

Health, Social Security and Housing Scrutiny Panel

Meeting 9

Date: 28th June 2007

Location: Blampied Room, States Building

Present Deputy A. Breckon, Chairman
 Deputy R. Le Hérisssier
 Deputy J.A. Martin, Vice Chairman
 Deputy S. Power

Apologies

Absent

In attendance Mr C Ahier, Scrutiny Officer
 Mr M Orbell, Scrutiny Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
	<p>1. Minutes of previous meetings</p> <p>a) Minutes of the meeting of 8th May 2007 The Panel approved the minutes of the meeting.</p>	
	<p>2. Matters arising</p> <p>a) Action Updates The Panel noted the action updates.</p> <p>b) Chairman and Panel Members' Actions The Panel noted that they would address these actions under separate agenda items.</p>	
	<p>3. Forthcoming Propositions</p> <p>The Panel noted the forthcoming proposition lodged for debate by the States on 17th July 2007.</p>	
	<p>4. Questions to Ministers</p> <p>The Panel noted the forthcoming arrangements for questions without notice to Ministers. The Panel noted that the Minister for Health & Social Services may not be present due to illness. The Panel agreed to ask the Minister for Planning & Environment why P.61, Rezoning of land for Category A and lifelong dwellings for the over-55s, had been withdrawn.</p>	
	<p>5. Panel Budget</p> <p>The Panel noted the expenditure to date. It was agreed to amend the title of an entry for £75.00 under the Telephone Masts Review to better reflect the circumstances behind this entry.</p> <p>The Panel noted that E&R Consultants had processed a vastly larger number of questionnaires than anticipated as part of the Social Housing Property Plan Review. As such, it was agreed to make an additional one-off payment to them in respect of the additional work undertaken. Deputy Power was delegated responsibility to agree an appropriate payment with E&R Consultants.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CA/MO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SP</p>

	<p>The Panel noted that if E&R Consultants were to be engaged in the future they would need to ensure that data compliance issues were fully addressed.</p> <p>The Panel considered the future funding requirements of ongoing reviews. It was agreed that a further £25,000 be allocated to the Income Support Review. The Panel further agreed that the proposed review of New Directions be allocated a provisional budget of £30,000.</p>	
	<p>6. Telephone Mast Sub-Panel</p> <p>The Panel noted that the Sub-Panel's report had made recommendations to a number of Ministers. The Panel were informed that a response had been received from the Minister for Planning & Environment but that a response was still awaited from the Minister for Health & Social Services. The Panel further noted that a written response was still awaited from the Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority.</p> <p>The Panel were informed that the Sub-Panel may consider bringing a report and proposition to the States if their recommendations are not taken on board by the relevant authorities.</p>	
	<p>7. Income Support Sub-Panel</p> <p>The Panel were informed that the Sub-Panel had received a draft of the Regulations but that the Social Security Department were revising these based upon comments from the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers would then consider the revised Regulations before being lodged.</p> <p>The Panel noted that the Sub-Panel were considering approximately 6 amendments to the proposals in addition to 2 stand alone amendments subject to information yet to be received from the Education, Sport & Culture Department and the Transport & Technical Services Department.</p> <p>The Panel discussed the proposals and its similarity to the 'Work Fair' programme in the UK and noted that such a system was resource heavy.</p>	
	<p>8. Social Housing Property Plan Sub-Panel</p> <p>The Panel were informed that consideration was being given to bringing a reference back in respect of P6/2007/Social Housing Property Plan 2007-2016. The Panel were further informed that an electronic file of correspondence between the Housing Department and the Scrutiny Office had been compiled for further reference by the Privileges and Procedures Committee should this be necessary.</p> <p>The Panel noted that, for the purpose of the States debate, the areas of P6/2007 would be divided up amongst the Sub-Panel to speak on. The Panel further noted that the Sub-Panel were awaiting the final invoice from their Advisers and that general feedback to the Sub-Panel's report from the public had been positive.</p>	

	<p>The Panel considered the likelihood of an official response to the report from the Minister for Housing. The Panel further considered recent correspondence between the Controller & Auditor General and the Housing Department. The Panel noted that the Public Accounts Committee may consider further discussions with the Housing Department.</p>	
	<p>9. Business Plan Sub-Panel</p> <p>The Panel noted the Sub-Panels comments that any future review should be targeted at a particular area and that the review should be clearly focussed. It was noted that a report had been submitted to the Chairmen’s Committee for consideration. It was further noted that the report detailed the view that too little detail was contained at this stage in the Social Security Business Plan to be properly reviewed. It was noted that this was likely to apply to all Departments. As such it was agreed that it was not a valid exercise to attempt to conduct review of Departments in detail at this stage. But rather, it was noted, to conduct a review of the process. The Panel discussed the issue of Department’s discretionary budgets and noted that this was an issue that further complicated scrutiny.</p>	
	<p>10. Health & Social Services</p> <p>a) New Directions</p> <p>The Panel was informed that New Directions was not yet a ‘green paper’ as had previously been advised. It was noted that, a review of the overall policy would probably be required and that in addition one or more smaller reviews may be required in the following areas: private health insurance/health care; the role of GPs; and care for the elderly.</p> <p>b) Private health care</p> <p>The Panel noted that a review of private health care was possible but unlikely unless the present healthcare system became so stretched that reform was evidently required.</p>	
	<p>11. Social Security</p> <p>a) Statistical information</p> <p>The Panel considered the need for statistical information in this area and agreed to pursue their initial enquiries with the Social Security Department in order to secure the information required.</p> <p>b) Consultation on ‘Maternity, Paternity and Family Friendly Working’</p> <p>The Panel considered the Employment Forum’s questionnaire and agreed to ascertain who had devised it and to whom it had been sent for consultation. The Panel agreed to meet with representatives of the Employment Forum before giving further consideration to initiating a review in this area.</p>	<p>CA/MO</p> <p>CA/MO</p>
	<p>12. Housing</p> <p>The Panel noted that the Environment Scrutiny Panel’s recent visit to Vienna had been of considerable benefit to the Design of Homes Review and that it may also be of benefit to future HSSH Panel</p>	

	reviews of the Housing Department.	
	<p>13. Public Consultation</p> <p>The Panel discussed the issue of public consultation. It was agreed that it was too early to set out and consult with the Public on a proposed programme of reviews for the second half of the year. The Panel further agreed to review this decision once a programme had been agreed upon.</p>	
	<p>14. Job Vacancies within States Departments</p> <p>The Panel noted the answers given by the Departments within their remit to questions tabled by Deputy Reed in the States on Tuesday 19th June 2007.</p>	
	<p>15. Future Meetings</p> <p>The Panel agreed not to set a date for their next meeting at this time.</p>	

Signed

Date

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Chairman, Health, Social Security and Housing Panel