

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. JOHN**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 5th APRIL 2005

Question

Following the recent announcement of the transfer of certain responsibilities in relation to historic buildings from the Committee to the Jersey Heritage Trust, would the President give members precise details of the transfer and explain why the States were not asked to approve the transfer?

Answer

The transfer in question relates to certain aspects of the Committee's obligations in respect of the built heritage, specifically advice on the registration (or listing) of properties, and the raising of awareness on heritage matters. It took effect from January of this year. The services to be provided by the Trust work are the subject of a Service Level Agreement between the two parties and members are welcome to have a copy of the agreement if they wish. This transfer is a response to the Committee's objective of delivering greater efficiency and improving quality of service with the department, which in this case will be achieved by means of a productive partnership with an established heritage body. The Committee has not delegated any decision-making powers to the Trust, nor are development control processes in any way affected. The Committee continues to fund these services.

The services transferred are, essentially –

Managing the register of historic buildings and sites (around 4,000 entries, including archaeological sites and occupation structures) and providing detailed information to the Committee in support of the registration of individual properties, should objections be raised by owners or other parties.

Managing and developing the associated database of information in relation to the Island's heritage, and conducting further research where appropriate to develop our knowledge.

Improving public access to the above database.

Dealing with enquiries from the public about the historic buildings register and the Island's built heritage.

Developing strategies in conjunction with the Committee to promote an awareness and understanding of the built heritage.

Developing strategies to promote an awareness of archaeological matters.

The Committee will retain overall responsibility for decisions on the registration of individual buildings and sites and will continue to make all statutory decisions. The Trust will have no involvement in development control matters and will act in an advisory capacity.

The key benefits of the transfer are seen to be –

Improvement in the transparency in the processes involved in the registration of buildings.

Development and improvement in the management of, and public access to, this unique database.

Detachment of the registration processes from the development control environment, which had previously generated a perceived conflict of interest.

The Jersey Heritage Trust will work in close co-operation with the Jersey Heritage Advisory Panel, a voluntary

advisory body established by the Committee to monitor standards in the registration of heritage properties. The Panel comprises representatives of the Société Jersiaise, the National Trust for Jersey, the Association of Jersey Architects, the Jersey Building & Allied Trades Employers Federation, and the Trust.

The operation of the Service Level Agreement will be managed by a senior officer in the Department and incorporates reviews on a three-monthly basis and a formal annual report.

As this transfer of functions represents a relatively minor adjustment in the way in which one aspect of the Committee's responsibilities are delivered, the Committee did not consider it necessary to seek the approval of the Assembly.