

THE STATES OF DELIBERATION

of the

ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

21st July, 2021

Proposition No. P.2021/71

Policy & Resources Committee

Government Work Plan 2021-2025

AMENDMENT

Proposed by: Deputy S Kazantseva-Miller

Seconded by: Deputy Y Burford

To delete Proposition 6 and substitute with:

“6A: To agree that it is within the existing mandates of the Committees of the States of Guernsey to drive Government Work Plan workstreams forward and where more complex recovery actions are involved such as those spanning multiple Committees, that creation of new governance structures, if deemed appropriate, will be established by the Committee(s) in question, as has happened on numerous occasions to-date within the existing system of government.”

Or, if Proposition 6A shall have been defeated:

“6B: To direct the Policy & Resources Committee to return to the States with detailed proposals on the issue of governance, including identifying which specific Government Work Plan workstreams require new or different governance arrangements, full terms of reference, resources to be allocated from officer and project management perspective and any other relevant information required to inform and effect the new arrangements”

Rule 4(3) Information

There are no financial implications.

Explanatory Note

Annex 3 does not outline which recovery workstreams might require new governance structures. There is nothing that currently prevents Committees, where appropriate, from creating advisory panels or other governing bodies to advance projects and workstreams.

Just a few of live examples include Digital Guernsey, Skills Guernsey and the Housing Action Group. These bodies are constituted, populated and changed according to the workstream needs and developing circumstances. Other bodies have come and gone including advisory panels relating to Brexit.

The three examples provided would not have, for different reasons, fitted the constitution criteria outlined in Annex 3. For example, the Housing Action Group contains four political representatives. Digital Guernsey has more than four officers involved because the workstream spans multiple committees and has a separate external panel of industry experts and representatives it engages with.

Creation of new Government Work plan driven governance structures can be seen as a new and possibly unnecessary layer of bureaucracy. New structures are likely to require a lead officer (project lead), a chair, minute taking, convening and other administrative actions. Annex 3, mentions the need for each new governance body to have a Senior Responsible Officer, who are in short supply and have significant workloads already.

This term most Committees have also gone a long way to appoint non-States members to improve Committees' governance through increased diversity and skills. This will provide valuable external insight into the many workstreams each Committee is progressing within its mandate.

The policy letter has not built a case as to why the existing Committee system is not capable to deliver on robust governance arrangements to progress most of the Government Work Plan workstreams. If the core motivation is to have a good monitoring system in place on how projects progress, it may be useful to improve the internal project management capability as well as the corresponding monitoring and reporting tools and processes.

In sum, proposition A of this amendment highlights that there is nothing within the existing Committee system of Government that would prevent new governance arrangements to take place anyway. By not constraining Committees with another level of bureaucracy, they will continue to have the flexibility to deliver on their responsibilities in the way they see best, drawing on their broad experience and without having to be confined to constitution criteria in Annex 3 which is limiting in nature and may not be applicable or appropriate in all circumstances.

If proposition A is defeated, then proposition B seeks further clarity from the Policy and Resources Committee as to what new governance structures may be suitable for delivery of specific workstreams within the Government Work Plan. This is necessary to ensure that the Assembly and Committees have a level of future scrutiny before new arrangements take place, to ensure that they don't lead to unnecessary bureaucracy, lost time and resources.