STATES OF JERSEY

CONSULTANTS: REPORTING ON THEIR USE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF JERSEY (P.59/2019) – SECOND AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 9th July 2019
by the Chief Minister

STATES GREFFE

PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (a) –

For the value "£1,000" substitute "£25,000".

CHIEF MINISTER

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to request the Chief Minister to present a report to the States on a six-monthly basis on the use of consultants by the Government of Jersey, with each report to include the following information –

(a)   the total number of consultants employed or engaged by the Government of Jersey for a contract value of £25,000 or greater, within the previous six-month period, broken down by department;

(b)   the projects / engagements on which such consultants are working or have worked in the preceding six-month period;

(c)   a description of the purpose of the consultant's engagement;

(d)   the estimated total cost of the engagement;

(e)   the final total cost of the engagement (as soon as practical after the end of the engagement);

(f)   the daily or monthly rate of engaging or employing each such consultant and the total cost to date of that engagement or employment;

(g)   confirmation of whether or not each such consultant was engaged or employed following a tender process or quote-selection process;

(h)   confirmation of whether or not a structured needs assessment was undertaken before the selection process was started;

(i)   the expected date on which the engagement or employment of each consultant is expected to end;

(j)   confirmation of whether or not a structured post-consultant engagement evaluation was undertaken;

(k)   confirmation of whether or not the contract has been, or is expected to be, extended; and

(l)   the title of the accounting officer responsible for the engagement.

REPORT

The Minister accepts Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence's proposition and amendment, in line with the commitments of this Council of Ministers to increase transparency.

Indeed, Ministers are minded to extend reporting beyond consultants to also cover other resources used by the Government for limited periods of time, for example, fixed-term contract workers, agency workers, and other hired services. This would also cover so-called "interims", whatever the precise contractual arrangements.

While reporting on total consultancy spend already takes place in the accounts, the Minister will be developing a statement explaining how the Government proposes to expand reporting in this way and in line with the proposition, enabling reporting to take place at the end of 2019.

It important that the public understand the costs we incur on their behalf, and also the benefits to them in terms of services and value, including the sizeable efficiencies that are being driven forward by this government, in part using the expertise of consultants.

In noting this, while every pound is precious, the requirement to report the detail for all engagements over £1,000 is somewhat onerous, and a relatively low threshold for government reporting. It would capture excessive amounts of information, meaning that reports are large and complex, and less easy to interpret and understand.

Instead, it is proposed that the limit be increased to £25,000, which aligns with the requirements in financial directions to obtain written quotations, and means that reporting is focused on large items that matter most to the public.

If this amendment is adopted part (a) of Deputy Morel's proposition would then read –

> "(a)   the total number of consultants employed or engaged by the Government of Jersey for a contract value of £25,000 or greater, within the previous six-month period, broken down by department;".

Financial and manpower implications

This amendment does not create additional financial and manpower implications over and above the main proposition.