

Public Accounts Committee

MEETING

Record of Meeting

Date: 24th May 2010

Meeting 35

Present	Senator B.E. Shenton (Chairman) Connétable J.M. Refault (Vice-Chairman) Senator A. Breckon Mr. M. Magee Mr. K. Keen
Apologies	Mr C. Swinson O.B.E, Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) Mr A. Fearn
Absent	Senator J. Perchard
In attendance	Mrs. M. Pardoe, Public Accounts Committee Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
	<p>1. Records of Meetings</p> <p>The records of the meetings held on the 8th and 26th of April 2010 were agreed as a true account of events and were accordingly signed.</p>	
<p>Item A2 26.04.10</p>	<p>2. Matters Arising</p> <p>The Committee noted that the Interim Treasurer of the States was unable to attend the meeting as planned, and had sent his apologies. It was agreed that he would be invited to the next Committee meeting instead.</p>	
<p>Item B1 18.05.10 512/7(8)</p>	<p>3. Jersey Heritage Trust</p> <p>Members recalled the Public Hearings in regard to the above, held on the 18th May 2010. The Officer was instructed to commence the drafting of the report.</p> <p>A Committee visit to the Jersey Archive, as arranged previously by electronic mail, was noted for the 1st June 2010.</p>	<p>MP</p>
<p>Item B2 26.04.10 512(18)</p>	<p>4. Proposition P29/2010</p> <p>The Committee recalled that its Proposition above regarding the reduction in States expenditure had been withdrawn after it had become obvious that it would fall. However the Committee considered that the point had been worth making nonetheless and further noted that the Minister for Treasury and Resources had welcomed the debate (although he had opposed the Proposition as he considered the cuts to be too stringent.)</p>	
<p>Item A5 26.04.10 513/27(8)</p>	<p>5. Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR)</p> <p>The Committee considered that the Ministries were still operating in silos, and that this made the Comprehensive Spending Review very difficult, when there were no incentives for cuts and nobody had the power to enforce them. It was considered that this was where the independence of the Treasurer of the States could be very helpful.</p> <p>It was noted that it had been announced on the front page of the Jersey Evening Post that sixty public sector jobs were to be lost. However it was noted that extra posts in the public sector had recently been created. It</p>	

	<p>was noted that there was little point in losing positions if only to create new ones. It was observed that in the private sector it was common practice to cut positions and then take many of the same staff back on under new terms and conditions, therefore making an overall saving. Or recruitment was frozen at the same time as implementing redundancies. It was noted that there was a large cost to laying staff off in regard of redundancy payments, and that it was important to take that into account when trying to make savings.</p>	
<p>Item B3 26.04.10 512/1(34)</p>	<p>6. Inter-Island Co-operation</p> <p>The Committee discussed their forthcoming visit to the Guernsey Public Accounts Committee on the 18th June 2010, and considered provisional agenda items.</p> <p>It was noted that Guernsey's per capita spend was around a thousand pound less than Jersey's, and that Guernsey had a 'user pays' policy in place for the use of ambulances. The Officer was requested to re-circulate all previous papers in respect of Guernsey to the Committee in advance of the visit. The Committee also resolved to write to the Chamber of Commerce and the Institute of Directors to invite their input prior to the visit.</p>	<p>MP</p>
<p>Item A7 26.04.10 512(5)</p>	<p>7. Procurement</p> <p>It was noted that ten months had elapsed since the Chief Officer for Resources and the Head of Corporate Procurement had briefed the Committee on the strategy for procurement. Therefore it was agreed that it would be beneficial to invite these officers to a public hearing in the summer to question them about progress in this area.</p> <p>The Committee was advised that the Head of Corporate Procurement had been asked for an update, and she had replied on the 19th April to confirm that the Procurement Strategy had been agreed and was in the process of being implemented. She had also advised that Financial Direction 5.7 (which encompassed Procurement) had been completed.</p> <p>The Officer was asked to write to the Head of Corporate Procurement to request a copy of this revised Financial Direction, and also to write a short paper summarising progress to date.</p>	<p>MP</p>
<p>512(24)</p>	<p>8. Remuneration in the States of Jersey</p> <p>The Committee recalled that Deputy R. Le Hérisier had recently been calling for disclosure of the remuneration for individuals in senior jobs in the States. The Committee was in accord with this view. It was considered that it would make sense for the States to have a similar disclosure to that of a Limited Company. It was noted that public sector pay (and indeed a great deal of other public sector financial information) was often published online. Furthermore the Committee was minded that such transparency engendered a more efficient use of public funds, and as such supported greater transparency in the availability of financial information.</p>	
<p>Item B3 19.10.09 512(17)</p>	<p>9. Public Employees Contributory Retirement Scheme (PECRS)</p> <p>The Committee noted that its letter to the interim Treasurer on the 30th April 2010 in regard of the above had received no reply. The Officer was requested to follow up.</p>	<p>MP</p>
<p>512(25)</p>	<p>10. Data Protection</p> <p>The Committee received two confidential papers regarding Data Protection.</p>	

11. Future meetings

The Committee noted that its next meeting was scheduled for 28th June 2010 in the Blampied Room, States Building

Signed

Date:



28th June 2010

Chairman, Public Accounts Committee

