

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER**BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. JOHN****ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 12th OCTOBER 2010****Question**

Given that at Council of Ministers meetings, there is an obligation for formal written minutes to be recorded by the States Greffe, which provides some transparency to the democratic process, can the Chief Minister advise what arrangements are in place to record decisions made by the Minister at or after a meeting with Assistant Ministers or senior Departmental staff under delegated powers?

Can the Chief Minister advise if politicians or suitably legally-privileged parties are permitted to have access to the records?

Answer

As meetings between Ministers, their Assistant Ministers or senior officers can often be informal in nature, there are no general arrangements in place to record decisions, although departments may have internal arrangements to record the issues and topics discussed or any actions arising.

However, it is important to note that there is a formal Ministerial Decision process in place for whenever the Minister (or Assistant Minister with delegated powers) makes a formal decision, which would be used to cover any key decisions made as part of an informal meeting.

Formal Ministerial decisions are recorded when Ministers (or Assistant Ministers with delegated powers) sign a standard Ministerial Decision template. The decision templates are backed up by supporting papers, which have been considered by the Minister before taking a decision, and include the reason(s) for a decision and any subsequent action(s) required. These Ministerial Decisions and supporting papers are uploaded onto the States website (<http://www.gov.je/GOVERNMENT/PLANNINGPERFORMANCE/Pages/MinisterialDecisions.aspx>) and are thus available to the public, unless it is deemed to be confidential in accordance with the Code of Practice on Public Access to Official Information.

Clear, detailed and comprehensive guidelines for the recording of Ministerial decisions have been distributed to departments, training has been provided to officers dealing with such decisions and the guidelines are available on the States Intranet.