

Public Accounts Committee

Record of Meeting

Date: 20th February 2012

Meeting No: 2

Present	Deputy T. Vallois, Chairman Senator S. C. Ferguson, Deputy R. Rondel Mr S. Haigh Mr A. Fearn
Apologies	Mr C. Evans
Absent	Deputy S. Pitman
In attendance	Mr. C. Swinson O.B.E. – Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) Mr M. Robbins, Scrutiny Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
	1. Records of Meetings The Committee approved the record of its meeting of 24 th January 2012, which was to be signed by the Chairman pending a typographical amendment..	MR
	2. Conflict of Interest In examining the area of conflict of interest raised in the previous meeting, the Committee noted that the risks section of scoping documents was the suitable place for such concerns. The Committee decided that it was to have a simple permanent addition to the agenda requiring consideration and declaration of conflict relating to any item on that agenda.	MR
	3. Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Public Accounts Committee workshop. The Committee approved all arrangements relating to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association workshop.	
	4. Westminster visit. The Committee approved all arrangements for the Westminster visit, noting that the hotel had not been finalised at this time.	
	5. Pay-offs to States Employees [Golden Handshakes] The Committee agreed that a review into pay-offs to States Employees [known colloquially as Golden Handshakes] needed to be part of a larger piece of work relating to relationships at top levels, pay arrangements and company payments within the remit of the Committee to look retrospectively at matters. The Committee examined areas of personality clashes between Ministers and top Civil Servants and considered how these were dealt with in other jurisdictions. It was recognized that this matter returned to the responsibility matrix within the Jersey system where there was no	

	<p>single point of responsibility or control and no point of mediation. The problem was exacerbated by the Ministers being 'corporation sole'. These problems, all relating to the machinery of government, had been recognized in previous reports by the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel and the previous Public Accounts Committee.</p> <p>The Comptroller and Auditor General agreed to produce a report relating to the subject to assist the Committee with its considerations at the next meeting.</p>	C&AG
	<p>6. Report from the Treasurer of the States</p> <p>The Committee noted a report received by the Chairman from the Treasurer of the States relating to the response to recommendations from the Comptroller and Auditor General by the States Treasurer since 2005. The document was to be circulated to Committee members. It was recognized that a large part of the Committees work should revolve around what action had been taken following such recommendations.</p>	MR
	<p>7. Work Programme.</p> <p>Further areas of interest were expressed, including:-</p> <p>Comprehensive Spending Review, Central Purchasing, Aspects of the Airport, Electronic Tendering and The Town Park.</p> <p>Prior to any decisions on a work programme, the Comptroller and Auditor General was requested to supply the Committee with his work programme.</p>	C&AG
	<p>8. Recruitment of non-elected members</p> <p>Prior to commencement of this subject, Mr S. Haigh and Mr A. Fearn declared a conflict and took no part in the discussion. The Committee was advised that the Human Resources Department suggested that the Committee defined the role precisely with a clear outline of the functions and expected outputs required of members. Such criteria were to be advertised by appropriate means, with applicants being selected by the normal shortlist and interview process. The officer was to produce an outline of what the Committee was expected to achieve. The Chairman and Comptroller and Auditor General would oversee this work.</p>	MR / TV / C&AG
	<p>9. Review into the Bus Contract.</p> <p>The Committee noted that the Chairmen's Committee had challenged the previous Terms of Reference, questioning whether they fulfilled the criteria of the Public Accounts Committee in considering matters retrospectively. This inspired discussion relating to procurement within the States of Jersey, the role of specific officers and the skills available to procure complicated contracts.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference were to be redrafted with the assistance of the Chairman and the Comptroller and Auditor General.</p>	
	<p>10. Training relating to questioning Accounting Officers.</p>	

	<p>The Committee received a briefing from the Comptroller and Auditor General relating to training he could arrange to assist the Committee with the questioning of Chief Officers / Accounting Officers. This could be supplied by an approved trainer, until recently from the National School of Government. The Committee requested this be arranged and approved £2,000 for the purpose. The Chairman and Comptroller and Auditor General were to make the necessary arrangements.</p>	<p>TV / C&AG</p>
	<p>11. Training on Accounts.</p> <p>The Comptroller and Auditor General provided the Committee with training relating to accounts.</p>	
	<p>12. Private Briefing by the Comptroller and Auditor General.</p> <p>The Committee went into private session under 3.2 of the Code of Practice on Public Access to Official Information to receive an update from the Comptroller and Auditor General.</p>	
	<p>13. Future Meetings</p> <p>The Committee agreed that the next meeting was to be at 12.30 pm on Monday 19th March 2012 in the Blampied Room of the States Buildings.</p>	