-Committee and welcomed Deputies J.A.N. Le Fondré and J.H. Young to the meeting.  |

It was recalled that the Machinery of Government Review (MOGR) Sub-Committee had been constituted by PPC in February 2012 and that its terms of reference were to:

1. analyse the machinery of government in Jersey,
2. identify any problems,
3. agree a series of findings and recommendations to improve the current machinery, and
4. present a report and recommendations to the PPC.

Following an extensive series of interviews with the majority of States members and senior officers, the Sub-Committee's draft interim report recommended the introduction of Ministerial Boards to: review the policies and priorities of departments and ensure that they were within the strategic direction of the States; provide advice to the Minister on departmental priorities and initiatives; make recommendations on policy issues identified as being priorities; and to oversee the delivery of planned results by monitoring performance. It was considered that each Board would be constituted by the relevant Minister, the Assistant Minister, and 3 non-executive board members. The Sub-Committee recommended that the 'Troy rule,' which prescribed a 10 per cent difference in numbers between the executive and scrutiny functions, should be retained under the proposed system. The Sub-Committee proposed the introduction of a Scrutiny Oversight Committee. Once approved, the report would invite comments from all stakeholders on the emerging proposals for reform and their implications by 31st December 2012, and the Sub-Committee had also recommended that the Committee should consider requesting an in committee debate in respect of its interim report in accordance with Standing Order 89(2)(c).

The Committee, having reviewed the content of the draft interim report, and having discussed the same with Deputies Le Fondré and Young in conjunction with a bullet-point summary circulated at the meeting, offered its congratulations to the authors of the report.

Having noted the conclusions of the report that there appeared to be no appetite to return to the Committee system, but rather that there should be refinement of the existing Ministerial system of government, the Committee asked for more work to be undertaken on the report towards developing the interesting analysis which had been referred to in general terms. It was agreed that it would be desirable for the report to have clarity regarding the perceived future of the Scrutiny function, which the delegation outlined as being an ability to investigate an issue in-depth in conjunction with specialist advisers. It was suggested that the advent of Freedom of Information legislation in the Island could do much to improve the access by Scrutiny to information held by the Executive which it required to fulfil its role.

The Committee agreed that it would wish to consider the report further at its next meeting, once the Sub-Committee had addressed the comments made by the Committee.

20th Meeting  
14.11.12

Financial Plan  
2013 – 2015.  
447/1/1/7(1)

The Committee recalled that the Council had submitted proposals for the States Assembly expenditure limits in accordance with Article 8(3) of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2005, and that these had been in line with the estimates provided by the Privileges and Procedures Committee for the period 2013 – 2015.

The Committee recalled that the Medium Term Financial Plan 2013-2015 had been adopted by the States on 8th November 2012.