



Royal Court of Jersey
Viscount's Department

Deputy Inna Gardiner
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
Scrutiny Office
States Greffe
Morier House
St Helier
Jersey
JE1 1DD

26 May 2021

Dear Deputy Gardiner,

PAC Review of Estate Management

Thank you for your letter of 30 April 2021 seeking information on Estate Management.

I have had the benefit of seeing the response to your enquiries from the Law Officers' Department dated 21 May 2021 (the **LOD Letter**) and will refer to it in my replies below.

1. What consultation have you or your department had with the Government of Jersey, particularly the Corporate Asset Management Board, regarding the plans for the development and future use of Cyril Le Marquand House and Broad Street accommodation, since 2018?

a. Do you believe that this consultation was adequate? Did the consultation show a clear understanding of the needs of your department?

b. What influence has this had on your views regarding the 2018 Business Case?

Have these changed since you first received the Case and since the pandemic?

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There has been no direct consultation between the Viscount's Department and the Corporate Asset Management Board in relation to Cyril Le Marquand House and Broad Street. There has been some consultation with the Government of Jersey on the needs of the Viscount's Department, and the other Non-Ministerial Departments occupying Morier House, firstly with Jersey Property Holdings, and latterly through the CEO's Office Accommodation Board, as described in the LOD letter.

To answer part (a) of the question, the consultation that took place during 2018, in respect of the proposed refurbishment of Morier House, was adequate and the project team appeared to be keen to understand our business needs and ensure that they were met, although within the context of the office planning principles being applied by the project team. We had not reached agreement on this by the end of 2018 because we were not satisfied that the "zonal layouts" fully met our needs.

The consultation in respect of the "OneGov" building was not adequate and did not show any clear understanding of the needs of the departments in Morier House. There appeared to be an assumption that all of our needs could be met without any enquiry as to what those needs were.

In answer to part (b) of the question, the needs of the Viscount's Department will have changed since the 2018 discussions on the refurbishment of Morier House and will need to be looked at again in light of anticipated growth in headcount and working patterns post-Covid.

2. To what extent were you consulted on the Public Estate Strategy 2021-2035?

a. How regularly were you in contact with the team assigned to the Strategy's development?

The Viscount's Department has not been consulted on the Public Estate Strategy.

3. What role do the Corporate Asset Management Group and States of Jersey Development Company have in maintaining the office accommodation used by your department?

a. Do you believe that the communication you have with these organisations is adequate? How could it be improved?

Morier House office accommodation is maintained by Jersey Property Holdings. Communication between the Department and JPH is limited and now largely reactive. For a time we had regular building users meetings with JPH and other meetings with a JPH representative. No meetings of this type have been held for some time (possibly since 2018). It would be beneficial to reinstate these meetings.

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b. We understand there to have been an advanced business case regarding the refurbishment of Morier House (2018) – to what extent were you consulted on the business case and what is your understanding of its status currently?

As described above, we were consulted to a satisfactory degree regarding the plans relating to the proposed refurbishment of Morier House that was in contemplation in 2018. This included meetings between the project management team and (i) the Viscount and Deputy Viscount and (ii) all of the senior managers in the Department.

As regards documentation relating to the Morier House refurbishment project, the position is as set out in the LOD letter.

c. Have the needs you expressed for the building's layout changed post-pandemic and have these been taken into account?

The last correspondence on the re-configuration of Morier House was in December 2018. Post-pandemic changes will not have been taken into account and our current needs will have to be reviewed now. We had not agreed the proposed layouts for Morier House at the end of 2018.

4. Can you provide a list of property/land in your department's remit, including:

- *Rental*
- *Unused/closed/disused*
- *Outside the purview of the Property Division*

The Viscount's Department occupies part of the ground floor and part of the first floor of Morier House.

We lease premises [REDACTED] principally for storage purposes [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] but also for some archive storage. The lease is directly between the Viscount and the landlord.

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5. Please indicate if you have completed any of the following on the behalf of your department:

- *Asset Management Plan*
- *Condition survey*
- *Risk/cost benefit analysis (for use/disposal/repurpose)*
- *Maintenance programme?*

The Viscount's Department does not carry out these functions but we understand that JPH has recently carried out an audit of Morier House.

6. What consultation have you received on ensuring disability legislation compliance, and what was the result?

a. How has this information been compiled?

The Department is reliant on JPH advising and making any changes required. We understand that an audit has taken place and we await the outcome.

We have, however, taken steps to ensure that the access door to the Viscount's Department reception area is accessible to wheelchair users, as we have a client who is a wheelchair user. There are toilets that are accessible to disabled users on the ground and first floors.

7. Do you consider the Strategy to be 'fit for purpose' – if not, what are the issues with any of the land/property you utilise not addressed by the Strategy?

a. How do you expect these issues to be represented beyond the Strategy? What discussions have you had with relevant Officers and Ministers regarding this?

I agree with the comments set out in the LOD letter in relation to the Strategy.

Like the other Morier House users, the needs of the Viscount's Department are to be independent from Government offices and adjacent to the States Assembly and Royal Court buildings. These needs are met by remaining in Morier House, a building which is already owned by the States.

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To enable us to fulfil our functions, the Viscount's Department requires more than just office space for our staff – we also need a cash/reception desk, a court room for the holding of inquests and a secure holding area (for use when we exercise powers of arrest).

8. Have you undertaken an assessment of what land/property your department will need:

- *In one year*
- *In 5-10 years*
- *In the longer term?*

Future needs were considered when the refurbishment of Morier House was planned in 2018 but will need to be reviewed again in light of changes in headcount and in working practices post-Covid.

9. How much annually do you spend on property maintenance (including what percentage of your budget) and who undertakes that maintenance?

a. Who is/are the Accountable Officer(s) for that expenditure?

The Viscount's Department 2021 spend on 'facilities management' will be £44,000. This represents 2.9% of the total Viscount's Department budget of £1,515,000. This amount includes property maintenance and all aspects of building control such as security, cleaning and the Morier House reception desk. Work is arranged by JPH, either directly or using external contractors.

The Accountable Officer for all Viscount's Department expenditure is the Viscount, Elaine Millar. The Accountable Officer has no input in the 'facilities management' allocation of costs to the Department from Treasury.

I hope that this letter is helpful but please do let me know if you need any further information or clarification.

Kind regards



Viscount