

The Greffier of the States (in the Chair):

Are there any questions for the Chairman on the statement? Very well, we come then to a statement to be made by the Chairman of the Economic Affairs Scrutiny Panel.

6.2 Deputy G.P. Southern (Chairman of the Economic Affairs Scrutiny Panel):

As Chairman of the Economic Affairs Scrutiny Panel I am pleased to inform Members that the Chief Minister, on behalf of the Treasury and Resources Minister, has accepted one of the 5 recommendations made in our report *Jersey Telecom Privatisation - S.R.5* of 2007. He has agreed that there should be a further cost benefit analysis performed before any proposal to sell-off the States shareholding in Jersey Telecom is brought to a States Assembly. I am pleased to note the willingness of the Treasury and Resources Minister to co-operate over this vital issue and thank the Chief Minister in particular for his willingness to resolve differences in approach that have arisen. We have now agreed that the assessment body should be made up of the following personnel: Ian Black, Treasurer of the States; Bob Lawrence, Managing Director of Jersey Telecom; David Parker, Advisor to the Scrutiny Panel; and Bill Ogley, Chief Executive, States of Jersey, acting as chairman. Both the funding and responsibility for the conduct of this inquiry will be shared between the Scrutiny Panel and the Treasury and Resources Minister. Terms of reference are currently being drawn-up to ensure an in-depth assessment of the wider economic and social implications, many of which were highlighted in the Panel's report. The assessment body is expected to complete its work and report within a 12-week timescale - likely to be in early July - and as a result of this, debate on the proposition "JT Group Limited ('Jersey Telecom'): proposed Sale - P.28 of 2007, lodged on 20th February 2007 by the Treasury and Resources Minister - is to be deferred until the new session. In accepting this deferment, the Chief Minister has effectively agreed, with inclusion of Dr. Parker, that any privatisation should be properly designed, planned and timetabled. A rushed privatisation is likely to be a bad privatisation. This deferral will give all Members the opportunity to fully understand the wider implications of divestment and produce a better informed and more comprehensive debate when a proposition is brought before the Assembly.