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Chair, Public Accounts Committee  
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16<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear Deputy Gardiner,

**Re: PAC Review of Citizens Panels, Assemblies and Juries**

Thank you for your letter to Nigel Appleton of 4<sup>th</sup> November setting out a series of questions on behalf of the Public Accounts Committee.

In my role and Managing Director of Contact Consulting (Oxford) Ltd, I have overseen the work relating to the facilitation of the Jersey Care Inquiry Citizens Panel and am the contract holder.

Working with our associate Peter Bryant, we have developed the attached response to the questions you posed. Additional documents have also been appended to the email containing this response document. These are contractual documents, or copies of our initial proposals for this work. As such they contain commercially confidential information relating to our professional fees. We would be grateful if the PAC were agreeable to not make the specific detail relating to day rates and charges public as this may provide a commercial advantage to other similar organisations when responding to expressions of interest for similar work.

We hope that our responses will be helpful to the PAC in their work.

If you or your officers have any queries, do please contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Steve Appleton  
Managing Director  
Contact Consulting (Oxford) Ltd

1. How did you work with the Independent Facilitator Peter Bryant to deliver the Care Inquiry Citizen's Panel? What involvement did the Government of Jersey have in shaping this collaboration?

Peter Bryant is an associate consultant with Contact Consulting. The contract for delivery of the citizens panel was held by Contact Consulting Oxford) Ltd. The Managing Director of Contact Consulting was the contract holder and was responsible for oversight of the project delivery and quality assurance.

The Government of Jersey put together the original tender for the contract. This clearly specified the requirements of the process and how it should be structured. Throughout the contract, Government of Jersey staff met regularly with Peter Bryant as the lead facilitator and Steve Appleton to shape the process. The presence of government officials enabled the process to be shaped in accordance with the particular needs of government policy-making requirements within this unique context in Jersey and the presence of Peter as an expert in processes of deliberative democracy enabled us to draw on international good practice in deliberative community engagement to design a suitable process.

The process design and implementation was further shaped and monitored, in keeping with best practice, by an oversight group made up of key stakeholders: from government department these were: Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance: Tom Walker, Andrew Heaven, Michelle Moffat and Tracey Ingle. The solicitor acting on behalf of survivors in Jersey: Alan Collins. From Contact Consulting Steve Appleton, Peter Bryant and Claire Mason. This panel met on average every two months.

- a. What processes did you have to undertake to be awarded the contract to facilitate the Citizens' Panel?

Contact Consulting responded to a request for Expressions of Interest via an open tender process on the Jersey Portal by the Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance Department of the Government of Jersey.

The brief described the nature and scope of the work, the experience required and the likely timescale. It also set out how the work was expected to be undertaken in terms of good practice relating to the use of Citizens' Panels.

Contact Consulting provided a written Expression of Interest in January 2018. This document included details of our experience and knowledge in this field, how we proposed to conduct the work, costings and professional biographies.

It is our understanding the Expressions of Interest were assessed by SPPP. Contact Consulting was appointed following that assessment.

2. Did you sign a Service Level Agreement with the Government of Jersey prior to undertaking your work on the Citizens' Panel? If so, may the PAC be provided in confidence with a copy of the Agreement?

Contact Consulting signed a Consultancy Agreement contract with the Government of Jersey for this work. The contract has been amended and extended since first issue. The most recent version, covering a third phase of the work has been supplied by email to the PAC.

3. How did you work with the Government of Jersey to understand how the Citizens' Panel would work?

- a. What responsibility did you have in administering the Citizens' Panel? How was this work divided between yourselves and the Government of Jersey?

The following responsibilities were led by Contact Consulting:

- recruitment of and liaison with citizens panel members,
- identification of external 'experts' to present information to the panel,
- design and facilitation of citizens panel sessions (in conjunction with government of Jersey personnel) and production of relevant resources,
- liaison with Government of Jersey personnel and other stakeholders support of oversight group and attendance at oversight group meetings and regular report writing and briefings

The following responsibilities were led by the government of Jersey:

- close liaison with government of Jersey departments, personnel and ministers, and where appropriate other local stakeholders,
- local logistics,
- budget management,
- co-design of panel sessions (in conjunction with Contact Consulting),
- organisation of and attendance at oversight group meetings
- monitoring project progress.

- b. How would you describe your partnership with the Government of Jersey? How did it work and what worked well? The PAC would be grateful if you could provide specific examples.

This was a successful partnership with the Government of Jersey. It worked well due to the conscientious work of government officers, in particular Michelle Moffat and Andrew Heaven.

They regularly demonstrated an ability to work in a sensitive, trauma informed fashion that responded to the unique needs of the survivors who made up the membership of the panel. They recognised the sensitivity of this work as well as the challenges and value of working in conjunction with survivors to achieve the aim of the process in enabling a deliberative process to help answer the question “How can the people of Jersey best remember the past abuse of children while in the Island’s care system?”

- c. What influence did you have on selecting the participants, experts and stakeholders who presented at meetings of the Citizens’ Panel?

All these decisions were made jointly between Peter Bryant as lead facilitator, government personnel (primarily Andrew Heaven and Michelle Moffat) and the oversight group previously described in question three.

- d. Could you provide a breakdown of the membership process including the criteria by which members were selected (i.e. age, gender, professional status)

The Citizens Panel was a unique deliberative project designed drawing on the principles underpinning processes such as Citizens Juries and Assemblies but applied to the unique context of an extremely sensitive issue and a highly charged political situation at the same time as grappling with complex issues of anonymity and distrust. The bringing together of a diverse group of people, who are often called a ‘mini-public’ to deliberate over a long period of time, sharing opinions, ideas and experiences and challenging each other before an attempt is made to reach consensus and to write a set of recommendations. A diverse group of people is important however, in this case it was essential to ensure that people who had themselves experienced harm and abuse as children in Jersey’s care system (survivors), formed the majority of those invited to take part in the process.

The following efforts were made to recruit the membership of the panel:

- i. Members of the Jersey Care Leavers Association and other channels were used to reach survivors including Alan Collins the solicitor who represented the Jersey Care Leavers Association at the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry.
- ii. a recruitment drive consisting of 500 letters inviting members of the public to apply to join the Citizens Panel randomly delivered to addresses (weighted by the number of homes in each Parish) across the Island by Jersey Post.
- iii. In the second phase of recruitment a news release was issued, and advertisements placed in the Jersey Evening Post inviting survivors to apply to join the Citizens Panel. The Director of Children’s Policy and the lead facilitator were interviewed about the Citizens Panel project by local TV and radio channels. A new page was created on the gov.je website to provide potential applicants with more information.

Applicants who were unable to attend all sessions and those from over represented age groups were taken from the long list to give a short list of 19 people who were invited to the first session. The main group of 14 people included seven males and seven females and had representation from all the following age groups: 16 to 19 year-olds, 20 to 35 year-olds, 36 to 45 year-olds, 46 to 60 year-olds, people older than 60.

4. How frequently did you meet with officers from the Government of Jersey to update them on the progress of this project and understand how goals are being met? What targets, goals or other metrics were used by the Government of Jersey to evaluate your performance?

Meetings with government officers were regular but dependent upon certain key milestones within the process. On average we met fortnightly, with the oversight group meeting on average every two months. Upon request regular reports were submitted after panel sessions.

5. What influence did you have in shaping and developing the budgets for the Citizens' Panel?
- a. What was the proposed original budget/contract?

The budget for the first phase of the work was £28,125.00 with a proposed £4,000.00 allowance for travel and expenses.

- b. What was the final budget?

The final budget for the first phase was as set out above

- c. Did you have to request additional funds from the Government of Jersey to successfully facilitate the Citizens' Panel? If so, why? How was this tracked and recorded?

The SPPP determined that the work should be extended beyond the terms of the initial contract both in respect of further delivery and timescales. This led to the contract being extended into a second and then third and final phase. Some of this was related to the impact of Covid-19, particularly during 2020. The table below sets out the budget position in relation to the contract addendum for the final phase of the project.

<b>Phase 3 Addendum</b>	<b>Professional fees (upper limit)</b>	<b>Expenses (upper limit)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Value of undelivered 2020 work under contract CS20/09/123.	£8,475.00	£7,315.04	£15,790.04
2021 addendum	£28,725.00	£1,275.00	£30,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£37,200.00</b>	<b>£8,590.04</b>	<b>£45,790.04</b>

- d. Please provide (in confidence if preferred) an overview of how Involve.org spent the funds provided by the Government of Jersey to deliver the Citizens' Panel?

Contact Consulting was not engaged in any work with Involve and is not aware of the details of any contract awarded to Involve or how any funds allocated to them were spent.

6. How did you provide feedback and identify lessons learned to improve the Government of Jersey's engagement and understanding of this area of work?

Through regular meetings with government personnel as well as with ministers (eg scrutiny panel) and through regular meetings of the oversight panel.

- a. Did you undertake any exit interviews or similar feedback opportunities with the Government of Jersey following the completion of the Citizens' Panel to identify areas of improvement for the Government?

No such meetings have taken place as the panel has not yet finished its work

- b. How did you facilitate, receive and process feedback from participants? (Please provide summary)

It is often the case with processes such as this that relationships between facilitator/s and panel/jury/assembly members are at the heart of the project. This relationship must be based around the needs of the citizens themselves. Not all panel members are comfortable with the written word and for some there are low levels of literacy. As a result a formal text based evaluation process is inappropriate.

After investing heavily in building relationships of trust (extremely difficult when considering the issue under consideration) regular feedback was obtained through conversations (sometimes face-to-face, sometimes on the phone/zoom). This feedback then fed directly into process design and where appropriate (due to anonymity) to the oversight panel.

- c. What lessons did Contact Consulting learn from facilitating the Citizens' Panel?

Three key lessons emerged for Contact Consulting in the conducting of this work:

- i. The importance of trauma informed practice when working with survivors.
- ii. The challenges of working with politicians who may not understand the value and structure of a deliberative process and how such processes can fit with and support representative democracy.
- iii. The challenges of designing a safe space for survivors that ensures anonymity (where requested), supports the mental health needs of those taking part and does not impact negatively on people's well-being.

7. How did you work with Officers to improve their understanding of how Citizens' Panels operate? Did you provide training opportunities to assist them?

We did not provide training opportunities as we have found in other experiences that often these are not well attended by senior management and politicians, instead we offered learning through briefings (e.g. Council of Ministers), publicity, reports and the working of the oversight group.

- a. How have you helped to develop an understanding of good practice for the Government of Jersey's organisation and operation of Citizens' Panels?
- b.

As described above in answer to question seven. However, we would be extremely happy to input into any proposed development of good practice for government processes in future.

- c. Have you, or will you in the future work with the Government of Jersey on other Citizens' Panels?

Possibly, depending upon the context for the project.