



# Scrutiny Management Committee

## MEDIA RELEASE

### SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE POLICY LETTER RELEASED FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REVIEW

The Scrutiny Management Committee has today released a policy letter on Freedom of Information. The purpose of this Policy Letter is to enable the States to debate the Freedom of Information Review Report<sup>i</sup> which was completed by the former Committee and released in August 2020. This was a substantial piece of work and the full Review is appended to the Policy Letter.

The current Scrutiny Management Committee members, by a majority of four to one, are proposing that the States approve a different course of action to that recommended by the former Committee in its Review. However, the Committee unanimously consider it important for the matter to be debated with all the evidence available in order for the States to come to an informed decision on the way forward.

The majority recommendation of the Committee is to strengthen the current Access to Public Information Code by means of the addition of an independent appeals mechanism (Proposition 1 (b)). This could be achieved quickly and at no additional cost. Deputy Fairclough supports instructing the Policy & Resources Committee to return to the States with a policy letter detailing the full operation and costs of a Freedom of Information law (Proposition 1 (a)).

Deputy Yvonne Burford, President of the Scrutiny Management Committee said:

*“My Committee recognises the significant work undertaken by the previous Scrutiny Management Committee led by Advocate Christopher Green and, although we have come to a different conclusion, we believe it to be important that the current States properly considers that Review. We have discussed this matter at length and arrived at three options for the States Assembly to consider. These are: to introduce Freedom of Information legislation at a cost (subject to further work by the Policy & Resources Committee); to improve the current Access to Public Information Code by means of the introduction of an independent appeal process, which can be done swiftly and at no additional cost; or to leave the current Access to Public Information arrangements unchanged”.*

**-ENDS-**

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.gov.gg/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=129570&p=0>