

**STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 27th SEPTEMBER 2005**

In July 2005, I announced the decision to undertake a major review of the planning process.

I am pleased to advise members that we have appointed Mr. Chris Shepley, retired Chief Executive of the U.K. Planning Inspectorate. As Chief Executive he was responsible for managing the planning appeals process in England and Wales. He was also past President of the Royal Town Planning Institute. Mr. Shepley has a long-standing career in planning and has held a number of senior appointments at local government level running large planning departments.

The review commenced last week when Mr. Shepley undertook interviews in the Planning Department as well as meeting leading industry representatives.

The review will be thorough. It will review all procedures within the department.

The Terms of Reference state -

“The Planning function is one of the most controversial areas of decision making and is widely regarded as one of the most challenging political portfolios. Over the past few years there have been a number of highly contentious planning applications which have attracted considerable scrutiny. It is vital the Planning authority enjoys high levels of confidence within the States and with the public of the Island. In preparing for the transition from Committee to Ministerial government, the existing Committee would like to undertake a thorough review of the planning processes and procedures to ensure that the system is well founded for the new incoming Minister. In addition, the new Planning and Building Law 2002 Law will come into effect 2006. This introduces provisions for third party appeals “.

The Scope of Review covers all divisions –

- Development Control
- Historic Buildings
- Building Control
- Policy and Projects

The output will be a detailed report outlining the overall performance of the Division, any weaknesses in procedure, and recommendations for change. It will provide a framework for development into the future to ensure the system can operate effectively under the new system of Government and new Planning Law.

I am happy to provide any member with a copy of the Terms of Reference.

In addition I hope that a number of States members will also have an opportunity to meet Mr. Shepley when he is conducting his next series of interviews during week commencing 10th October 2005. I would encourage members to express their views on the planning process and how they would like to see it operate in the future as we move into Ministerial government and when the new planning law is introduced.

This review is important. It is designed to ensure the new Planning and Environment Ministry is fit for purpose. It will also provide the States, applicants and members of the public with a Ministry in which they can have confidence in.