

# Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

## PUBLIC MEETING

### Record of Meeting

Date: **26th July 2007**

Meeting Number: **43**

Present	Deputy P J D Ryan, Chairman Senator J Perchard, Vice Chairman Connétable J L S Gallichan Deputy C Egré
Apologies	Connétable D Murphy
In attendance	Mr M Haden, Scrutiny Officer Miss S Power, Scrutiny Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
<b>1.</b>	<b>Minutes –</b> The Panel approved the minutes of the meeting held on the 21st June 2007.	
<b>2.</b> Item 2a Item 5 21.06.07	<b>Matters Arising</b> a. <b>Budget Scrutiny Training</b> - It was noted that a number of training options were being explored by the Scrutiny Manager. b. <b>Jersey's independence</b> - The Panel considered correspondence from Mr. D. Pearce regarding the EU treaty and Jersey's relationship with the United Kingdom. The Panel agreed to refer to the Attorney General's recent investigation of this issue in relation to TIEAs.	<b>SP</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Forthcoming Legislation –</b> The Panel agreed that (i) the draft States of Jersey (Amendment No4) (Jersey) Law 200- and the Employment of States of Jersey Employees (Amendment No.2) (Jersey) Regulations 200-; (ii) the draft Gender Recognition (Jersey) Law 200- did not require further scrutiny. The Panel requested information on the progress of legislation on civil partnerships	<b>MH</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Ministerial Decisions –</b> The Panel noted Ministerial Decisions within its remit for the period from 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2007 to 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2007.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Executive response to Scrutiny Reports</b> The Panel noted the draft Protocol.	
<b>6.</b> Item B1a 21.06.07	<b>States Annual Business Plan 2008</b> a. <b>Proposed cash limits for Scrutiny</b> - The Panel considered a briefing paper prepared by the Scrutiny Officer. It was noted that the Scrutiny budget had been underspent in	

<p>Item B1b 21.06.07</p>	<p>2006 and this was likely to remain the case in 2007 and 2008. It was clear that, on current spending trends, Scrutiny could afford a reduction of £200,000 as suggested at the previous meeting. Nevertheless, the Panel decided that it would not seek to reduce the cash limit at this stage on the basis that the Panels were increasingly realising the benefits of engaging external expert advice to assist with reviews. Therefore a reduction in cash limits which would limit this ability would be premature. The Panel was mindful that unspent resources would be returned to the Treasury at the year end.</p> <p>The Panel noted that the Privileges and Procedures Committee intended to conduct a review of cash limits and Scrutiny activity after a full three years of operation and it was agreed that this would be a more appropriate time to revert to this issue.</p> <p><b>b. Financial Framework and Financial Forecast 2007-2012. -</b></p> <p>The Panel noted that the financial forecast was an essential element in determining States future spending policies. The overriding financial policy of the Strategic Plan is to achieve balanced budgets over the five year cycle. In this context the forecast deficits for 2010 to 2012 were of particular concern and the Panel agreed that careful monitoring the position over the next few years was vital.</p> <p>The Panel was mindful that the forecast for Income Tax represented in particular a large part of forecast income (approximately 80%). Therefore, the Panel considered that it was particularly important for this area of forecasting to be both accurate and transparent. It requested the Scrutiny Officer to review performance in this respect over the previous five years.</p> <p>The Panel noted that the Minister was advised by the Comptroller of Income Tax assisted by a forecasting group consisting of four senior officers. In the Panel's view the work of this group should be open to independent, expert scrutiny. The Panel agreed to advise the States that it intended to pursue further investigations into this aspect of the Business Plan in the coming year and to explore the possibility of engaging expert advice to assist with this work.</p> <p>The Panel requested that a draft comment be prepared for submission to the States accordingly.</p> <p><b>c Corporate ICT</b> - The Panel noted the planned expenditure in the Capital Programme 2008 - 2012. It agreed that this was an area which ought to be reviewed by the Panel.</p>	<p>MH</p> <p>MH</p> <p>MH</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Corporate Management Board</b></p> <p>The Panel discussed the position of the Corporate Management Board. It noted the importance of this body of the Island's most senior civil servants and their role in policy formulation and implementation. The Panel expressed concern at the current lack of accountability and transparency</p>	

	<p>due to the fact that the agendas and minutes of their meetings were not available to be scrutinised. This was on the basis that it was Ministers who were accountable to Scrutiny for policy development, not officers. Senior Officers were held accountable by the Public Accounts Committee for expenditure in their departments and for the implementation of policies.</p> <p>The Panel agreed that this was a matter which ought to be reviewed.</p>	
8. Item 8 26.06.07	<p><b>Level Playing Field –</b></p> <p>The Panel approved an estimate of expenditure in the sum of £2,000 for the Panel’s adviser for this review</p>	
9 Item 11 26.06.07	<p><b>Overseas Aid review</b></p> <p>The Panel noted the response of the Overseas Aid Commission to the findings of the review. The Panel welcomed the Commission’s acceptance of the recommendation to form a working party to address the issues of identifying a funding formula and a suitable timescale for reaching the 0.7% of GNI international target.</p> <p>The Panel agreed to defer the planned public meeting pending the outcome of the working party’s review.</p>	
10	<p><b>GST review</b></p> <p>The Panel noted correspondence from the Treasury and Resources Minister with regard to certain policy issues which were to be included in the draft Regulations.</p> <p>The Panel noted that a public hearing was scheduled for 7th August to discuss the treatment of the Financial Services Industry; the Customs arrangements for imports and the de minimis level for imports. The Chairman informed the Panel that stakeholders appeared to be comfortable with the proposals for the first two issues. However, the Sub Panel intended to explore the concerns of retailers in relation to a potential high de minimis level.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Zero/ten review</b></p> <p>The Panel noted that a hearing was scheduled for 7th August with Jurat Blampied to discuss the Oxera report on his proposal for dealing with a contribution from non-residential companies.</p>	
12	<p><b>Migration Policy Review</b></p> <p>The Panel approved an estimate in the sum of £695 for the cost of inviting two applicants for the role of expert adviser.</p> <p>The Panel was informed that a project manager had been appointed by the Migration Advisory Group. This was expected to improve the communication between politicians and officers engaged in this project.</p>	
13. Item	<p><b>Sale of former JCG site</b></p> <p>The Panel noted confidential notes of a meeting held on 6th July 2007 with the Treasury and Resources Minister the outcome of which was a formal letter to the Minister</p>	

	requesting that he re-consider his intention not put the site out to open tender.	
14 Item 10 21.06.07	<p><b>Waterfront Development</b></p> <p>The Panel noted that the Sub Panel had concluded its review having been satisfied that the structure and terms of the proposed deal with Harcourt represented full and fair value for the public. The Sub Panel intended to publish a report on its review in the autumn.</p> <p>The Panel was informed that the Environment Panel was considering a review of the planning, traffic and waste issues. It was suggested that the review would benefit from a member of the Sub Panel joining the Environment Review. Deputy Egré agreed to represent the Corporate Services Panel.</p>	
15	<p><b>Freedom of Information</b></p> <p>The Panel agreed that the Scrutiny Officer could undertake preliminary research into this agreed future review if time allowed during the summer recess period.</p>	
16.	<p><b>Future Meetings:</b></p> <p>The Panel meeting on 16th August 2007 was cancelled to allow a hearing of the GST Sub Panel to take place on that date.</p>	

Signed

Date:

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Chairman  
Deputy P J D Ryan