

CHAIRMEN'S COMMITTEE

Meeting of Chairmen held on 10th January 2006

Present	Deputy R C Duhamel, President Deputy F J Hill Deputy G P Southern Deputy S C Ferguson Deputy P J D Ryan
Apologies	
Absent	
In attendance	Mrs K Tremellen-Frost, Scrutiny Manager Mrs C. Le Quesne, Scrutiny Officer [Item 1 only] Mr M Haden, Scrutiny Officer [items 2 & 3 only]

Ref. back.	Agenda matter	Action
<p>1.</p> <p>20.12.05</p> <p>Item 7</p>	<p>Receive Chief Minister, Chief Executive and Strategic Planning Manager.</p> <p>The delegation was welcomed to the meeting and discussed the working practices to be applied for the effective working of Scrutiny and the Ministerial system.</p> <p>Attention was given to the learning curve still to be achieved and it was agreed that the Chief Minister would make himself available to attend Chairmen's Panel meetings when necessary. It was also agreed that meetings with the full Council of Ministers would be less frequent and only when a specific issue required such a meeting. It was further agreed that, in principle, the first of these should be arranged for the end of February 2006.</p> <p>The timings of lodging the budget and the States Strategic Plan were discussed and discussion ensued as to the most appropriate time for Scrutiny to become involved in the reviewing of future documents. It was agreed that further discussion would be required and that some thought should be given to the involvement of Scrutiny in the development of the 2007 documents at the earliest opportunity to ensure a proactive approach. It was noted that during the Shadow period budget process had been reviewed but that in the future Scrutiny would be required to undertake a more comprehensive review in accordance with its remit.</p> <p>The meeting agreed that good governance required a cooperative approach with an efficient flow of complete and thorough information. The Committee was assured that Ministerial decisions would be recorded in such a way as to ensure that all background documentation and related reasons for decision making were made available for Scrutiny if required. It was accepted that an effective audit trail of documents that provide evidence for decision making was essential. The Committee was advised that it was the Chief Minister's intention to ensure that the information required was made available to Scrutiny as it was an obligation of the Ministers to provide such, and that</p>	

	<p>the divulgence of the information would be subject to the previous confidentiality requirements as the former Committee system with the continuation of Part A and Part B items. The suggestion from the Chairmen’s Committee that there should be a standardised approach to decision recording across the States was noted by the Chief Minister. The Chief Executive undertook to investigate the possibility of Scrutiny members having access to “Live link”.</p> <p>The Committee noted that the Chief Minister did not support Scrutiny Chairmen attending the Council of Ministers as that body needed to be able to undertake its work as a team in private. It was also noted that the Council of Ministers would undertake its work in private due to the confidential nature of issues with which it was involved.</p> <p>The Ministerial role and delegation to Assistant Ministers was explained to the Committee in order to clarify the situation.</p> <p><u>Documents provided from Chief Minister</u> [attached] Report to Council of Ministers [16.12.05]:First Strategic Plan Report to Council of Ministers [16.12.05]: Work Programme</p>	BO
<p>2 20.12.05 Item 14</p>	<p>Meeting with Chief Minister, Chief Executive and H.M. Attorney General regarding access of Scrutiny to legal advice given to Ministers and legal advice to Scrutiny Panels.</p> <p>It was agreed that this item would not be minuted to afford a non-constrained discussion to occur.</p> <p>The outcome was that a draft protocol would be prepared by the Scrutiny office by way of summary of the discussion which would be circulated to the Chief Minister and H.M. Attorney General [attached]</p> <p>It was agreed that the Chief Minister would take the matter to the Council of Ministers at the earliest opportunity. Once the matter had been agreed, it would be incorporated into the Scrutiny Code of Practice for lodging “au Greffe”. This would necessitate a delay in taking the Code of Practice to the States.</p>	MH /KTF
<p>3 20.12.05 Item 14</p>	<p>Meeting with H.M. Attorney General and Data Protection Commissioner</p> <p>The Committee noted that complications arose when the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner was not involved at an early stage in the development of States policy initiatives. There was a need to be aware of such matters before they were released into the public domain so that advice could be given at an appropriate stage.</p>	

	<p>The Committee, having noted this, agreed to inform the Chief Minister of the matter and to advise that Departments be instructed to contact the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as a matter of course at an early stage of policy development.</p>	<p>KTF/ RD</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>The Committee agreed to hold a further supplementary meeting during States recess on 17th January 2006 to consider the draft booklet for circulation to the public.</p> <p>Date of next scheduled meeting: 27th January 2006 commencing at 9.30am.</p>	

Signed

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President, Chairmen's Committee