

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE CHAIRMEN'S COMMITTEE  
BY SENATOR B.E. SHENTON**

**ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY, 5th DECEMBER 2006**

**Question**

The Council of Ministers has been set specific targets in the Strategic Plan from which performance can be judged. Would the President inform members whether the scrutiny panels have in place any performance measurement criteria and, if so, have the targets been met in 2006? Are there plans to implement improved performance targeting in 2007 in order that the overall performance of the scrutiny panels can be determined and assessed?

**Answer**

The States will be aware that in 2003 it approved P.79/2003 "Machinery of Government: Establishment of Scrutiny Panels and Public Accounts Committee". In approving that projet it also approved article 26. 1 which states:-

**Article 26. Measuring the results of scrutiny**

26.1 Measuring the results of scrutiny will not be a simple task. However, Panels should be able to identify, in general terms, tangible and substantive outcomes. The Executive system of government, to which the States of Jersey has committed itself, aspires to a number of stated improvements, including quicker decision making, focus on strategic rather than operational issues, fewer meetings, reduced paperwork, more open and accountable government, avoidance of overspends and a joined-up, corporate, approach. Scrutiny, as a key element in the new arrangements in the provision of the necessary checks and balances, needs to be clear about its intended outcomes. The non-Executive members must not be sidelined and must be able to find in scrutiny arrangements the opportunity to make a real difference. This means that they must be able to demonstrate that they have –

- held the Executive to account;
- supported the development of effective policies and initiatives;
- provided an opportunity to engage the public properly;
- positively impacted on the work of external agencies in receipt of public funds;
- provided an effective means for all States members to influence the work of the public service; and
- helped to improve the performance of the Executive and informed the States and the public about the performance of the Executive.

The Chairmen's Committee will be reviewing its performance at the end of this year in order to prepare its Annual Report in accordance with Standing Order 143 (d) for inclusion in the annual report produced by the Privileges and Procedures Committee upon the work of the States and of committees and panels established by the standing orders which will be presented to the States.

It is important for the States to remember that this is the first year of considerable change from the previous Committee system to that of Ministerial Government. With any large structural change there is always room for development and improvement.

There remains to date a number of issues regarding working practices which affect the effectiveness of the scrutiny function and which need to be resolved between the Ministers, the Council of Ministers and Scrutiny. The Chairmen's Committee will endeavour to work in conjunction with the Council of Ministers towards improving these working practices.

The development of further performance targeting measures will be considered where justified in the new year.