

Health, Social Security & Housing Scrutiny Panel

Review of Income Support Sub-Panel

PUBLIC MEETING

Record of Meeting

Date: **10th February 2009**

Meeting number: **4**

Present	Deputy G.P. Southern, Chairman Connétable S.A. Yates Deputy D.J. De Sousa Deputy T. Vallois
In attendance	Reverend G. Houghton, Advisor C. Le Quesne, Scrutiny Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
	1. Minutes The Sub-Panel approved and signed the following minutes - 2nd January 2009; 27th January 2009; and, 9th February 2009.	
	2. Social Security Advisory Council The Sub-Panel noted the record of a meeting on 29th January 2009 between the Chairman and Mr. J. Rosser, Chairman, Social Security Advisory Council. The Sub-Panel was advised that the Council provided some advice to the Minister for Social Security which was in part recorded in an annual report which was circulated to States members. It was agreed that some further attention may be given to the operation and function of the Council at a later date.	
	2. Action Updates The Sub-Panel noted the following actions since its last meeting - <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A position paper had been produced outlining 18 initial issues that required its attention;2. A number of individuals had been approached to provide interpreting services; no firm quotes had yet been received.3. That an answer in respect of officer training had been received from Social Security although it did not provide any of the detail requested. In addition the answer provided an overview of reporting lines but did not	

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	<p>provide an insight into the working practice;</p> <p>4. Mrs Wilson had been thanked for her interest as a possible advisor and she was aware that she may be called as a witness in due course; and,</p> <p>5. Mr. Le Brocq had expressed an interest in being an advisor.</p>	
	<p>3. Appointment of Advisors</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed Reverend G. Houghton to his first Sub-Panel meeting in his capacity of advisor. The Public Hearing of the 9th February 2009 was briefly discussed as were general working practices and the position to date with regard to the review.</p> <p>The Sub-Panel noted that two of the individuals approached to assess interest in the remaining advisory post had responded positively. Mr. E. Le Quesne attended the meeting briefly to discuss the terms of the contract and his experience.</p> <p>The Sub-Panel decided that on the basis of the breadth of his experience on issues relating to need it would appoint Mr. Le Quesne as its second advisor for this review.</p> <p>Mr. Le Quesne would be provided with a review file in due course and a copy of the advisor contract would be forwarded to the Chairmen's Committee for information.</p> <p>The Officer was requested to take the necessary action.</p>	
	<p>4. Submissions</p> <p>The Sub-Panel noted that it had received 11 submissions to date. Acknowledgement letters would be sent out to all the individuals who had made submissions.</p> <p>It was noted that the submissions would be de personalized and uploaded to the web-site in due course.</p>	
	<p>5. Meeting with the Minister</p> <p>The Sub-Panel recalled that it had requested a Public Hearing with the Minister for Social Security and agreed to the proposed date of 3rd March 2009 from 11.30 am - 1.00 pm.</p> <p>The Sub-Panel agreed that it should prepare questions in advance of that date to be circulated to the Minister no later than five working days before the Hearing in accordance with the Code of Practice.</p>	CLQ
	<p>6. Review work</p> <p>The Sub- Panel noted the current position with the review and decided that the following actions were required -</p> <p>1. The Chairman would contact Mr. Tom Bunting to further discuss exactly what further data was required to facilitate the work on the 'like for like' comparison. The Sub-Pane was advised that</p>	

the information previously supplied by the department was not comprehensive;

2. The individuals previously approached to provide Portuguese translations of the call for evidence had been unable to assist. Deputy De Sousa would provide contact details of another individual who may be in a position to assist;
3. Connétable Yates advised that he would be writing to all of the former welfare recipients in his Parish to ensure that they were satisfied with the new Income Support system provision. The Sub-Panel agreed that it would assist with the formulation of the questions to be asked of the individuals together with a request that it be permitted to use the responses as part of its review;
4. That the St. Helier Community Care Visitors team leaders should be invited to give evidence at a Public Hearing on the 23rd February 2009. The Sub-Panel discussed the evidence it had received to date and agreed that there appeared to be a gap in the Income Support System relating to the former home visit service which prevented vulnerable people from being overlooked;
5. It was agreed that someone from the Shelter Trust should also be invited to give evidence so that the Sub-Panel fully understood how outreach work together with advocacy support could help vulnerable people through the system. It was accepted that the cessation of the regular visits for the former welfare clients had removed the only social contact or interaction that some clients had access to.
6. It was agreed that the main focus for the review would be to access the evidence being received and to report to the States with recommendations by early April and to propose any further scrutiny required;
7. The transcript from the Public Hearing with Dr. Ince would be circulated to members electronically upon receipt, a few of the key issues noted from that hearing were as follows -
 - a) That the letter writing required by doctors to apply for additional visits for clients/patients did not have any significant resource implications on surgeries;
 - b) Patients and doctors currently appeared content with the operation of the Household Medical Accounts (HMA's) following some initial confusion over the service;
 - c) It was not clear if the system was in part working due to the benevolence of the General Practitioners and their decision not to charge patients; and
 - d) There was still confusion with regard to patients on HMA being charged for scans or x-rays and the possibility that this could cause them hardship
8. A request would be made for the review call for evidence poster to be displayed at the Social Security Department near to the Income Support counter; and,

	<p>9. A Channel 103 advertising campaign would be undertaken to encourage people to make submissions.</p> <p>The Sub-Panel also agreed that from the submissions to date and those received by the Sub-Panel as formerly constituted, there appeared to be a recurring and consistent theme which was the growing requirement for client support and advocacy services.</p> <p>The Sub-Panel decided that it would wish to call the following individuals to give evidence at public hearings on the afternoon on Monday 23rd February 2009 or during that week -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Visitor Team from the Parish of St. Helier together with the Connétable of St. Helier; • The Prison Chaplin - Pauline Wilcox reverend to attend with Mr. John Hodge, Chairman of Shelter Trust as many of the issues would overlap; • Mon Seigneur Nick France, St Thomas Welcome Centre; • Director of the Citizens Advice Bureau • A representative from the Jersey District Nursing Association; • A representative from the Carers Association; and, • Mrs D. Minihane and Mr. R. Le Brocq, Age Concern. <p>Letters should also be sent to the following to invite submissions -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rotary Club, Grace Trust and the Variety Club - in respect of whether or not they are getting any or increased requests for living expenses • Chairman of the Comité des Connétables to ascertain if the Connétables have reported any concerns from parishioners. <p>The Sub-Panel agreed that it should request fast turn around for its hearings on the week of the 23rd February 2009.</p>	
	<p>7. Next Meeting The Sub-Panel agreed that its next scheduled meeting was due to take place on 23rd February 2009.</p>	

Initials

gfs

Date:

23-01-09

Deputy G. Southern
Chairman, Income Support Panel

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