

Economic Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Meeting No 53

28th November 2007

Present Deputy G. P. Southern, Chairman
Deputy J. A. Martin
Deputy K. C. Lewis

Apologies Deputy A. Breckon
Connétable M. K. Jackson

Absent

In attendance Elizabeth Kingston-Walsh, Scrutiny Officer
Nathan Fox, Scrutiny Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
1.	Minutes The Minutes of the meetings held on 14th November 2007 were approved.	NJF
2. Item 7 14.11.07	Draft Price and Charge Indicators (Jersey) Law 200- The Panel recalled that the Economic Development Minister had agreed during a speech to the assembly on 7th November 2007 that it would be preferable for an inclusive system for the display of GST to include provision for the GST incurred per transaction to be displayed on receipts. Officers were directed to draft a letter to the Economic Development Minister requesting a timetable for the implementation of mandatory GST display on receipts.	NJF
3. Item 9 14.11.07	National Lottery – extension to Jersey The Panel recalled that it had received a white paper from the Economic Development Department regarding the possible extension of the UK National Lottery to Jersey, and that it had instructed officers to draft a letter to the Assistant Economic Development Minister seeking clarification of certain matters. The Panel noted the response from the Assistant Economic Development Minister, and considered that it demonstrated that the Economic Development Department had not finalised a number of details.	
4. Item 11 14.11.07	Rural economy The Panel recalled that it had been scheduled to meet with the Director of Environmental Management and Rural Economy on 14th November 2007, but that unavoidable changes in the timing of other meetings had made this impossible.	

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	<p>Officers informed that Panel that its chosen dates for a rescheduled meeting had not been available. They were directed to rearrange the meeting with the Director of Environmental Management and Rural Economy as soon as possible. Deputy Breckon was absent and therefore could not indicate his preferred dates. Accordingly officers were instructed to delay any action until his return.</p>	
5.	<p>Action Lists</p> <p>The Panel noted that several actions assigned to the Chairman at the previous meeting had not been completed. The Chairman therefore directed officers to develop and manage an action list encompassing officers, the Chairman and members.</p> <p>These were to be forwarded to the Panel after every meeting. Particular attention was to be given to actions assigned to officers for the approval of the Chairman, and to actions to be carried out solely by the Chairman.</p>	NJF EKW
6.	<p>Forthcoming propositions</p> <p>The Panel noted the following forthcoming propositions-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Companies (Amendment No. 2) (Jersey) Regulations 200-, lodged by the Economic Development Minister on 19th November 2007. • Draft Companies (Amendment No. 9) (Jersey) Law 200-, lodged by the Economic Development Minister on 19th November 2007. 	
7.	<p>Question to Ministers</p> <p>The Panel noted that the Social Security Minister and the Chief Minister were to be questioned without notice at the next meeting of the States on 4th December 2007.</p> <p>While the Panel had no pressing questions for these Ministers under its own remit, it noted that there would be some questions submitted to the Chief Minister in respect of the privatisation of Jersey Telecom by the relevant Sub-Panel.</p>	
8.	<p>Annual Business Plan</p> <p>The Panel recalled that at its last meeting it had decided that consideration of the States Annual Business Plan and the Economic Development Department Business Plan would appear on every future agenda. Accordingly, the Panel noted documents received during its previous consideration of the Business Plans.</p> <p>The Panel considered that the Economic Development Department Business Plan 2007 was difficult if not impossible to reconcile with previous Plans as it had been developed in a very different format.</p>	

	It was decided that the starting point of work on the Economic Development Department Business Plan 2008 would be the completed cash allocation results from the Business Plan 2007.	
9. Item 12 14.11.07	<p>Role and funding of Jersey Finance Limited</p> <p>The Panel noted that a key point in terms of the funding of Jersey Finance Limited was the initial intention of the Committees responsible for its formation. If it was found that Jersey Finance Limited was intended in the first instance to be self-funding in the long term then the current public funding arrangement would clearly not meet the founding criteria.</p> <p>The Panel noted that this had been difficult to establish, however, as the Act detailing the decision to incorporate Jersey Finance Limited was not available despite officers having considered the appropriate files and having made requests for information from the relevant parties.</p> <p>The Panel noted that two advertisements had been placed calling for evidence on the subject, in the Jersey Evening Post (JEP) and in 'Business Brief', a JEP-run business magazine. An advert in the Institute of Directors publication was to follow. These calls for evidence were to close on 21st December 2007.</p> <p>In order to ensure a rapid development of the review, the Panel directed officers to prepare Public Hearings to be held on 17th and 18th December 2007. Officers were to develop questions for these hearings with the Chairman to be completed by 7th December 2007.</p>	GS EKW
10. Item 11 17.10.07	<p>Jersey Telecom Privatisation</p> <p>The Panel noted that Dr. D. Parker had again been engaged by the Economic Affairs sub-Panel (Telecoms Privatisation) as a consultant for a brief period.</p> <p>The Panel was informed that the Sub-Panel had received an invoice in the sum of £350.00 for his work.</p> <p>The Panel directed officers to make arrangements to remit this sum to Dr. Parker as soon as possible.</p>	
11. New file 151/14	<p>Youth employment in Jersey</p> <p>The Panel considered draft terms of reference, a draft scoping document, a draft time plan and a draft budget for a review to examine youth employment in Jersey.</p> <p>The Chairman informed that Panel that he had made a statement to the media that the review was to take place, and that he hoped that this would generate public interest.</p> <p>The Panel noted that the terms of reference were currently specific to the problem of developing a usable comparator to that of other</p>	

	<p>jurisdictions, as there was no detailed measure of unemployment in Jersey. The Panel considered that the terms of reference would have to be considerably wider than currently drafted in order to accomplish its review goals. Accordingly the Panel delegated the Chairman to modify the terms of reference in the appropriate manner.</p> <p>These were to be returned to the Panel for consideration its next meeting.</p>	GS
12.	<p>Draft Price and Charge Indicators (Jersey) Law 200- evaluation</p> <p>The Panel noted a draft evaluation of the review of the draft Price and Charge Indicators (Jersey) Law 200-.</p> <p>The Panel was broadly in agreement with the conclusions of the evaluation, and noted that it had correctly identified the realignment of the Panel's position on the preferable form of GST display as a case of a Scrutiny Panel operating a truly evidence-led review.</p> <p>The Chairman was however not satisfied that section entitled 'Advisers' contained the question '<i>Was the adviser unbiased?</i>'.</p> <p>The Chairman considered it detrimental to the reputation of Scrutiny as a whole to suggest that biased advisors might be engaged, and furthermore were such an adviser to be employed the relevant Panel would be unlikely to recognise the bias involved.</p> <p>Officers were directed to liaise with the Scrutiny Manager to discuss the possibility of removing the term 'biased' from the evaluation template.</p>	NJF
13.	<p>Departmental efficiency review</p> <p>The Panel recalled that the Chairmen's Committee had requested all Panels to indicate what areas in the Departments which they scrutinised could tolerate funding reductions with a minimum of effect on services to the public.</p> <p>The Panel noted that the Public Accounts Committee's amendment to the 2007 States Annual Business Plan would have removed £12,425,000 from the overall States budget, which was proportionally equivalent to approximately £350,000 from the Economic Development Department's budget.</p> <p>The Panel was confident that such reductions could be made without significant effects on services. The Chairman directed officers to review his speech to the assembly during the discussion of this amendment on 20th September 2007 to identify the necessary reductions.</p>	NJF
14.	<p>Machinery of Government Review</p> <p>The Panel noted that it had been encouraged by the Chairmen's Committee to produce a response to the report of the Privileges and Procedures Committee on the operation of the Machinery of</p>	

	<p>Government reforms that introduced Ministerial Government and the Scrutiny function.</p> <p>The Panel noted that there was as yet no formal position on this matter, and that the only response so far produced was from officers. This was not considered suitable for adoption by the Panel as it was solely a personal opinion.</p> <p>Accordingly, officers were directed to produce a response on behalf of the Panel. The Chairman was to insert a paragraph outlining his opinion of the process as a whole.</p>	NJF GS
15.	<p>Future meetings</p> <p>The Panel noted that its next meeting was to be held at 11.00am on 12th December 2007 in the Blampied Room, States Building.</p>	

Signed

Date

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Chairman Deputy G. P. Southern
Economic Affairs Panel