

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 14TH FEBRUARY 2017**

Question

Following the presentation of 'Jersey Innovation Fund' (R.3/2017) and in light of the Chief Minister's statement to the Assembly on 17th January 2017, will the Chief Minister –

- (a) release the results of the review undertaken by accountants between 22nd February and 15th March 2016 of the existing loans from the Fund, along with those of the subsequent reviews of loans C, B and E, as mentioned on page 33 of R.3/2017;
- (b) inform members of the terms of reference given to the independent U.K. former employment lawyer engaged to investigate the actions of civil servants involved in the Fund, along with the timescale and fees involved, and agree to release this report, when completed;
- (c) agree to release the report of the external accountant employed to review all the financial arrangements States departments have with external bodies; and
- (d) release the name of the person identified to review whether any political involvement contributed to failings identified in respect of the Fund, along with the terms of reference and timescale involved, and agree to publish any findings?

Answer

As much information as possible will be released into the public domain in relation to the reviews being undertaken, in particular, the report in relation to political responsibility will be published in full.

However, there are natural and appropriate limitations on the ability to publish in full matters concerning individual loans, individual officer conduct, and detailed matters concerning financial arrangements with external bodies.

In making decisions on publication, the rules for the publication of information, as clearly outlined in the Freedom of Information (Jersey) Law 2011, will be followed, inclusive of the requirement to publish information in the public interest, subject to exemptions, and processes around review and appeal.

Having noted this and in advance of receipt of these reports and any final decisions, the answers to parts (a) – (d) are as follows:

- (a) It is not expected that it will be possible to release the requested information as this could prejudice the commercial interests of the companies concerned.
- (b) The review is expected to be completed within six to eight weeks of commencement.

It is expected to cost between £20,000 and £25,000 depending on the scope of work as interviews progress.

The review will consider the extent to which officer involvement contributed to the deficiencies identified in R.3/2017, inclusive of:

- Clarifying and establishing all officer roles.

- Identify whether they discharged their duties in accordance with their defined roles and professional responsibilities.
- Identify any breaches that may have occurred.
- Identify individuals who have failed to follow the set policies, procedures and guidelines including the Code of Conduct for States of Jersey Employees, Financial Directions and the Public Finances Law.

It is not expected that the full report will be released.

- (c) It is not expected that it will be possible to release the requested information as this could prejudice the commercial interests of the external bodies concerned.
- (d) The review of political involvement is expected to be completed within six to eight weeks of commencement.

Jessica Simor QC has been instructed to undertake a review of political involvement.

The review will:

- Consider the extent to which Ministerial involvement in matters referred to in the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General, in particular matters identified at 15.2 & 15.3 of the conclusions and the conclusions generally contributed to the deficiencies and failings identified in the report.
- Consider any other matters that the reviewer considers appropriate that arise during the course of the review
- Identify and consider matters relevant to the timeframes in which political decisions were made and which Ministers had responsibility for the Jersey Innovation Fund.