

CHAIRMEN'S COMMITTEE

Meeting of Chairmen held on 9th March 2007

Meeting Number 43

Present	Deputy R C Duhamel, President Deputy F J Hill Deputy G P Southern Deputy R G Le Hérisssier Deputy P J D Ryan Deputy A Breckon Deputy J G Reed Deputy S C Ferguson
Apologies	
Absent	
In attendance	Mrs K Tremellen-Frost, Scrutiny Manager Mr W Millow, Scrutiny Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
	<p>1. Revised Agenda</p> <p>Due the implications of an imminent proposition to be lodged under Standing Order 22, the Committee agreed it would not consider all items on the agenda.</p>	
	<p>2. Minutes</p> <p>The Minutes of 2nd, 9th and 19th February 2007 were taken as read and signed accordingly.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to amend Item (c) of the Minutes of 12th February 2007 to reflect the fact that the purpose for circulating sections of draft Scrutiny Reports to the relevant Minister was “to provide the Minister with the opportunity to comment on any matters of a technical nature but not on a Panel’s findings or recommendations.” The Committee approved the Minutes as amended and they were signed accordingly.</p>	
	<p>3. Matters Arising</p> <p>The Committee noted that work was in progress on the Draft Scrutiny Members Protocol and also in relation to the Code of Practice on Public Consultation as drawn up by the Communication’s Unit.</p>	
	<p>4. Panel Position Reports</p> <p>The Committee received and noted Panel Reports for-</p> <p>a) Corporate Services Panel <u>Zero/Ten Review</u></p> <p>The Panel had formed a new Sub-Panel to conclude the final stage of its review into the legislative framework to support Zero/Ten. The review would focus on the second part of the Zero/Ten legislation. The Sub-Panel hoped to receive a confidential copy of the draft legislation within the next few weeks.</p>	

The Committee received and noted Terms of Reference for the review into the legislative programme to support Zero/Ten. It further noted that the Sub-Panel conducting the review would be constituted as follows:

- Senator J.L. Perchard, Chairman
- Senator B.E. Shenton
- Deputy P.J.D. Ryan
- Mr. B. Curtis (Local unpaid expert advisor)

The Committee noted that the Sub-Panel would continue to use Mr. R. Teather as an advisor.

Overseas Aid Review

The Sub-Panel had held three days worth of public hearings on 5th, 6th and 7th February 2007. The Sub-Panel was now in the process of analysing all the evidence and information it had received. It would soon begin to draft its report, with a view to presenting it to the States at the beginning of April 2007.

GST Review

The GST Sub-Panel had held a preliminary meeting with the GST Director to discuss the latest draft of the primary legislation, prior to a public hearing with the Minister for Treasury and Resources, Senator T.A. Le Sueur. It had also discussed in private session the compatibility of the law with Protocol 3 with the Attorney-General, Mr. W.J. Bailhache QC. It was expected that the GST legislation would be lodged in the near future for debate in April/early May 2007. The Sub-Panel would prepare a report in advance of that date.

Migration Review

The Sub-Panel had met Mrs. E. Martins, Data Protection Commissioner, to discuss issues regarding the proposed population register. It had also met Mr. D. Millard, Head of the Statistics Unit, to discuss methods of calculating the working population.

The Sub-Panel continued to search for an expert adviser to assist with this review. A scoping document and estimate of expenditure would be forwarded once further work had been done on the timetable for the review.

The Committee received and noted Terms of Reference for the Sub-Panel's Review.

Scrutiny of States Annual Business Plan and States Budget

The Panel had received a confidential briefing from Mr. I. Black, States Treasurer, on the indicative cash limits. In the next stage of the process, the Panel would look at the outcome of the Council of Minister's deliberations on high level cash limits, revised income forecasts and high level taxation implications.

All Scrutiny Panels would receive details of the proposed cash limits for Departments within their remit on 19th March 2007. A briefing for all Scrutiny Members on the financial framework and the proposed cash limits had been arranged for 23rd March

2007. All Panels would be invited to submit comments on the implications, for consideration by the Council of Ministers, by the end of April 2007.

b) Economic Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Retail Strategy Review

The Panel had begun a review into the retail policy of the Department of Economic Development, based upon a report from Experian Property Consultancy. This report asserted that Jersey was sorely in need of additional retail space and that the introduction of a chain UK supermarket such as Asda, Tesco or Safeway would be of benefit to consumers in Jersey. This had been challenged by the Chamber of Commerce, who were concerned that this would have adverse effects on high street traders in St. Helier and other areas.

The call for evidence had generated over 40 responses, and the Panel had held two Public Hearings to interview five witnesses at St. Paul's Centre. Deputy A. Breckon was not able to take part in the review as he was the head of the Jersey Consumer Council, and felt that his involvement with campaigns to lower prices as well as his contributions to the Experian Retail Strategy would suggest that he held preconceived ideas on the subject. The review would therefore be carried out by a four-person Panel and was to be completed by 5th April 2005.

Jersey Telecom Review

It had been anticipated that the Telecom Privatisation Review would be completed, in accordance with the statement made by the Chairman to the States, by Monday 5th March 2007. As of 2nd March 2007, the report was with the stakeholders for consideration, and a number of lengthy responses had been received.

c) Education and Home Affairs Panel

Review of the Centeniers Role in the Magistrate's Court Review

- Work on the Panel's report was ongoing.

Review of the GP Out-of-Hours Service Review

- Work on the Panel's report was ongoing as of 19th February 2007.

Review of the Closure of Leoville and McKinstry Wards (Overdale Hospital) Review

- The Panel was awaiting an official response from Senator S. Syvret, Minister for Health and Social Services, to the Scrutiny Report.

Higher Education Funding:

The Panel had discussed the topic with Senator M.E. Vibert, Minister for Education, Sport and Culture, at its meeting on 5th February 2007. A Panel Statement was being prepared on the

Minister's funding policy proposal as a record of the preliminary work undertaken by the Panel. Progress on the policy would be monitored and would possibly lead to a review at a later date.

Meetings with Ministers:

The Panel had met Senator W. Kinnard, Minister for Home Affairs, on 19th February 2007.

d) Health, Social Security and Housing Panel

Telephone Mast Review

The Sub-Panel had held public meetings at Hautlieu School and St Brelade's Parish Hall in January 2007, followed by a series of Public Hearings in the States Chamber with industry representatives and other witnesses. Visiting speakers had been invited to address a public meeting in February, and there had been three further Public Hearings since then with Ministers and an expert invited by the local concern group. The evidence-gathering process was virtually complete and report drafting had begun, with a view to completing the review by the end of the first quarter.

Housing Property Plan Review

The Sub-Panel had now met three times and had had a separate meeting with Senator T.J. Le Main, Minister for Housing, and his officers. A date for the debate had now been suggested which was agreeable to both Housing and the Sub-Panel. Evidence gathering and investigation were under way.

Income Support Sub-Panel

The Income Support Sub-Panel had met Senator P.F. Routier, Minister for Social Security, on 23rd February 2007 to discuss the draft Regulations. A detailed response had been prepared and it was intended to invite the Minister to a Public Hearing in March to follow up the points raised.

Meeting with Minister for Health & Social Services

The Panel had met with the Minister for Health & Social Services on Monday 5th February 2007 to discuss the future work programme.

e) Environment Panel

The Panel had noted the resignation of Deputy G.C.L. Baudains in the States on Tuesday 13th February 2007.

Waste Management Review

The drafting of the report for the review was continuing. Delays were being experienced due to the Panel only having one officer available, the second having been engaged in the Telecoms Review.

Design of Homes Review

The Design of Homes Review had made a fact finding visit to Vienna during which it had been able to view alternative types of social and privately owned housing. The emphasis on design was a very open plan loft-style concept with an emphasis on eco-friendly design. Many of the projects and developments focused on community shared spaces. Atrium walkways provided year round amenity space and the recycling of grey water was actively promoted. A public hearing had been held for the review and the report would be drafted during March.

The Committee considered the topic of environmental taxes. It was advised that the Environment Panel was considering this topic and that no decision had yet been taken as to whether the Panel would undertake a Scrutiny Review. The Committee noted that a process of public consultation on environmental taxes had been implemented by the Minister for Planning and Environment. Consideration was given to whether the taxes would be introduced merely to address environmental concerns or whether the rationale also involved replacing revenue lost from other taxes that had been dissolved.

The Committee was advised that the Panel had met to consider the public consultation document for *Integrated Travel and Transport Plan for Jersey* and that comments had been sent to the Minister for Transport and Technical Services. The Committee noted that the period of public consultation ended on 9th March 2007.

f) Public Accounts Committee (PAC)

The Committee was advised that the work of PAC was closely linked to the programme of the Comptroller and Auditor General. It was further advised that work had been undertaken on obtaining figures relating to the Countryside Renewal Fund and on the reconciliation of figures from the 2005 and 2006 States Budgets. It was noted that the latter topic might also fall within the remit of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel. It was suggested that Deputies S.C. Ferguson and P.J.D. Ryan, Chairmen of PAC and the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel respectively, meet to consider the issue. The Committee was further advised that PAC would be undertaking further work in relation to the Property Holdings Department.

5. Resources

The Committee considered the current situation regarding officer support available to Scrutiny Panels. It was noted that the Economic Affairs Scrutiny Panel would seemingly have little available officer support in April 2007 due to staff changes. However, that Panel had addressed its working practices to accommodate this.

The Committee noted that the Environment Scrutiny Panel was currently unable to access support from two officers as one officer was working on the Telephone Masts Review, having been "seconded" to this by agreement of the Chairmen's Committee during the Christmas period. It was noted that the Environment Panel wished to be able to access the services of this officer as soon as possible; however, it was recognised that the officer would need to finish work on the "mast" review before this occurred. The Committee was advised that the Telephone

	<p>Masts Review was due for completion within the first quarter of 2007. It was, therefore, anticipated that this officer would be available to return to the Environment Panel thereafter.</p> <p>The Committee further noted that, due to the drafting of the Centeniers report, the support provided by one officer was currently split between the Health, Social Security and Housing Scrutiny Panel and the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel, although it was recognised that the former Panel did currently have the support of two officers due to the “secondment” of one officer from the Environment Panel to the Telephone Mast Review as minuted above. It was requested that the Committee give consideration to the production and distribution of Scrutiny Reports at its subsequent meeting.</p>	
<p>[09/02/07, Item 7]</p>	<p>6. Investigative Interviewing Training</p> <p>The Committee noted that eleven expressions of interest in questioning training had been received from Scrutiny Members: four Members had expressed a preference to receive the training on 26th April 2007 and seven on 27th April 2007. The Committee was advised that a maximum of twelve people could be accommodated during one session although enquiries could be made as to the feasibility of accommodating greater numbers at one time.</p> <p>The Committee noted that Scrutiny Members had been advised by e-mail of questioning training and that the issue had also been raised at the Scrutiny Away Day. It was agreed that a final e-mail would be distributed to those Members who had not yet responded to the invitation. These Members would be advised that the Committee felt it crucial for Members to receive this training. It was further agreed that the two sessions that had previously been identified would be maintained and not merged into a single session occurring on one day: in the event that it was not possible to fill all spaces on both days, spaces would be filled by Scrutiny Officers.</p>	<p>KTF</p>
<p>[09/02/07, Item 15]</p>	<p>7. Draft Annual Report</p> <p>The Committee was advised that an amendment had been made to the appendices to reflect the two items that had been (self)-referred to the Public Accounts Committee in 2006. It was noted that it would be beneficial for the appendices to indicate the number of Scrutiny Reviews that Panels had undertaken during the year.</p> <p>The Committee considered the references to presentation dates of reports due in 2007 and whether such references should state precisely the anticipated presentation dates. It was noted that reporting dates were an issue for individual Panels to consider. It was further noted that the 2007 Annual Report would include the precise presentation dates of any Scrutiny Reports completed during 2007.</p> <p>The Committee noted that contributions from the Economic Affairs Scrutiny Panel and the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel (on behalf of the former Social Affairs Scrutiny Panel) in addition to the President’s Foreword had not yet been supplied. It was advised that contributions from the two</p>	

	<p>remaining Panels had now been completed and were due for inclusion. The Committee was advised that the report needed to reach the Privileges and Procedures Committee by 21st March 2007. It was consequently agreed that all sections of the Scrutiny Annual Report needed to be completed by 14th March 2007.</p>	
	<p>8. Presentation on the Revised Website</p> <p>The Committee noted that the presentation to the Public Engagement Group (PEG) on 28th February 2007 had not been accessible by all Members of the Chairmen’s Committee. The Committee was advised that the presentation had been intended as a precursor to a presentation to the Committee and all Scrutiny Members and that there had been no intention for such a presentation not to occur prior to the website’s launch.</p> <p>The Committee noted that work had been undertaken by Executive Departments in relation to the gov.je website that included the procurement of specialist staff for this work.</p> <p>The Committee agreed it would meet at 1:15pm on 15th March 2007 to receive a presentation on the revised website. It was agreed that the meeting would be open to all Scrutiny Members.</p>	<p>KTF</p>

Signed

Date:

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President, Chairmen’s Committee