

Health, Social Security & Housing Scrutiny Panel

Income Support Sub-Panel

PUBLIC MEETING

Record of Meeting

Date: **24th November 2009**

Meeting Number: **5**

Present	Deputy G.P. Southern, Chairman Deputy T. Vallois, Vice Chairman Deputy D.J. De Sousa Connétable D. Mezbourian Connétable S.A. Yates (for a time)
In attendance	Mr. E. Le Quesne, Advisor C. Le Quesne, Scrutiny Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
	<p>1. Minutes The Sub-Panel received and approved its minutes of the 10th November 2009.</p>	
Item 2 10.11.09	<p>2. Review update The Sub-Panel received an oral report from the Chairman and was advised as follows -</p> <p>Members discussed some draft questions that had been provided as a basis for the development of the questionnaire to be used as an evidence-gathering tool for the review. A meeting with the Statistics Unit would be arranged to progress the development of the questionnaire and the form to be sent to States members. The necessary action would also be taken to ensure compliance with data protection requirements;</p> <p>Clarification would be sought as to the exact focus of the 'household' component within Income Support;</p> <p>That the impact of reassessments of Transitional Payments would be monitored; and,</p> <p>That further consideration should be given to the rent levels set both for social rented and private sector rentals and the implications for low-income families.</p>	

	<p>In addition, the Chairman advised that a meeting had taken place with Mrs. P. Tumelty, The Bridge to discuss public engagement with seldom heard groups. It was noted that the message coming through from service delivery specialists remained much the same as during the previous Income Support Review. The concerns and issues were noted. It was agreed that the focus of the current review would be to collate and report on challenges in a much broader way indicating findings without the use of individualised data.</p> <p>It was suggested that an officer should have the opportunity of attending group work at The Bridge and of providing access to the clients of The Bridge on site at agreed times. This would also be an alternative public engagement exercise for scrutiny. Mrs. Tumelty advised that she had an office available and was supportive of the concept of providing access to the clients using The Bridge.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that he had agreed to discuss the proposal with both the Panel and the Sub-Panel. He reported that the Panel had been supportive subject to the proper safeguards and arrangements being in place.</p> <p>The Sub-Panel endorsed the decision subject to it being on a temporary and structured basis.</p> <p>It was agreed that a timetable for the programmes offered should be obtained and that the officer should attend as many of the groups as possible to advise what Scrutiny was doing and how individuals could add to the value of the review. Attendance at The Bridge should then be agreed to ensure best use of time and resources both with Mrs. Tumelty and with the Scrutiny Manager.</p> <p>It was noted that the cost for the rental of the office would be approximately £3,000 for 6 months. The officer was requested to investigate other options to reduce that cost on the basis that the room would only be used for three half or two full days dependant upon public response.</p> <p>The Sub-Panel was advised that only a laptop would be required for the officer and that remote computer access could be provided.</p> <p>The officer was requested to take the necessary action and was authorised to request access to the soft ware package to progress the development of the questionnaire.</p>	
	<p>3. Documents received</p> <p>The Sub-Panel received a number of documents for inclusion to its background information together with</p>	<p>CLQ</p>

	<p>a) Notes of a meeting with Mr. F. Le Gresley, Citizens Advice Bureau dated 16th November 2009;</p> <p>b) email correspondence from Dr. M. Evans relating to data processing which may be of assistance to the Sub-Panel. The officer was requested to ascertain if the Statistics Unit could release the data required. If the data was available a contract should be prepared for Dr. Harkness in order that she could progress the work;</p>	CLQ
	<p>4. Next Meeting</p> <p>The Panel noted that its next scheduled meeting was due to take place on 8th December 2009 from 1.00 - 2.00 pm.</p>	

Initials



Date:

24th November 2009

Deputy G. Southern
Chairman, Income Support Panel

