



St Paul's Community Centre
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Citizens Advice Jersey, St Paul's Community Centre, St Helier, JE2 3WP

23rd July 2020

Response to the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Re. The decision to demerge CICRA.

Foreword

I am the CEO of Citizens Advice Jersey, a position that I have held for the last 10 years.

We are pleased to respond to this scrutiny review of the decision to demerge CICRA. During the course of our work, we see the problems associated with consumer issues and the provision of a reliable and forward-looking regulator is pivotal to consumer confidence and good market governance.

Consumer issues constituted only a small number of our caseload, in 2019 we recorded **365** client contacts that fell into this category. The main issues were around utilities and retail problems. Many of our cases are referred to either Trading Standards or the Jersey Consumer Council who have more in-depth knowledge of this specific area of advice.

In relation to the two specific areas highlighted by the Scrutiny Panel in the letter from Deputy Kirsten Morel dated 7 July, 2020;

Whether you were consulted in advance of the decision to give your organisation's views as a stakeholder.

My organisation was not contacted or consulted prior to this decision being made.

From conversations that I have had with colleagues in the Voluntary and Community Sector and in other sectors of the community, nobody else seems to have been contacted in this regard. It should be noted that the second part of the above statement is purely anecdotal evidence.



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The ways in which you think competition regulation will be affected, positively or negatively, by the decision.

As with any change, there will always be pros and cons. Broadly, I believe that operating on a pan-Island basis offers more advantages than disadvantages, not least because we have a number of companies that operate within both jurisdictions and being able to deal with one joined-up office is preferable to having to deal with two.

There is likely to be cost implications relating to the demerger and I do not understand the rationale behind the decision to demerge at a time when we should be trying to work more collaboratively between the Islands.

Having said that, the demerger will be an opportunity for JCRA staff to have a clear focus on Jersey issues and perhaps reduce some of the complexity of their job roles.

My final point is to question where in the legislation allowed the demerger and if this can be achieved at such short notice, without consultation, then this is an opportunity to review the legislation to make sure that this does not happen again.

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