

Chief Minister of Jersey

Cyril Le Marquand House
St Helier, Jersey, JE4 8QT
Tel: +44 (0)1534 440636



Senator Kristina Moore
President, Chairmen's Committee
States Greffe
Morier House
St Helier
JE1 1DD

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Dear President

Policy Development Boards

Thank you for your correspondence on the above subject.

As a former President of the Chairmen's Committee, I can assure the Committee that I am as passionate as anyone in my support for your work reviewing legislation and policy, and helping the Assembly to hold the executive to account.

At the same time, when I stood as Chief Minister, I made it clear that my intention was to listen to colleagues, partners and stakeholders before rushing into major policy proposals.

I said I would offer integrity, inclusiveness and teamwork, and the Policy Development Boards ("Boards") I am establishing are part of my commitment to enable more States Members to contribute to the important decisions facing us in the coming years. I stand by this approach, and believe we cannot continue with the practices of the past.

I have already announced a new Board to review the evidence that informed the selection of the hospital site – a once in a generation decision that has so far proved divisive, costly and prolonged.

I have also announced that we will establish a Board to examine the migration policy - including work permits and criminal record checks - and that we will consult on the issue as I promised during the election. This will help build consensus and deliver, after many years, a long term policy that serves our whole Island.

I hope you will understand that as a new government it is logical that we would want to examine carefully the proposals of the previous government, bringing in

other Members, before we decide how to proceed. Thereafter, these Boards will primarily be about developing and advising Ministers on policy.

As to the concerns you raise, firstly, you will know that we are proposing that a States Member can only sit on a Board if they are also part of the Scrutiny process. This condition protects the Scrutiny function, ensuring that Members do not instead gravitate to Boards.

Secondly, I have made it clear that a States Member could not serve on a Board if they could reasonably expect to be on the Panel reviewing a decision based on that Board's advice – the self-review threat which I explained at the hearing on Tuesday. I have also committed to discuss any potential conflicts with the relevant Panel Chairs.

Finally, I have been very clear that Boards exist to provide the Minister with advice only – they do not determine government policy. The last government created a range of advisory groups, some of which included other States Members – and these new proposals will simply introduce more rigour, formality and transparency to the process, assisting in the early engagement of States Members. The advice of the Boards will be public, and the members of the Board are free to say and act as they wish, including dissenting, so long as they respect the confidentiality of information they receive. The function is very different from the role of Scrutiny, and does not preclude ongoing and early engagement with Panels.

With these safeguards in place, I am confident that we can move forward respecting and supporting the Scrutiny function, while also delivering more inclusive policy making as promised, which is in the best interests of all Islanders. This is something I hope will be seen as different, and an overall improvement on what we have seen before.

Accordingly, and having provided previously in response to your requests, I now attach the latest terms of reference. I hope this assists the Chairman's Committee.

I am also more than content to meet to discuss the proposals, as requested in your most recent letter dated 19th July 2018, and I will ask officials to make arrangements. At the same time, I remain focused on delivering the plans I have outlined for a more inclusive form of government.

Yours sincerely



Senator John Le Fondré
Chief Minister