

**REPLY BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
TO QUESTIONS ASKED PURSUANT TO RULE 14 OF THE
RULES OF PROCEDURE BY DEPUTY LAURIE QUERPEL**

Question 1

Are the Policy & Resources Committee able to calculate how much the use of the consultants cost the States of Guernsey (and therefore the taxpayer) during 2019 and if so can the figure be provided please.

Answer

Data from the SAP system indicates that the total spend raised by Purchase Orders against ‘consultancy’ material codes was £6.19m in 2019 versus £3.08m in 2018. The breakdown of this spend in the five principal sub-categories is shown below.

Consulting Type (SAP Classification)	2019 Spend
Business consultants	£1.49m
Finance consultants	£1.24m
ICT consultants	£0.54m
HR consultants	£0.46m
Consultants – Scientific, Research, Tech	£2.46m
Total	£6.19m

It is worth noting that the figures quoted under the ‘Consultants – Scientific, Research, Tech’ sub-category include a range of professional advisor and services fees associated with key transformation projects. These include the use of architects for the Education programme and professional fees incurred in the building of the Waste Transfer Station and Household Waste Recycling Centre. Some of these costs were previously captured under the ‘Contracted out work’ category, the spend of which is also published in the annual accounts.

Question 2

If the answer to the above question or any part of it is no, please provide an explanation as to why that is the case.

Answer

Not applicable given the answer to 1.

Question 3

Would it be possible, say on an annual basis, to publish details regarding the engaging of consultants and the cost of doing so, and would the Policy & Resources Committee be agreeable to this.

Answer

This information is currently published annually in the accounts and is available to all.

Question 4

Bearing in mind that a perception exists that consultants are engaged too regularly, almost on a default basis, is there or should there be some criteria / process in place whereby States committees are obliged to justify their intention / wish to use a consultant so that consultants are engaged only when it can be shown to be necessary.

Answer

A policy document was drafted some years ago to provide guidance on the use of consultants to ensure they were only engaged appropriately (i.e. where the States did not possess the skill for example) and the States secured effective value for money in their use. There are however many reasons and circumstances in which consultants are used and, for the most part, consultants are used only in circumstances where the States does not have the required skill, experience or capacity to perform the task. It is also worth noting that the use of consultants in certain circumstances helps prevent unnecessary creep on ongoing employment costs as we only engage them when their skill is required. This is particularly the case where a task may need to be performed infrequently and periodically but it is not an ongoing requirement that can justify employing someone full-time.

Question 5

Does a way currently exist to demonstrate whether the use of consultants provides value for money and added value, if not would the Policy & Resources Committee be willing to formulate and put in place a process of analysis whereby such measurements can be made.

Answer

All consulting engagements (subject to financial thresholds) are normally procured through a competitive process which outlines clearly the scope of work together with the objectives and outcomes and then appraises any responses from both a quality and cost perspective. Any such assignments will also have an officer identified as the Contract Owner whose responsibility is to manage the consultant and ensure the outcomes are delivered for the agreed costs.

Question 6

Via local organisations and individual islanders a wide pool of knowledge, expertise and experience already exists on island and at times may be available at little cost. Is the Policy & Resources Committee satisfied that these skills are sufficiently identified, accessed and utilised when consultancy work is required in connection with policy areas and, if not, could greater efforts be made to do so.

Answer

Through networks that exist amongst individuals across the civil service and, more broadly, those of deputies and industry based organisations, plus through our normal procurement routes to market, we feel satisfied that, on the whole, we are able to reach and access existing knowledge, expertise and experience in many cases. The States is in a fortunate position that many individuals based within the community proactively come forward and offer their services on various initiatives.

In addition, our Procurement Policy states a preference to use local resource where possible and the evaluation criteria used does include a section which allows for benefit to the local economy to be assessed and scored.

Date of Receipt of the Questions: 3rd January 2020
Date of Reply: 16th January 2020