



POLICY COUNCIL

THE STATES OF GUERNSEY

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States Strategic Plan (SSP) 2013 -2017

The 2013 review of the States Strategic Plan is being published this week for debate at the end of March States meeting. This is the first plan review to be carried out by the present Policy Council. The Chief Minister, Deputy Peter Harwood, has commented that, “Whatever important matters government has to manage day to day – and there are a lot of them – we must also look forward with a longer-term vision. For States Members, coming together to decide what we are trying to achieve and what sort of community we want Guernsey to become gives us a compass setting for making short-term decisions that are in line with this long-term vision. This is what the States Strategic Plan is all about”.

This year, the Plan reflects the Policy Council’s commitment to work with all States Members to make government aims and objectives clearer and to agree a ‘political direction of travel’ for pursuing them. The Policy Council has hosted a number of well-attended informal meetings with States Members to share ideas about strategic policy and to form these ideas into a clearer expression of the majority view than the States have previously achieved. This direction of travel does not amount to a manifesto in the party political sense but it does set a ‘tone’ for government in this States term.

The content of the States Strategic Plan is concise and it highlights the big challenges Guernsey faces over the next 25 years. Of particular importance is the relationship *between* challenges in different policy areas; for example, filling the budget deficit and achieving fiscal balance while also maintaining public services for an ageing population. The Policy Council explains that the States need to take into account the connections and tensions between sometimes competing aspirations when making their choices.

Once the revised Strategic Plan is in place then the proposed development of a Government Service Plan, starting this year, will provide a new process for prioritising action and the use of public resources to confront those challenges. The concept of a Government Service Plan – a rolling 4 year policy and financial plan linked to the States Budget - represents an extremely important step forward for the States as is explained in the States report. The new plan will strengthen the links between policy and action and between the corporate and departmental layers of government.

The Policy Council will be consulting with Departments, Committees and States Members as a whole over the next few months about the way the plan can best be made to work within Guernsey's system of government. A report setting out detailed proposals for the new process will then be presented to the States for formal consideration in July 2013 so that the first Government Service Plan can be produced next year.

In outline, the two complementary plans are intended to function in the following way:

States Strategic Plan - 0-25 yr planning horizon

- Assesses the challenges ahead for which government needs to plan
- Sets high-level strategic policy and a political 'direction of travel'
- Will be fully reviewed once every four years early in each States Term
- Should not normally require interim reviews.

Government Service Plan - 0-4 year 'rolling' plan. The plan will be subject to annual review and it will:

- Translate strategy into a programme for action during the States Term
- Inform the preparation of the States Budget
- Be fully reviewed once every four years following the review of the SSP
- Then be reviewed annually to monitor performance against targets.

The States Strategic Plan represents the latest stage in a journey to create a more effective and accountable way of determining government policy and putting it into action.

ENDS

DATE 12th February 2013