



Scrutiny Management Committee

MEDIA RELEASE

Comments on the Public Service Reform proposals for reductions in Government Spending

On Wednesday, 29 June 2016, Policy and Resources President, Deputy Gavin St Pier, provided an update on Public Service Reform and the transformation agenda, announcing a three-year programme of reductions in spending over the period 2017-19.

In 2017, cost reductions of three per cent in real terms will be sought from committee budgets, excluding Health & Social Care and the formula-led budgets, and further reductions of up to five percent over the following two years.

The Scrutiny Management Committee has discussed Deputy St Pier's proposals and supports the stated aim underlying this policy to ensure that government spending is adequately controlled.

However, the Committee is mindful of the conclusions of the 2015 Public Accounts Committee review into the major savings achieved by the Financial Transformation Programme, specifically, that any future savings should be sustainable and based on genuine transformational change.

The President of the Scrutiny Management Committee, Deputy Chris Green, commented:

"The Committee is keen to ensure that the proposed spending reductions are effectively targeted and do not negatively impact on the delivery of 'front line' public services, therefore, the Committee will work with Presidents and senior officers to understand how meaningful efficiencies are to be achieved."

The Scrutiny Management Committee intends to undertake regular public hearings with the principal committees to monitor progress on these targets. In particular, it will be seeking guidance from the committees on:

- How the proposed reductions are to be made
- To what extent budget reductions will be achieved by increasing fees or charges
- How the committees intend managing ongoing payroll costs, and

- How the committees decided on the areas identified to make savings

End

Notes for Editors

1. Since 1 May 2016, the Scrutiny Management Committee is tasked with delivering or overseeing the operational functions previously delivered by the Scrutiny Committee, the Public Accounts Committee and the Legislation Select Committee.
2. Scrutiny Management's primary task is to lead and co-ordinate the scrutiny of committees of the States by reviewing and examining legislation, policies, services and the use of monies and other resources for which committees are responsible.
3. Under the duties and powers conferred upon it by the States of Guernsey, Scrutiny Management has to pay particular attention to the performance of committees in contributing to States' objectives and policy plans and to matters which are of substantial importance or of significant public interest when determining the subject of its reviews and examinations.
4. That same obligation extends to recognising that the carrying out of scrutiny in public where possible is likely to contribute positively to public perceptions of scrutiny.
5. Scrutiny Management is committed to holding hearings in public on a range of issues and topics where it believes to do so would assist the scrutiny process.