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Deputy Inna Gardiner
Chair of the Public Accounts Committee
BY EMAIL

6th September 2021

Dear Deputy Gardiner

I understand your Committee is considering exploring further the recent use by Government of a number of innovative citizen engagement methods. I have received a number of additional questions from your officers and am pleased to reply to these below.

If I might take this opportunity to reiterate my previous comments, that this is an area of emerging practice, where Jersey is showing leadership and experimenting with different formats and approaches to support ministers and the States Assembly to improve public policy making.

As such, I would ask that, in framing and setting expectations of any future enquiry in this area, your committee would recognise that any attempt by the government to assess the efficacy of these innovative methods is therefore also emerging practice.

Assessing the value for money of policy making methodologies, which by their nature are bespoke solutions to complex and unique situations, is always challenging. We must continue to try new things, where there is evidence of their potential value to Jersey, even if that value cannot be quantified.

You previously kindly sent us information on the Climate Emergency Citizen's Assembly. Is similar information available on the other Assemblies/Juries/Panel's, etc?

My letter of 12th May 2021 addressed the range of citizens processes currently underway at the strategic policy level within government, both in the financial information provided and the scope of the answers offered.

Other related processes are used in some service areas. For example, there are steps taken by HCS and CYPES to ensure that patient voices and children's voices are heard within both policy making and service design and delivery. An example would be the recent development of the Jersey Youth Parliament (www.jyp.je).

Does the Government of Jersey intend to use these types of forum in the future?

At the strategic policy level, this would be a decision for individual ministers at any given time. As such it isn't possible to know what future instances might occur.

It is important to note that the Citizen's Assembly on Climate Change was convened under a mandate of the States Assembly, and it remains the case that other political actors may also seek to make use of similar citizen's processes in the future.

We were advised that there would be a review process of the use of Citizens Panels or Juries after they had completed their tasks, and that this would take place before others were set up (by Q4 this year). The PAC would like to understand what that process is and when it would take place.

An evaluation of the Citizen's Assembly on Climate Change and the Citizen's Panel on Assisted Dying will be undertaken. Both exercises were supported by the same consortium of organisations and were commissioned both to support their related policy making processes and to provide learning and insight for the Department for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance.

That evaluation (which will begin in the Autumn) will consider at least two issues, to different timescales:

- Learning about the more mechanistic elements of the two exercises, including matters of cost and logistics, structure and process and the experiences of those involved. This aspect is expected to conclude by the end of 2021; and
- Learning about how these citizen processes worked with and influenced our existing policy making systems. There is no confirmed deadline for this aspect, as it can only be effectively undertaken once the related policy discussions (on carbon neutral and assisted dying) have concluded.

We understand, apart from the Climate Emergency Citizens Assembly, there are similar groups looking at Assisted Dying, the Future Hospital and the Care Inquiry. The Committee would like to know:

- **what type of cost benefit analysis is being undertaken on these groups, and**
- **what are their governance and decision making processes.**

My letter of 12th May 2021 provided information on each of these four citizen processes, both in the financial information provided and the scope of the answers offered.

As alluded to above, it is not possible to undertake cost benefit analysis of bespoke and qualitative processes like these, and no such assessment is planned.

For ease of reference, I have copied below my previous response to the question about governance and decision making in citizens deliberative processes.

Each policy making process is bespoke, and needs to respond to a range of considerations relating to the political, resourcing, information, technology and other contexts at that time and in respect of the given issues.

The creation of a citizens' body may occur as the result of a decision by ministerial body, such as a political oversight group of Council of Ministers; as a Ministerial Decision by an individual Minister; or as a decision of the States Assembly. There may be other appropriate ways to constitute a citizens' body, depending on its scope, remit and intended influence. Each citizens' process will have its own purpose and terms of reference, which will be established under appropriate political governance and made available to participants, States Members and other interested parties. These steps, together with the ministerial and official codes of conducts, ensure that each body is appropriately and transparently constituted.

Yours sincerely



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