

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

PUBLIC MEETING

Record of Meeting

Date: 18th June 2009

Meeting Number: 16

Present	Connétable G. F. Butcher Deputy R. G. Le Hérissier, Chairman Deputy T. M. Pitman Deputy M. Tadier
Apologies	
Absent	
In attendance	Mrs. E. Liddiard, Scrutiny Officer Miss S. Power, Scrutiny Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
	<p>1. Records of Meetings</p> <p>The Records of the meetings of 11th May; 12th May; 13th May; and 5th June 2009 were approved and signed.</p>	
	<p>2. Matters Arising</p> <p>a. The Panel noted the status of action updates from the previous meeting on the 12th May 2009.</p> <p>b. The Panel noted briefing notes of the Chairmen's Committee meeting of the 21st May 2009.</p>	
Item 4 12.05.09 516/17(8)	<p>3. Prison Board of Visitors</p> <p>The Panel received an update from the Chairman of the Sub-Panel, Deputy M Tadier. The Panel noted that the draft report for this review was nearing completion. However it was advised that the presentation of the Sub-Panel's report would be delayed as a result of the Sub-Panel wishing to seek external legal advice from the UK on the human rights compliance of the current constitution of the Board of Visitors. It was noted that a firm had been identified that would be able to provide this advice, and the Panel therefore approved a budget of £3,500 for this advice. The Panel requested for the Chairmen's Committee to be notified accordingly.</p>	SP
Item 7 09.04.09	<p>4. Schools Suspension Review</p> <p>The Panel agreed that Deputy Pitman would chair the Sub-Panel conducting this review, with Connétable Butcher and Deputy Tadier also being members of this Sub-Panel. It was agreed that Deputy Pitman would identify an additional member for the Sub-Panel, following which the final membership of the Sub-Panel would be confirmed.</p> <p>The Panel noted a draft scoping document and draft terms of reference for this review. It was agreed that these documents should initially be</p>	TP

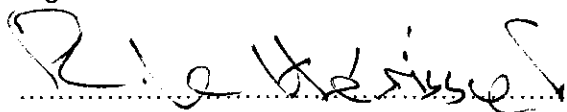
Item 7 12.05.09	discussed by the Sub-Panel before returning to the full Panel for approval. The Panel noted a letter from the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding the Panel's request for data on the suspension figures from individual schools to be provided publicly. It was agreed that this issue would be considered by the Sub-Panel during the course of its review.	
517/10(8)	5. Youth Unemployment The Panel discussed a letter from the Health, Social Security and Housing Scrutiny Panel regarding a potential review into youth unemployment. The Panel acknowledged that it was a very important issue, however as a result of its current work schedule it would not be possible for it to be considered until the beginning of 2010. The Panel noted that the former Economic Affairs Panel had commenced a review into employment and training opportunities in Jersey. It was agreed that as a result of previous work into this issue, the lead Panel for any review into youth unemployment should be the Economic Affairs Panel, with any Sub-Panel to also include a member of the Education and Home Affairs Panel. The Panel requested for a response to be drafted from the Chairman confirming the above.	EL/SP
Item 7 09.04.09 517/1(15)	6. Work Programme The Panel discussed its 2009 Annual Work Programme. It was agreed that Deputy Tadier would chair a Sub-Panel reviewing higher education fees, with Deputy Le Hérissier and Deputy Pitman also sitting on this Sub-Panel, which would commence its review in September. It was agreed that Deputy Le Hérissier would chair a Sub-Panel reviewing political education, which would start in late October.	
	7. Council of Ministers documents The Panel noted documents titled 'States of Jersey Police – User Pays Charges' and 'Vetting and Barring: A Template for Jersey' which had been provided to the Panel in confidence following the Council of Ministers' meeting on the 12 th June. It was recalled that the previous Education and Home Affairs Panel had reviewed the 'User Pays' charge in 2008. Once the proposition was lodged, the Panel requested the officers to prepare a document comparing the lodged proposition with the recommendations that had been made in the previous Panel's report.	EL/SP
	8. Topic Proposal The Panel discussed an anonymous letter from a member of the public regarding a topic proposal for a potential Scrutiny Review in private session under Article 3.2.1(b) of the Code of Practice on Public Access to Official Information.	
	9. Amendment of the Loi (1864) Réglant la Procédure Criminelle The Panel noted a response from the Minister for Home Affairs to the Panel's letter regarding this amendment.	
Item 5 09.04.09	10. Strategic Plan The Panel noted the comments that had been presented by the Chairmen's Committee to the draft Strategic Plan, and considered	

	<p>whether Article 18(2)(e) of the States of Jersey (Jersey) Law 2005 should be amended so that the Strategic Plan was a report rather than a proposition. The Panel discussed the comment from the Chairmen's Committee that it may be preferable that the Strategic Plan was the Council of Ministers' "manifesto" for its future work and therefore be presented to the States rather than debated.</p> <p>The Panel agreed that the Strategic Plan should be a consensus document and that members should have the opportunity to amend or comment on the document, and that it should therefore be kept as a document that is debated by the States as a whole. However, the Panel agreed that the process leading up to the debate should be reviewed. It was agreed that if amendments were lodged that were readily accepted by the Council of Ministers they should be incorporated immediately into the plan. This would therefore lead to the States debate only focusing on the contentious issues. The Panel further believed that there needed to be more meaningful consultation before the debate, and was not happy that this had been achieved. It was concluded that if the Council of Ministers were not prepared to hold meaningful consultation then it would ultimately be better for the Strategic Plan to be regarded as their manifesto and to be put to a vote by which the Council would either stand or fall. The Panel requested for the Chairmen's Committee to be notified of its views accordingly.</p>	SP
	<p>11. Visits to Westminster</p> <p>The Panel discussed the possibility of undertaking a visit to Westminster. It was agreed that it would be useful to visit both Westminster and the Welsh Assembly, however it was agreed that if it were only possible to visit one jurisdiction the focus should be on Westminster. The Panel requested the Officers to look into details for these visits, with a view to them taking place before October half-term.</p>	EL/SP
	<p>12. Meeting with Jersey Heritage Trust</p> <p>The Panel noted the documents that had been received during the meeting with Jersey Heritage Trust at Jersey Archive on Monday 1st June 2009, in addition to a letter that had been sent to Deputy Le Hérissier from Mr. C.S. Jones, Chairman, thanking the Panel for its visit.</p>	
	<p>13. Annual Business Plan 2010</p> <p>The Panel noted a paper documenting the remaining key dates for the draft Annual Business Plan 2010. The Panel agreed to meet on the 23rd July at 10.30am to discuss its approach to reviewing the business plan, once it had been lodged on the 21st July.</p> <p>The Panel further noted that the Comptroller and Auditor General would be holding a briefing on scrutiny of the Annual Business Plan during the States lunch break on the 30th June.</p>	
	<p>14. Forthcoming Legislation</p> <p>The Panel noted that there were no forthcoming propositions lodged <i>au Greffe</i> by the Minister for Home Affairs or the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture.</p>	
	<p>15. Ministerial Decisions</p> <p>The Panel noted receipt of recent Ministerial Decisions pertinent to its remit. The Panel discussed the following decisions:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jersey College for Girls and Jersey College for Girls Prep School: Increase in fees for Academic Year 2009-2010 (MD-ESC-2009-0008) Victoria College and Victoria College Prep School: Fees for Academic Year 2009-2010 (MD-ESC-2009-0007) <p>It was noted that fee increases for the 2009-2010 academic year should not exceed 2.5 per cent, however the Panel discussed that as public sector workers would not be getting a pay increase, this may lead to public sector employees with pupils at these schools being unable to deal with this increase in fees. The Panel requested the Officers to draft a letter to the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture asking what the justification and the rationale was for the increase; what the role of the Minister vis-à-vis the Board of Governors is in the setting of the fees; and whether the Minister has the right to refuse an increase in fees.</p>	EL/SP
	<p>16. Questions to Ministers</p> <p>The Panel noted the Minister for Transport and Technical Services and the Minister for Treasury and Resources would be taking questions without notice at the States sitting on 30th June 2009.</p>	
	<p>17. Future Meetings</p> <p>The Panel noted that the next Panel Meeting would be 8th July 2009 at 10.30am in Blampied Room, States Building. It was noted that the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture and the Minister for Home Affairs would be attending at the following times for the quarterly public meetings with the Panel:</p> <p>11.00am: Minister for Education, Sport and Culture. It was noted that this meeting would be followed by a private meeting with the Minister at 12.00pm. The Panel requested for no officers to be present during this section of the meeting.</p> <p>2.30pm: Minister for Home Affairs.</p> <p>The Panel requested the Officers to draft question plans for the public meetings with the Ministers.</p>	EL/SP

Signed

Date:



23/7/09

Chairman
Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel