

# Health, Social Security & Housing Scrutiny Panel

## Income Support Sub-Panel

### PUBLIC MEETING

### Record of Meeting

Date: **27th January 2009**

Meeting Number: **2**

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

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
	<b>1. Vice-Chairman</b> The Sub-Panel appointed Deputy D.J. De Sousa as its Vice-Chairman.	
	<b>2. Relationship between the Sub-Panel and the Health, Social Security and Housing Panel</b> The Sub-Panel noted the provisions for Sub-Panels under Standing Orders and the Code of Practice.  It also noted its budget, officer allocation and project plan. The Sub-Panel indicated that it would prefer to receive hard copy documentation pertinent to its work and the review. Agendas would be provided at least four working days prior to meetings.	
	<b>3. Terms of Reference</b> The Sub-Panel discussed the review and considered the purpose and focus of the review. It noted concerns expressed and decided that it should make a slight amendment to its terms of reference.  Bullet point two of its terms would now read as follows - To assess whether the Income Support system meets the objective of the Department of Social Security to establish a fair and integrated system that meets the requirements of all clients.  The officer was directed to take the necessary action.	<b>CLQ</b>
	<b>4. Appointment of Advisors</b> The Sub-Panel noted a list of possible advisors to assist with the review. It agreed that two advisors should be selected and was advised that the HSSH Panel had proposed Mr. Ed Le Quesne for consideration.  The Chairman advised that he had made initial approaches to individuals on the list and that some interest had been expressed.  Mrs. M. Wilson a former Community Visitor for the Parish of St. Helier had indicated that she had the capacity to assist the Sub-Panel. A number of other individuals were to respond to the Chairman in the near future.	<b>GS/C LQ</b>

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	<p>The Sub-Panel decided that Mrs. Wilson should be invited to become an Honorary Advisor. It also supported suggestions for two other recommended advisors from the list which included the Reverend G. Houghton, Trinity and Mr. R. Le Brocq. Issues relating to conflicts of interest with regard to other possible advisors were considered by the Sub-Panel. The Chairman was authorized to continue liaising with both of the candidates and to include Mr. Ed Le Quesne as proposed by the Panel. The Sub-Panel agreed that the candidates would be suitable as advisors and accepted that the deciding factor would be the availability of those approached.</p> <p>It was agreed that responses from the individuals approached should be circulated by email to enable the Sub-Panel to select its second advisor and progress the review.</p> <p>The Sub-Panel noted the draft contract of engagement for advisors and accepted that such documents were necessary. The officer was requested to advise Mrs. Wilson that the Sub-Panel had agreed to her appointment subject to the necessary approvals and documents being signed.</p>	
	<p><b>5. Meeting with the Minister</b>  The Sub-Panel agreed that it would invite the Minister for Social Security to attend upon it at a Public Hearing on Monday the 23rd February 2009 at 2.00pm- 3.30pm to answer questions on Income Support.</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>	<p>CLQ</p>
	<p><b>6. Review work</b>  The Sub-Panel agreed the following -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All correspondence to and from the Minister for Social Security should be included in its review file;</li> <li>A summary of the work undertaken on the two completed Income Support Reviews and that part completed in 2008 should be provided to it;</li> <li>An outline of the officer structure provided for the delivery of the Income Support System should be requested from the Department of Social Security together with details of officer training provided;</li> <li>The call for evidence as amended, subject to final approval by the Chairman to be placed in the JEP for 3 nights on the week commencing the 2nd February or as soon as possible. Costs and designer to be confirmed by the Chairman;</li> <li>Data required by the Sub-Panel relating to 'like for like' payments to Income Support clients should be requested from the Department. It was noted that the figures previously provided by the Department were not sufficient to allow the direct comparison required;</li> </ul> <p>An update would be requested from Mr. T. Bunting, Statistician</p>	<p>CLQ</p> <p>CLQ</p> <p>CLQ</p> <p>GS/ CLQ</p> <p>CLQ</p>

	<p>contracted by the previous Sub-Panel to report on the data provided by the Department. Subject to the additional data being received it was agreed that Mr. Bunting should be contracted to assist with the completion of the task. It was noted that the expenditure had not been included within the budget for the review but that the contingency fund would suffice to fund the work;</p> <p>That a General Practitioner should be called to give evidence to the Panel on the issues relating to Household Medical Accounts at the earliest opportunity;</p> <p>All individuals who had responded to previous Income Support Reviews would be advised that a new Sub-Panel had been formed and invited to update their submissions;</p> <p>The terms of reference booklet would be produced in Portuguese, the officer was provided with a point of contact and instructed to obtain a translated version; and,</p> <p>The Chairman would produce a press release with the officer to launch the review.</p> <p>The Sub-Panel was advised by the Chairman that he would be pursuing the issue of fettering of discretion as an individual member as it was not within the remit of the Sub-Panel or the Panel to pursue the particular course of action required.</p>	<p>CLQ</p> <p>CLQ</p> <p>CLQ</p> <p>GS/ CLQ</p>
	<p><b>7. Working Practices</b></p> <p>The Sub-Panel confirmed that it was happy for the officer to liaise with the Members by email, and when appropriate for Electronic Meetings to be held. The Sub-Panel agreed that such meetings required the Members to respond with a clear decision regarding the matters being determined.</p> <p>The Sub-Panel further agreed that where it had agreed for letters to be sent out, the Chairman would approve the final draft. The Chairman's electronic signature would be added and the letter would be distributed electronically to the Sub-Panel for information rather than being included on a subsequent Agenda.</p> <p>The Sub-Panel further agreed that all communication and requests to the Departments under its remit should be undertaken via its officer.</p> <p>Members would also advise the Chairman and officer of any Sub-Panel related media contact that they may have prior to its occurrence.</p>	
	<p><b>8. Next Meeting</b></p> <p>The Panel agreed its schedule of meetings for 2009 and that its next scheduled meeting was due to take place on 10th February 2009.</p>	

Initials



Date:

10th February 2009

Deputy G. Southern  
Chairman, Income Support Panel