

# Chairmen's Committee

## Record of Meeting

Date: 13th November 2012

Present	Deputy T.A. Vallois, President Deputy S.G. Luce, Vice-President Senator S.C. Ferguson Deputy J.H. Young Connétable S. Pallett
Apologies	Deputy J.M. Maçon, Deputy K.L. Moore, Deputy J. A. Hilton
Absent	
In attendance	Mr. T. Oldham, Scrutiny Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
	<p><b>1. Minutes of previous meetings</b></p> <p>The minutes of 8th and 23rd October and 2nd November 2012, having been approved were accordingly signed. The minutes of 25th October 2012 would be amended prior to approval at the next meeting.</p>	
511/1(33)	<p><b>2. Minutes of joint Chairmen's Committee and Council of Ministers meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of the joint meeting with the Council of Ministers on 4th October 2012 were approved and signed.</p> <p>In relation to these minutes, it was noted that the issue of being able to undertake more reviews was due to a lack of time available to Scrutiny Members rather than to a lack of officer resource.</p>	
1444/1(53)	<p><b>3. Shadow Boards and Ministerial Boards: approval by the States [P.170/2010]</b></p> <p>It was noted that, in accordance with P.170/2010, the Public Accounts Committee, the Privileges and Procedures Committee and the relevant Scrutiny Panel should be consulted about all proposals to establish any Ministerial Shadow Boards to ensure appropriate oversight of the proposals.</p> <p>The Committee noted that PAC had recently received one such proposal and had agreed that such matters fell outside the remit of the PAC. It would consequently be bringing a proposition to the States to amend P.170/2010.</p> <p>It was expected that such proposals should still be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Panel.</p>	<b>PAC</b>
512/1(42)	<p><b>4. Price Waterhouse Cooper [PWC]: possible charges to be incurred for attending on the Public Accounts Committee [PAC]</b></p> <p>It was noted that, in the absence of a Comptroller and Auditor General, in order to undertake its work on the Annual Report and</p>	

	<p>Accounts, the PAC had called PWC before it to give a private briefing. As this necessitated a visit from the UK, PWC advised PAC that a representative would be coming to the Island on 2nd November anyway. Consequently PAC had identified a time to meet them on that date to avoid any additional travel costs. However, PWC brought forward its date to come to the Island to visit Treasury but did not advise PAC of this.</p> <p>Subsequently, the cost of one and half hours preparation and one and half hours for attendance on PAC had been included on an invoice to Treasury to the cost of £1,200. It was unsure whether this sum included travel to the Island.</p> <p>On consideration of the matter, the Committee agreed that it should not pay for any travel expenses as had PWC advised PAC of its change of date, it would have identified a time when PWC had been on-Island to hold the briefing with them.</p> <p>It also agreed, that, in view of the fact that PWC was attending on the PAC to discuss a management letter which they had prepared, payment for one and half hours preparation time was unreasonable and would not be met. As PWC had, infact, attended on PAC for one hour, the final agreement was, therefore, to pay for one hour's attendance if so requested.</p> <p>Noting that the sum was still with Treasury, PAC would await the outcome of further investigations into the situation.</p>	PAC
<p><b>16.10.12</b> <b>Item 5</b>  <b>510/1(3)</b></p>	<p><b>5. Chairmen's Committee Expenditure</b></p> <p>It was agreed that a sum of £1,500 should be made available should any Scrutiny Members wish to attend on-Island conferences relevant to the Scrutiny function. Such expenditure should be considered by the Committee prior to expenditure to ensure its relevancy to the Scrutiny function</p>	KTF
<p><b>513/37(1)</b></p>	<p><b>6. Budget Statement 2013 review: Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel</b></p> <p>The scoping document and Terms of Reference for a review by the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel into the 2013 Budget Statement was noted.</p>	
<p><b>08.10.12</b> <b>Item 1</b>  <b>513/35</b></p>	<p><b>7. Medium Term Financial Plan</b></p> <p>The Committee noted some concerns about the processes used relating to the MTFP and the lateness of documentation received by the Scrutiny Sub-Panel. It noted that the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel, under which the Sub-Panel had been formed, would be inviting the Sub-Panel to meet to evaluate the review.</p>	CSSP
<p><b>23.10.12</b> <b>Item 1</b>  <b>513/36</b></p>	<p><b>8. Population and Migration Review: Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel</b></p> <p>The Committee queried the timing of the review given its recent approval by Privy Council. It was noted that the Panel had believed that the approval would not have been given before January as, if it had, it would have undertaken a review earlier. However, it was noted that the Sub-Panel was reviewing the Regulations in preparation for the debate on this Secondary Legislation in 2013.</p>	

	<p>The Committee also considered the merit of a fact-finding visit to the Isle of Man scheduled to take place at the end of this month. There was a view that the relevant information could have been acquired by means other than a visit requiring the use of public funds. However, it was accepted that if the visit were a follow-up on previous communications, there may be some merit in “face-to-face” dialogue.</p>	
	<p><b>9. Panel Activity Reports</b></p> <p>The Committee noted the Panel Activity Reports.</p>	
	<p><b>10. Financial Report – 3rd quarter</b></p> <p>The Committee noted that third quarter financial report.</p>	
510/1(77)	<p><b>11. Access to Executive information in a timely manner</b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the difficulties created by the late receipt of documentation from the Executive. There was a view that policy issues were “flushed” out too late and that Scrutiny needed to be involved much earlier in the policy formation process, not necessarily to undertake any work but to be au fait with developments. There was an expectation by the States Assembly that Scrutiny would review a number of matters in preparation for debates, but the late sending of documentation didn’t permit Scrutiny to undertake these in a timely and therefore, thorough fashion which could result in delays to debates which frustrated the Executive. The receipt of late documentation also gave a feeling of exclusion and made the system adversarial which led to a lack of efficiency. There was some concern expressed about active intervention in policy development by Scrutiny, as this would compromise Scrutiny Members once they came to reviewing the matter.</p> <p>Consideration was given to Scrutiny being used beneficially as a “sounding board” in “real time”. The Committee was reminded that Scrutiny was mandated by the States to base its work on facts and evidence and that using Scrutiny as sounding boards may encourage personal and subjective views to be put forward. It was noted that the Scrutiny Office had been established to fulfil the function as mandated by the States in 2005; to support evidential-based reviews not personal or political views of individual Members or Panels. Should there be the requirement of the function of the office to change it would need to be as a result of a States decision to change the system.</p> <p>In respect of access to Green and White Papers, it was noted, that as a result of the joint meeting between the Chairmen’s Committee and the Council of Ministers, a Working Practice Note was to be devised by end October 2012. It was also noted that the Minister for Treasury and Resources had indicated that the programme of work for the next two years would be provided to Scrutiny prior to the year end 2012. The President would follow-up on these matters at her next meeting with the Chief Minister.</p>	TV
510/1(76)	<p><b>12. Research Student</b></p> <p>The Committee noted that the President had received correspondence requesting the possibility of a student currently</p>	

	<p>undertaking the Social Sciences Degree Course to undertake some work shadowing within Scrutiny. The Committee was advised that such requests are received by the office quite frequently but unfortunately the students are generally only available during States recesses or at intermittent times during the week which did not lend itself to a beneficial learning experience.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that it could only consider such placements if the students were available during working hours for a block period during non-recess times. The President was to revert to the author of the request.</p>	<b>TV</b>
	<p><b>13. Scrutiny Members meeting</b></p> <p>Noting that the next meeting for all Scrutiny Members was scheduled for 21st November 2012, the Committee queried whether there were any matters which required all Member discussion. It agreed to invite all Scrutiny Members to suggest items for discussion and if none were forthcoming, to cancel the meeting rather than to hold a meeting “for meeting’s sake”.</p>	<b>KTF</b>
	<p><b>Future meetings</b></p> <p>18th December 2012 9.30am-11.30am – Chairmen’s Committee meeting, Le Capelain Room.</p>	