

Chairmen's Committee

Record of Meeting

Date: 13th June 2012

Present	Deputy T.A. Vallois, President Deputy S.G. Luce, Vice-President Senator S.C. Ferguson Deputy J.M. Maçon Deputy J.H. Young Deputy K.L. Moore
Apologies	Deputy Power
Absent	Deputy S. Pitman, Connétable of Grouville, Connétable of St. Ouen
In attendance	Connétable of St. Brelade(item 3 onwards) Connétable of St. John (item 1 to mid 4) Connétable of St. Martin Deputy Hilton Deputy Reed Deputy Rondel Mrs. K. Tremellen-Frost, Scrutiny Manager Mr. W. Millow, Scrutiny Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
07.02.12 Item5 513/32 517/18	1. Ministerial Responses to Scrutiny Reports SR1/2012 and SR2/2012 and The President, having congratulated the Corporate Services and Health, Social Security and Housing Scrutiny Panels on their Scrutiny Reports (SR1/2012: <i>Population and Migration</i> and SR2: <i>Respite Care for Children and Young Adults</i> respectively) also commented on the positive Ministerial Responses they had received. The meeting noted the importance of following up accepted recommendations in a timely manner.	
30.05.12 Item 1 513/35	2. Medium Term Financial Plan [MTFP] The meeting recalled its previous decision to scrutinise the MTFP in a standardised format by each Panel holding private briefings with respective Ministers and Departments prior to the lodging of the MTFP, preparing brief papers to forward to a Sub-Panel of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel, on which a Member from each Panel would sit (not necessarily Chairmen) and this Sub-Panel would undertake a thorough review of all matters arising. The Committee noted that Terms of Reference for each Panel had been drafted to provide some standardisation as had the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Services Sub-Panel. The Chairmen's Committee had received these and they had been circulated to Officers for Panel agendas.	

	<p>The Committee, aware that the MTFP changed on a regular basis, considered at what point Panels would be able to rely on information contained within the plan. The fact that the previously stated date of 3rd July 2012 for lodging looked likely to slip was of concern as it had an impact on the work of all the Panels and of the Sub-Panel of the Corporate Services Sub-Panel.</p> <p>If the lodging date were not until late July and Panels wished to hold public hearings then these hearings would have to take place during the summer recess. Experience had shown that holding Hearings during this time was impractical, mainly due to lack of accessibility to Ministers, Executive Officers and Scrutiny Members at the same time.</p> <p>It was recognised that, in any event, it was important to establish the membership of the Corporate Services Sub-Panel and that this should be progressed with a Member (not necessarily the Chairman) from each Panel.</p> <p>Given that the meeting was advised that the work of the Sub-Panel needed to be concluded by end October and that it would therefore need to hold hearings through the summer recess and that it would require the Panel papers in order to commence its work by the end of July, it would not be possible for Panels to hold any public Hearings.</p> <p>It was agreed that at the next meeting between the President and the Chief Minister, the concern of the Scrutiny Membership should be raised with a discussion about the possibility of a deferral of the debate given the deferral of the lodging date.</p> <p>Consideration was given to the President asking a question of the Chief Minister in the States, however no decision was reached.</p> <p>Consideration was also given as to the rationale of the Corporate Services Sub-Panel requiring one or more advisers and an explanation was provided.</p> <p>The Connétable of St. John withdrew during this item</p>	
511/1(50)	<p>3. Votes by Scrutiny Members on Scrutiny-related matters in the States Assembly</p> <p>The meeting considered whether it would be beneficial for Scrutiny Members to vote in unison on Scrutiny-related matters which were debated in the States Assembly. Members were cognisant of the fact that although they served on Scrutiny, they were also apolitical on Scrutiny and that unified voting could appear to be forming a “party”.</p> <p>The meeting considered the particular case of the Tourism Development Fund (P.26/2012) which had been referred back to the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel. The meeting recognised how events had led to this proposition falling between two Panels and therefore concluded with a debate for a referral to Scrutiny. It was agreed that closer communication between Panels was important.</p> <p>The meeting noted Standing Orders 72 and 79 which related to procedures that were available for Scrutiny to use as mechanisms in the States Assembly.</p>	

	The Connétable of St. Brelade arrived at the end of this item.	
22.05.12 Item 7 510/1(3)	<p>4. Training: Questioning Skills</p> <p>The meeting recalled that the Chairmen's Committee had previously agreed that Mrs K. Faragher of beSPokeskills should provide follow-up training in questioning skills later in the year. Noting that it was planned that this would be a more interactive session involving role-play the meeting fully supported this and requested that Chairing Skills should also be included.</p> <p>The meeting was advised that H.M Attorney General had offered to provide training on questioning skills and it was agreed that this should be followed up.</p> <p>On a non-related Scrutiny matter, the meeting considered the availability of training for Members to ask questions in the States Assembly. It was agreed that, as this was not a matter for Scrutiny, it would be referred to the Privileges and Procedures Committee.</p>	KTF/ KM
510/1(45)	<p>5. Information relevant to briefings and hearings by the Executive to be received at least 24hrs prior to the meeting</p> <p>The meeting considered a number of situations whereby written information from the Executive had been made available during Scrutiny Hearings. The meeting agreed that this was not acceptable and that, in order for Panels and the PAC to be able to perform to the best of their ability they required all written documentation at least twenty-four hours in advance. It was noted that the existing Executive Guidelines which had been drawn up by the Executive would need to be amended which would require acceptance by the Executive.</p>	KTF/ TV
510/1(45)	<p>6. Effectiveness of Public Hearings</p> <p>The meeting received a request from a Member that the Chairmen's Committee should consider the effectiveness of Scrutiny Hearings ie: whether it would be advisable to receive written documentation in advance so that the Panels could better prepare questions based on that documentation. This was agreed.</p>	KTF/ CC
510/1(45)	<p>7. Scrutiny Hearings: moving from Public to Private during a Hearing</p> <p>The meeting, having considered the relevant circumstances and regulations in respect of the above, agreed that the President would remind the Chief Minister of the relevant Standing Orders and that moving into private during a Hearing was at the discretion of the Panel/Committee not the witness.</p> <p>It also agreed that the Chief Minister should be requested to advise Ministers of the above and also advise them that, should a Minister believe that it would be more appropriate for a hearing, or part thereof, to be held in private, the Minister should contact the Scrutiny Office at least 24 hours in advance to request this with the reasons why.</p>	KTF/ TV
510/1(42)	<p>8. Visual footage of Scrutiny Hearings</p> <p>It was queried whether any decisions had been made in respect of members of the public taking visual footage at Scrutiny Hearings and was advised that this was a matter for the next Chairmen's Committee meeting when a final decision would be made.</p>	CC

