

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Record of Meeting

Date: 12th January 2015

Present	Deputy L. M. C. Doublet, Chairman Deputy J. M. Maçon, Vice-Chairman Deputy S. Y. Mezec
Apologies	
Absent	
In attendance	Mr M. Robbins, Scrutiny Officer Mrs A. Goodyear, Assistant Greffier of the States. (Item 4) Mr W. Millow, Scrutiny Officer. (Item 4)

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
	<p>1. Records of Meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the meetings held on the 4th December 2014 were approved for signing by the Chairman.</p>	
<p>Item 3 04.12.14 516/1/1(7)</p>	<p>2. Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>The Panel considered that there were no areas of conflict that had not previously been declared.</p>	
<p>510/1(45)</p>	<p>3. Engaging with the public.</p> <p>The Panel noted that the Chairmen's Committee had agreed by majority that Scrutiny and PAC meetings and briefings were to continue to be held in private. It was also noted that there would be a minor rewording of the Scrutiny Code.</p> <p>There were differing opinions within the Panel on the correct approach to this issue. However, it was agreed that the decision made by the Chairmen's Committee would be followed.</p> <p>Deputy S. Mezec stated that it was his intention to take a proposition to the States to provide a more transparent system.</p>	
<p>516/1/1(2)</p>	<p>4. Livelink</p> <p>The Panel welcomed Mrs A. Goodyear, Assistant Greffier of the States and Mr W. Millow, Scrutiny Officer who provided a presentation on Livelink to the Panel. This system allowed Members to have access to Scrutiny files in a central location, rather than being required to maintain their own filing systems. The system would be used within the Panel's first review.</p>	MR

<p>Item 1 06.01.15 516/1/1(3)</p>	<p>5. Home Affairs Briefing.</p> <p>The Panel discussed a briefing provided by the Home Affairs Department on 6th January 2015. This was an overview of the responsibilities and functions of the Department and States of Jersey Police and included a visit to the Police Station, Rouge Bouillon. It agreed that the information provided was useful, relevant and appropriate for the needs of the Panel. A letter was to be sent to the Minister, the Department and the Police, expressing the gratitude of the Panel.</p> <p>The Panel looked forward to a similar briefing from the Education, Sport and Culture Department which had yet to be arranged.</p>	<p>MR</p> <p>MR</p>
<p>516/1/1(4)</p>	<p>6. Meeting with Minister for Education Sport and Culture.</p> <p>The Panel was advised that the Chairman had met with the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture and the Director of Education. A Scrutiny Officer had been present and the meeting had been noted.</p> <p>The meeting had been very successful in ensuring that any misunderstandings which had led to the lack of information from the Department were discussed and dealt with. Lines of communication were now fully open between the Department and the Panel. Both the Minister and Director intended to take a very open and transparent approach with Scrutiny.</p> <p>The Minister had maintained that he would be happy to meet with the Scrutiny Panel on a regular basis to update the Panel with departmental work streams. He was also willing to provide the Panel with information in the form of the standard 'work programming template'. He recognised that Scrutiny was, in principle, a public process of holding Ministers to account. Whilst the value of providing fuller information to a Scrutiny Panel in a private session was acknowledged, particularly in the early stages of a Panel's term, a proper balance should be maintained in holding meetings open to the public. The Director had maintained that he did not anticipate that much of the discussions with Scrutiny would need to be held in private.</p> <p>When asked about the possibility of Scrutiny access to teachers, the Minister agreed that this would be facilitated wherever possible.</p> <p>A copy of a report drafted by the outgoing Director for Education for the Department had been requested from the Minister and current Director. It had been stated that the report was unfinished and it was considered unlikely that the report was to be finished. The Panel decided it wanted sight of the report at some point and discussions were to take place with the Minister to enable that to happen.</p>	<p>MR</p>
<p>Item 5 12.04.14</p>	<p>7. Hansard Transcript</p> <p>The Panel recalled that it required the Hansard transcripts of the previous Minister for Education, Sport and Culture of his speech in the States on the budget to be circulated.</p>	<p>MR</p>

<p>Item 8 04.12.14 516/1/1(5)</p>	<p>8. Special Education Needs Provision</p> <p>The Panel examined scoping documents, terms of reference and a time line for the review. It approved the undertaking of the review and accepted the risk of becoming involved in the minutia of the subject. To prevent this, it was decided that an advisor was to be found to assist the Panel in the technical areas. The documents were to be presented to the Chairmen’s Committee for approval.</p> <p>The Chairman suggested that the Panel co-opted Deputy J. Martin in relation to this review. Deputy Martin had been approached and had accepted the invitation, should the Panel agree. It was decided that the Panel should take advantage of the experience of the Deputy and the Panel approved the suggestion.</p> <p>The Panel discussed various methods of public engagement which might be employed to assist in the evidence gathering phase of the review. It recognised that it wanted to speak to teachers who dealt directly with the issues on a day to day basis. The Panel wanted to be pro-active in obtaining evidence and consideration was given to an on-line survey.</p> <p>The Panel considered the Community Relations Trust report, ‘Choice, Well Being and Opportunity in the Jersey School System’. It was decided that aspects of the report were reflected within the review and were to be considered when gathering evidence.</p>	<p>LD/MR</p> <p>MR</p> <p>MR</p> <p>MR</p>
<p>Item 5 04.12.14 516/1/1(5)</p>	<p>9. School Starting Ages</p> <p>The Panel considered a suggestion from a member of the public that the Panel reviewed the policy of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture in relation to the age children started school. The individual concerned had a problem with his child being one day into the yearly intake, which would make it the youngest in the class and therefore disadvantaged.</p> <p>The Panel recognised that this was a specific grievance between the individual and the Department or Minister and that the Code of Practice required it was rejected under paragraph 7.11 for that reason. The Panel rejected the review. The Chairman volunteered to take the particular case up as an individual constituency matter. It was considered that should the work of the Chairman evidence a problem which was endemic within the Minister’s policies then the option to undertake a review would be re-examined.</p>	<p>LD</p>
<p>Item 4 04.12.14 516/43</p>	<p>10. Prison Board of Visitors</p> <p>The Panel recalled that following a question from Deputy M. Tadier in relation to the Prison Board of Visitors, and a subsequent presentation from him to the Panel, it had been agreed that a proposition was to be drafted. Deputy Mezec was leading the work, however, the officer had been unavailable over the Christmas period and the work would be undertaken shortly.</p>	<p>SM/MR</p>
	<p>11. Visit to Westminster</p>	

510/1(3)	The Panel noted the details of the visit to Westminster on 14th January and the London Authority on 15th January 2015.	MR
	<p data-bbox="352 264 651 297">12. Future Meetings</p> <p data-bbox="352 331 1307 389">The Panel agreed to meet next at 9.30am on Monday 9th February 2015.</p>	MR