



Public Accounts Committee

Public Hearing

Witness: Chief of Staff

Monday, 15th November 2021

Panel:

Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier (Chair)

Senator T.A. Vallois

Connétable A. Jehan of St. John

Connétable J.E. Le Maistre of Grouville

Mr. A. Lane

Dr. H. Miles

Ms. L. Pamment, Comptroller and Auditor General

Witness:

Ms. C. Madden, Chief of Staff

[14:00]

Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier (Chair):

Good afternoon and welcome to the Public Accounts Committee public hearing with the Chief of Staff, Catherine Madden. Thank you for joining us this afternoon. We will go around the table shortly to introduce ourselves, but first for the benefit of the public I will state the reasons for the short public hearing today. As you know, we are currently undertaking 2 reviews, one on performance management and one on the Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. P.A.C. (Public Accounts Committee) and C. and A.G. (Comptroller and Auditor General) write reports which include recommendations that are designed to help Government improve its governance procedures. Some of those recommendations might be targeted at a particular department but suggested improvements can and should be taken on board by the Executive Leadership Team and by all departments on the corporate level. We have asked you to join us today because we would like to

know how effective the recommendation tracker is - which was developed to track all these recommendations and was developed by the Government with P.A.C. and C. and A.G. suggestions - how the recommendation tracker is used to improve staff performance throughout the departments and how this translates into benefits that the public can see. We also would like to understand what effect the management of the COVID response had on implementing the recommendations, what blockages there are to ensure that they are acted on and implemented in a timely manner and what improvements might be made for this process. So it is really general exploring. Let us go around the table and introduce ourselves for the benefit of the transcript. Deputy Inna Gardiner, Chair of the Public Accounts Committee.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Senator Tracey Vallois, member of the Public Accounts Committee.

Connétable A. Jehan of St. John:

Constable Andy Jehan, member of the committee.

Comptroller and Auditor General:

Lynn Pamment, Comptroller and Auditor General.

Chief of Staff:

Catherine Madden, Chief of Staff.

Mr. A. Lane:

Adrian Lane, independent member of the Public Accounts Committee.

Dr. H. Miles:

Dr. Helen Miles, independent member of the Public Accounts Committee.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Just checking that Connétable Le Maistre of Grouville is online with us? Yes, okay. Before we start some questions about performance management and the recommendation tracker, for the benefit of the public can you please briefly explain the role of the Chief of Staff and what functions you are responsible for?

Chief of Staff:

Primarily in my substantive role I am responsible for the Ministerial Support Unit and the relationship with the Comptroller and Auditor General for the whole of government and the Public Accounts Committee. I also have a relationship with Scrutiny and the States Assembly. I am also responsible

for some of the major projects. I can get involved right across government in various projects where they need supporting. For example, I was involved in the office modernisation project when it first began. I chair the Team Jersey board. While I am not the senior responsible officer - that sits with the Chief Operating Officer - I am the critical challenge there and we have representatives on the board from right across the government, including at various grades so it is not just senior leadership. We get people feeding in who are lower down in terms of what it means in terms of business change and transformation. So I can get involved in a wide range of issues, dependent on what are the priorities at the time.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you. We did have questions from the public on Twitter when we said we were going to meet you and one of the questions was ... interestingly enough, you mentioned the Chief Operating Officer. The question was why we need a Chief Operating Officer and a Chief of Staff on top of the Chief Executive, so why in the new target operating model we need 3 roles. If you can describe why your role is unique and different.

Chief of Staff:

Okay. The Chief Operating Officer has a number of operational services that sit over things, for example People and Culture Services, the I.T.S. (Integrated Technology Solution) programme. The Chief of Staff works directly with the Chief Executive, the Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers and that role is there to support the delivery of the business of the Government right across government in terms of corporately but also in terms of developing the vision and policies that sit around that. So I bring everything together and work directly to the Chief Executive and the Chief Executive can also delegate some of his responsibilities - or her responsibilities when the new Chief Executive comes in - directly to me to execute on a daily basis.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Okay, thank you, that is helpful. I am trying to establish, we have 3 senior positions: where is the cut, where is the clarity and benefit for the public to have these 3 separate senior positions?

Chief of Staff:

Okay. So I think from my perspective I can work right across government, so I have a government-wide remit whereas the Chief Operating Officer has a department in his own right and he has services that work directly to him, so he is directly responsible for certain services in that department, whereas my remit can go right across government. I work quite closely with the Chief Operating Officer on the I.T.S. programme, so I chair the Business Change Forum on his behalf and work with him on that. As I already outlined, I chair Team Jersey, but mine is more of a corporate role. So my work in particular with the Comptroller and Auditor General and yourselves is about driving

improvements across the organisation and supporting change and transformation, just in terms of the services we produce but also the culture and behaviour element of staff progression. I support in a number of areas right across government.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

So how many people report to you directly?

Chief of Staff:

So, directly about 32. I do not have a lot of services and a lot of people reporting to me. I have the Ministerial Support Unit, which has the private secretaries and the core team within there and then the small team that sits outside of the Chief Executive as part of the Chief Executive's role. I am not responsible for lots of services or lots of people directly. However, my role is to go in and support but also challenge at times and to lead and drive the direction of travel across the government, dependent on what are the issues at the time or what are the priorities at the time. We are at the moment looking at our departmental operational business plans for next year. I have been working with the Chief Executive and sitting on the panel, which has then been challenging those departmental operational business plans so that they have the continuity across the government but are also focusing on the priorities, what we think they should be for the departments for 2022.

The Connétable of St. John:

You mentioned culture. Does your remit include health and social services?

Chief of Staff:

It does not really, no. I can provide support if they require but I have not done a lot of work in that area.

The Connétable of St. John:

So when you talk about your role in culture and vision and values, is that excluding health?

Chief of Staff:

Well, it is a strategic role but I would not have been involved in the Jersey Care Model because that is more of a specialist for health and social services. I have provided more support in terms of C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills) around the skills agenda and the corporate parenting but not with health.

The Connétable of St. John:

Going back to the Chair's original question on where the boundaries are, if you are responsible for culture but not within health, who is responsible for culture in health?

Chief of Staff:

That would be the Director General for Health and Social Care. In terms of the strategic culture as part of Team Jersey, Health and Social Care colleagues and their officers do partake in the Team Jersey programme. So from that perspective I am involved but not in the direct implementation of the way they change, the way they operate the Jersey Care Model, no.

The Connétable of St. John:

Thank you.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Sorry, I am just trying to get my head around this. If yours is a corporate role that works right across the board, what is the toolkit in your bag to enable?

Chief of Staff:

I would say that is my past experience and skillset. I would say the Chief of Staff's role, apart from the substantive element for change, is dependent on who the person is. I have a regeneration, planning background and in my previous roles I have done a lot on change and transformation. I have done quite a bit on regeneration on the economic side, so I get involved due to my skillset, I would say, rather than just going in where I have not had the experience. I have done quite a lot on policy in my previous roles and performance, so I have done quite a bit of support around the performance framework and supporting the directors general in terms of policy development, the Government Plan process and I do quite a bit on the finance law with the Head of Financial Governance as well.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Just so I can understand it in my own head, if you as an individual as Chief of Staff have K.P.I.s (key performance indicators), how does that fit within the performance framework?

Chief of Staff:

Our K.P.I.s or our outcome measures are within our operational business plan. I would have K.P.I.s around our performance in terms of how we interface with the Public Accounts Committee, Scrutiny and States Assembly and then any of the work that the Chief Executive is doing they would become my responsibility as well in terms of delivering those outcomes. So I would be as accountable as the Chief Executive for those.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Just in terms of the operational business plans - you mentioned them before - what is your role in ensuring and measuring and making sure that they are implemented, that things are actually happening through those operational business plans?

Chief of Staff:

That happens in 2 ways. We have the operating committee that was stood up as part of COVID that we have continued to maintain, which is basically the tier 2s underneath the directors general and that deals with the day-to-day operation and performance right across the piece. They will get a quarterly report on P.A.C. and C. and A.G. recommendations but they will also get a quarterly report on how we respond to F.O.I.s (Freedom of Information) and also complaints, et cetera. So there is that element of it. In terms of E.L.T. (Executive Leadership Team) that comes in in terms of when we do workshops. Outside of our normal E.L.T. business, we do a series of workshops across the year and presently we have been doing workshops on the development of the operational business plans for next year. We will then do a half-yearly report on what we are doing in terms of the Government Plan and how it relates to the business plans and what the performance has been around the delivery for that. But also it comes up in terms of any of the other quarterly performance reports we do that is then fed into E.L.T. and if there are any specific issues - so, for instance, if I have specific issues around a particular department in terms of how they are delivering on their C. and A.G. and P.A.C. recommendations - I will highlight that to the Chief Executive. So that in the first instance will go into the one-to-ones with the relevant director general but if it is replicated across departments and we feel it warrants a proper discussion it will then go into the E.L.T. session to have a proper discussion about the issues.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

The accountability of director generals to yourself, what are they?

Chief of Staff:

They do not report directly to me, so they are not accountable in that way but they are accountable in terms of their relationship with the Comptroller and Auditor General and P.A.C. All of their reports and their responses they do to their action plans I will come in and have an overview of them before they go in. I will then review them and if I think they have not answered or done their responses in the way they should have, they will go back. It is almost like I am the last person that sees the reports or the responses to reports or recommendations before they go back into yourselves or into the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Going back to my original question - and again please correct me if I have got it wrong or maybe I missed some of it - as Chief of Staff you are responsible to the Ministerial Support Unit; is that correct?

Chief of Staff:

I am directly responsible for the Ministerial Support Unit, how it operates, the interface between the private secretaries of the Ministers and their departments but also the interface with the Greffe and States Assembly and Scrutiny, so the whole logistical organisation of how we deal with that and the working relationship we have with officials in the Greffe and States Assembly.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I will keep this question for later. Are there other questions on this theme before we go on?

Mr. A. Lane:

I will pick up on the 32 posts. When we formed the Chief of Staff, how many of those were existing roles that were moved into that activity and how many were created new?

Chief of Staff:

They were not existing in their own right but they did a little bit of the job within the departments.

[14:15]

So previously before the new structure was set up there were officers within the departments who worked with the Ministers but the Ministers sat within the departments and they did a little bit of the work. Private secretaries were then created, some officers were moved across into the ministerial unit because they were already doing some of the role and then where there were gaps, where new departments were created, new posts were put in place for private secretary roles. We have a mix of private secretary and what I call assistant private secretaries so that we can bring people in and then they have career development and workforce development to move up to a private secretary. That depends on the portfolio, the breadth of the portfolio that the Minister may have, because some Ministers have a larger remit than other Ministers.

Mr. A. Lane:

Do you know when you built the business case for the creation of that particular function?

Chief of Staff:

That target operating model was already in place before I arrived, so the target operating model was agreed, as was the Chief of Staff, when I came in but I have developed it further. The private

secretaries were on a particular grade and there was no ability, as I said, to have an assistant private secretary so that you could bring people in at a lower level and give them the development. Also the Ministerial Support Unit does a lot more than just the private secretary role. Some members who are private secretaries will also look after the Government Plan process and the interface with Scrutiny in terms of once we lodge the Government Plan until it is approved. They do quite a lot of work with Scrutiny and States Assembly, which they would not have done previously. That would have been picked up by the individual departments whereas it is co-ordinated as one within the Ministerial Support Unit.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Just for clarification, any liaison officer - P.A.C. has an liaison officer within the Government who will communicate with our officers - reports direct to you about communication with P.A.C.; is that correct?

Chief of Staff:

Yes, but through the Ministerial Support Unit, so we do not have the liaison officer in their own right. They do that as part of other work they would do as a private secretary or as a research officer, ultimately reporting through to me.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

The C.O.O. (Chief Operating Office) do not have an official deputy?

Chief of Staff:

No, they do not.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

No, but from what you explained what capabilities of deputy do you do as the Chief of Staff, if you do any? Is there anybody else in the top team that do corporate tasks?

Chief of Staff:

All of the D.G.s (directors general) will do an element of corporate tasks dependent on what the issue is or what the initiative is. For instance, in S.P.P.P. (Strategic Policy, Performance and Population) they have a performance framework so that is a corporate element because that goes right across all of the departments. The Chief Operating Office have the I.T.S. programme, which they are rolling out, so they are co-ordinating that from their department and working with other departments right across government to embed that. But I provide the deputy role to the Chief Executive in the sense that the Chief Executive will delegate certain of the tasks to me to do on his behalf, dependent on what it is. For instance, the office accommodation, we have a role within the

hospital although now that has moved across to the Director General for Health. What normally happens is some big projects start in the Chief Executive's office in their development and they move across when it is time to deliver to the department that is responsible for delivering it.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Okay. Where are you in this process?

Chief of Staff:

I will lead on some of those projects on behalf of the Chief Executive and then will continue to be the challenge. I sit on the Office Accommodation Board. I am no longer the accountable officer for the office accommodation but I was in its development. Now that it has moved across, that accountable officer role has moved to I.H.E. (Infrastructure, Housing and Environment). However, I still sit on the board, so will provide that challenge.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you. It was helpful for the public to have more clarity and us as well. We will move to performance management and the recommendation tracker. Briefly, how do you distribute an agreed recommendation from P.A.C. and C. and A.G. throughout the departments?

Chief of Staff:

What happens is a report will come out and either the responsible department or there may be a series of departments ... for instance with COVID some of the reports span a number of departments. There will be an action plan developed by either the responsible department or a number of departments and for each action there will be a responsible officer. That is then input into the recommendation tracker, which was originally in Excel, which is quite clunky, but we have moved it across to SharePoint now, so its automation is much better in terms of data entry. That is how it is distributed to the departments. Each department has a lead officer responsible for ensuring the tracker is kept up to date. However, now that we have SharePoint in place you automatically get a notification if something has not happened but also the control team which sits within Treasury and the Exchequer also get a notification when something has happened, so we know when changes are being made to the tracker. Then every quarter we pull down a report but as part of that report - and you will notice in your quarterly report you get from us - there is what is known as closed recommendations. However, when we go to do the quality assurance we get what is known as pending closure. What we do is once we draw down the pending closure recommendations, we will go through those and do the due diligence on those in discussion with the departments. For example, this time we have had 32 recommendations that have closed. However, we have got 22 recommendations that we sent back to the departments, 21 that are P.A.C. and one that is C. and A.G., not because we thought they had not done the work to close them but we did not think there

was sufficient evidence for us to make a judgment on that, because we are clearly doing it on a paper exercise. That is to assure you that we do not automatically just tick them off. There is the due diligence that is done on the closed recommendations, so there is the toing and froing between the departments. In terms of the departments, I think it has been helpful now for the directors general because they have their own sessions with yourselves, so they are able to talk about their own recommendations through the P.A.C., P.A.C. and C. and A.G. recommendations as well. So they will have discussions in their S.L.T.s (senior leadership teams) on the recommendations. I am not sure that they are consistent across government in the departments, so for 2022 one of my objectives for our business plan is to get tighter governance around that. The proposal is that the Head of Financial Governance and myself will attend the departmental S.L.T.s on a biannual basis, so we will go twice a year to the S.L.T.s just to discuss progress on the tracker, the recommendations that they have. That also includes their Scrutiny recommendations as well and we are now adding the States Assembly recommendations to that, so it will not just be C. and A.G. and P.A.C. recommendations. We will touch on the other recommendations as well, but also when we review the tracker on the quarterly basis and if we see there is a problem with one of the departments - it may be due to lack of resource or other dependencies - we will then go in and offer support to them to get them back on track.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you. It is reassuring to know that 22 recommendations were sent back for due diligence because do you remember we questioned in January in order to pass through the process and it is good that P.C.A. will receive a double check when back in January we did not have answers. I assume that now you will have answers to the questions that we asked.

Chief of Staff:

Yes, and it does not mean that they cannot be closed. It is purely from the evidence we have seen we do not feel it is appropriate.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

It is documented. It is clearly documented, okay. Thank you. Where you identify obstacles to implementation of an agreed recommendation within an agreed timetable, how do you deal with those?

Chief of Staff:

It depends what it is. For instance, COVID threw up a number of obstacles because of resources and that was not just to do with delivering the recommendation. It was to do with the data entry and staff were overwhelmed doing other things and did not update the tracker on the monthly basis that they were supposed to. But we can see what the dependencies are, so in the dropdown boxes we

can see the dependencies and so we can then have the discussion with ... we bring the lead officers for all the departments together on a regular basis so they are a working group, so we can see those and see that in terms of the dependencies. At the moment you will notice we have got a lot of ambers and we have delineated them, so we have got 3 sets of ambers. What we are currently looking at is the categorisation of those ambers and how we can get richer intelligence from that, because I think the categorisation is still work in progress. I think we have done a lot from setting it up to getting all the recommendations mapped out and getting the data cleansing done and morphed across to SharePoint but I think we have got a lot more work we need to do on the categorisation.

Mr. A. Lane:

If we just go back to the process of ingesting the recommendations and you talked about having responsibility for doing the read across to the departments. Talk us through that process of how you make sure that a recommendation is picked up as broadly as appropriate across the Government.

Chief of Staff:

Okay. When a report comes in either from the C. and A.G. or from P.A.C. it will be sent out to E.L.T. members but with a focus on the key responsible officers within who are responsible in terms of the directors general. They will then allocate an officer. More so operating committee now because they are more responsible for the delivery of the recommendations. The response that comes in the way of an action plan with each recommendation - and you will have seen the action plans that come out - go through E.L.T. or operating committee, particularly where we think there is a read across to other departments. An example would be where there has been a report on financial decision-making but it may be related to ... for example there was a report done I think back in 2015 or 2016 on the new hospital decision-making. However, that was just an example. It applies to all projects right across. We discuss that at E.L.T.C. who also needs to be involved. We have a director general ... if there are 3 directors general involved we still have one director general who has overall responsibility for the delivery of that. Once it goes into the tracker we are then able to report back on a monthly basis if we need to. So we look at it on a monthly basis but we do the report in a report to the operating committee and E.L.T., so we can see where there are issues across them where either things are not being delivered the way they should be and what the reasoning is for that.

Mr. A. Lane:

From what you just said, the read across, the taking of a recommendation and asking the question: "Does this also apply to any other part of government?" is a committee discussion.

Chief of Staff:

That is a discussion, yes, at a senior ...

Mr. A. Lane:

As opposed to sitting just purely with yourself?

Chief of Staff:

Yes. It is a discussion at the senior leadership team and those departments where the report has gone we will also have a discussion with their senior leadership teams to see is this just for us or do we need to involve other departments in that.

Mr. A. Lane:

Given the lack of a single point owner, what is your assessment of how that process is working at the moment in terms of its effectiveness?

Chief of Staff:

When you say a single point owner you mean ...

Mr. A. Lane:

Of the process for making sure that you do a read across to look at the reach.

Chief of Staff:

I have ultimate responsibility for that, so I have access to the tracker, as do all of the directors general so they are able to go into the tracker. I have access to that. We know what reports have come in. We will look at the action plans for those reports and the individual recommendations to see if they are fit for purpose and we will challenge those.

[14:30]

I will challenge those if I do not think there is sufficient information within the action plan to send back but also once they are in the tracker I will go in and I can look at those particularly if we think there is an issue. We will also look at it in terms of the prioritisation. That is something that again is work in progress at that moment. Departments do prioritise them but we do not share that prioritisation with yourselves so that is something that we need to look at going forward.

Mr. A. Lane:

Do you have anyone to help you with that? When you say "we", does that mean people in your function that ...

Chief of Staff:

No, at the moment I do have people who I work with across government. I have the individual leads in the departments but I rely heavily on Treasury and Exchequer. The Head of Financial Governance has given a lot of time to me for that and a couple of his colleagues and also we have Internal Audit who have given a lot of support in terms of their independent review. They will do what I call a mystery shop if required and they did all the data cleansing for us before we moved from the Excel spreadsheet through to SharePoint. So I work with officers within other departments. Do I have dedicated resource for it? No. If somebody left and someone new came in who was not as experienced as the person who helps me at the moment, then there would be a gap, I would say.

Mr. A. Lane:

Are you comfortable with the way it works at the moment?

Chief of Staff:

I am very comfortable with the way it works at the moment but I think that is because I am working with really good people. They understand what needs to be done and they are likeminded and it fits with the ... they do a lot on governance. So, yes, I think we have sufficient resource at the moment but it is not a dedicated team of people who that is their only role.

Mr. A. Lane:

In the quarterly update that you have just sent to us, you had, I think, 249 outstanding recommendations in process, of which 97 are listed as on track and then there is a variety of reasons, some of which you have alluded to, for why things are off track, but there is 92 that just had this badge "dependency" on it. Can you articulate for us where those dependencies are not lack of resources or needing an E.L.T. discussion or a political decision or I.T. (information technology), what are they and what is being done about them?

Chief of Staff:

In the dependencies there is a range. That is one of the categorisations we are looking at because it is quite easy just to go into the dropdown box and pick the dependency. There is not the ability to put more information in and that is something that we are looking at because we want to be able to get more information about what the dependency is and is it a real dependency or is it something that we can do something about. So I would say while we have the dependencies as a dropdown box it is not where it should be and that is something that we are looking at ourselves in terms of dependencies because we want it to be more articulate and to be able to give more information about what that dependency is.

Mr. A. Lane:

Should I understand that you corporately do not at this point understand what the blockers are to dealing with those 92?

Chief of Staff:

We do if we go into the individual recommendations and have the discussions with them. If there are a series of recommendations belonging to one department and it appears to be a similar dependency we go and have those discussions with the department, but in terms of being able to interrogate it within the tracker at the moment I would say we have not got sufficient information in that tracker. We do have those conversations with the direct leads and we are challenging them all of the time, but it will be good to have more intelligence embedded within the tracker so we do not need to keep on going back.

Mr. A. Lane:

How do you get assurance that sufficient action is being taken to remove those blocks or that sufficient help is being asked for from yourself?

Chief of Staff:

When they come to do the quarterly review, on that quarterly review we will see where the dependencies lie, so we pull those out for our own due diligence. Going forward, once the report has gone in we will then look at those and we will have the conversations with the director general and say: "You have a series of recommendations that have these dependencies. Can you have a look at those because clearly there seems to be a lot and they seem to be the same dependency and we are not quite sure whether that is the real reason for it? Is there another issue that is not in the dropdown box and so you are just putting it against that dependency?" We use the quarterly reports to show us where we need to either do more challenge going forward once the report is out or where we need to have the conversations about: "How much more support can we give you, is there a problem with the actual recommendations?" You will also see there are a number of recommendations that have the target date changed but at the moment that is not easy to see. We can pull it out but we want to be able to have a ... for it to be easier for you to see where the target dates have been changed and for us the challenge then back to the departments is: "Have you been realistic with the target date? You do not have to do everything." I think sometimes departments feel that they are supposed to say: "Yes, we have got a target date for this." This is where we are looking ... for 2022 it is about us looking at the prioritisation. If you say you accept the recommendation, is it wise to put a target date in for 18 months' time when the world might be quite different? Do we need to look at the priorities and say: "Okay, there is a series of recommendations that we agree with but at this moment in time we are going to put them in a box for review rather than putting the target date in"? I think some of it is about them being proactive but also perhaps being unrealistic about what they can achieve with those target dates. For next year in terms of the

intelligence and getting that intelligence out, it is also about being more realistic in terms of the categorisation so that when they put a target date in it is realistic. Okay, there will always be slippage if something comes left field but we want them to be as accurate as possible, but we can see it.

Mr. A. Lane:

Yes. I am going to let Andy jump in.

The Connétable of St. John:

I think we were trying to ascertain are there any themes in the dependencies. If you had a dropdown menu, what would be the 4 top features on that dropdown menu?

Chief of Staff:

I would say resources comes first because it is an easy one. If it is dependent on a political decision it is dependent on a political decision and you have to articulate that, but if it is dependent on resources or another department we want to understand what is the dependency on the other department: "Is it a very easy thing that can be unblocked but you have not necessarily done that?"

The Connétable of St. John:

Sorry, you have got lack of resources as a specific reason for something not being done. Why would resource be on the dropdown menu under dependency? You are not duplicating?

Chief of Staff:

No, but what I am saying is the resources within the department, so they will say they have got a lack of resource to implement something. I would say very often if we say: "You have got a series of recommendations that we are not seeing any progress on" they will then say it is due to lack of resources.

The Connétable of St. John:

What would the other things be on that dropdown for dependencies?

Chief of Staff:

For dependencies we have the political, they may need a political decision, so they may need legislation or they may be dependent on another department for delivering some of what is required. For us we want to get a better categorisation because if it is dependent on another department, not because they are working on it together but it may be that there is something another department has to do before they can deliver that.

Mr. A. Lane:

I think we are disappearing down a rabbit hole slightly on what sounds like a data quality issue in that catchall bucket, which should be allocated out to other things. It would be helpful, I think, if you could take a tangible example where you have got perhaps a high priority issue that you are trying to resolve that is currently blocked and maybe give us an example of one which is blocked because of lack of resources, one which is blocked because of needing a political decision.

Chief of Staff:

I would have to go through the full detail of that because clearly I do not have ...

Mr. A. Lane:

I did not know if there were a couple that were the ones that caused you to not sleep at night because of the lack of progress or anything.

Chief of Staff:

Let me have a look.

Mr. A. Lane:

If not, then, Chair, perhaps we should just follow up with a written question.

Chief of Staff:

Yes, I can follow up with a couple of examples if that would be ...

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Yes. I think it is really important for us, because you said that you had discussed these dependencies, we have examples and also a clear breakdown of 4 reasons, as the Constable asked. Like if it is political, how many of these 92 related to the lack of the political decision and if it has been raised and when, to have a real understanding because currently 92 dependencies, we need to know.

Chief of Staff:

Yes, I can provide that.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you.

Mr. A. Lane:

I am going to hand to the Constable now.

The Connétable of St. John:

The C. and A.G. and the P.A.C. have deliberately chosen not to put recommendations that they make in order of priority of importance. Do you categorise them as such?

Chief of Staff:

We have started to but it is not where it should be and I think that is part of the problem we have where there is not as much progress as there might be because it is difficult to see where the prioritisation is. That is something we were looking at and we did not know whether or not particularly the C. and A.G. would want to have a discussion about how we prioritise the recommendations when they come out. If we then look at the prioritisation that C. and A.G. may put in place, a bit like the recommendations themselves, we can have a discussion about what we think our prioritisation is.

The Connétable of St. John:

You spoke about departments talking about timing, perhaps they are too ambitious at times. The timings are all delivered to us by the Government. It is not the timing given by P.A.C., so what is your involvement in agreeing the timing?

Chief of Staff:

In timing? We will look at the action plan and what they put in as the timeframe and if the timeframe is too far out I will go back and ask the reasoning for that. Very often they will come back and say: "The reason is because we are having to do this, this and this before we can get to that point." So we do have a discussion at that level about the timeframes they put in. However, I think we probably need them to do a bit more prioritisation about the recommendations. You will get them in an order coming out to you but that is not the order of prioritisation for them. I think we do need to have a further discussion about what they feel in terms of a report and its recommendations where the priority is for those recommendations.

The Connétable of St. John:

If a recommendation is on red, does that end up on a risk register somewhere?

Chief of Staff:

It depends what the recommendation is. It does read across to both the departmental risk registers and the corporate risk register, but it does depend on what the recommendation is, whether it warrants to go on the actual risk register.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I looked through the papers that were received and I could see 4 red identified according to the departments but I could not find in this report ... one of them connected to S.C.B. (States Complaints

Board) follow-up report and 2 connected to the insurance. Can you please specify what are the recommendations in the red and what has happened with them?

Chief of Staff:

I have not got the detail of that.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

This is the report that we received. I also looked at your report and I could not ...

Chief of Staff:

If I can get back to you with the details of those 4.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Yes, please, and explain how it is in red and if it is on the risk register and what does it mean in practical terms.

Chief of Staff:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. John:

How does the tracker feed into the performance management of officers throughout departments?

Chief of Staff:

Currently it will be picked up as part of a My Conversation, My Goals, which is for individuals, or it will be picked up dependent on what outcome measures they have in their departmental business plans and it will be picked up as part of their S.L.T.s, but I do not think it as developed as it could be. That is something that again we are looking at next year, how it looks at staff improvement. For some areas of the recommendations where they are directly related to staff improvement, that is easy to see but for other recommendations I would say there needs to be more work done in terms of how it relates to staff improvement in terms of services.

[14:45]

The Connétable of St. John:

That is the individual. What about at department level? If a department is failing to implement recommendations, what do you do and what power have you got to take action?

Chief of Staff:

That is something that is then raised with the individual director general and/or the responsible officer within that senior leadership team and then that is picked up in the one-to-one with the Chief Executive or by myself in conversation, in discussion with the relevant department. If it is a wider issue it may be raised at E.L.T. or it is raised at the operating committee as well but it tends to be, in the first instance, picked up in the one-to-ones they have with their chief executives about performance in terms of: "You have got this number of recommendations that do not seem to be having any progress. Is there a problem? What is the problem? Is it in terms of how you are updating, so you have not updated it sufficiently or is there an actual problem in the delivery of the recommendation?"

The Connétable of St. John:

I am sure many of us are familiar with the R.A.G. (red, amber, green) status. I have never seen in risk or project management or business management R.A.A.A.G. status. I am surprised at that level of ...

Chief of Staff:

Do you mean on the amber status?

The Connétable of St. John:

Yes.

Chief of Staff:

Amber is something that we are looking at. The problem we have is we have a lot in that area that are moving on track, tending to move on track, and it is a slug in there and we recognise that. That is where we are looking at the categorisation for next year so we can get more intelligence out of that so we do not need to ... we can get more intelligence about what is happening in that first phase of amber, the second phase and the third phase, so that it moves through. It is work in progress at the moment in terms of the ambers and we do recognise that we do need to have better categorisation of that so that whether it is in terms of how we deal with the target date they put in. Sometimes in that amber there will be a target date put in and then it is changed, so categorising when things have changed and also what deals are closed as well. A lot of the ambers when they go towards the third period are what we call pending closure. What does that mean? We are doing a lot more work on that at the moment.

The Connétable of St. John:

Okay, thank you.

Chief of Staff:

I have to say we have been talking to the C. and A.G. about that as well as part of her review.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Just as a follow-up, you mentioned the tighter governance you want to put in place about biannual attendance at senior leadership teams. You have referred to dependency criteria to be more articulate and also about prioritisation. How or what enabled the 97 to be on track for target date? Is it because they are easy to do?

Chief of Staff:

Some of it could be but I think also because on track is in that big swathe of amber and we have not gone into more granular detail on that. I think some of it is they require just one thing to happen for them to be closed but there are a number that are complicated as well, so it is a whole mix. If we can look at how complicated they are perhaps we can then ... some of them might not be red or some of them we can take out of the amber. I think the problem is the 92 is because it is quite a broad categorisation, so we need to drill down into the categories so we can get more intelligence about what is happening, so we can get more categorisation within that amber.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Okay. I am just asking about the on track for target date, there is 97 there and, considering what your answers have been so far, that would suggest to me that they are on track for target date purely because they are easy to do. Is there not a risk then that maybe some recommendations are cart before horse?

Chief of Staff:

I would say it could also be because the target dates are quite long. If you have got a target date that is, for instance, for next March or next September you are going to be on track because that is the target date. That is where us drilling down and getting better categorisation of: "You say you are going to do it at that date but what are the things you are going to do in between that we can also put a target in for?" I think a lot of is to do with the target dates. There will be some that are very easy to do, for instance to set up a board to deliver something, to look at the arm's-length organisations, which was one of the recommendations, that is quite easy and that is a tick in the box because you have set the board up, but there will be others where it is quite complicated but it will be the target date is put out.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

I want to understand the teeth. Where do the teeth sit in terms of if it gets to a crunch point ... I imagine there are themes of certain departments, particularly in the dependencies where they put them in dependencies: "It is the hard to do pile or that can wait because my priorities are here, not

there.” I am not putting blame on anyone or anything like that. It is human behaviour, is it not? Is there a theme and, if so, where is the teeth to make sure that it does happen and does get done? It is fine having all these meetings and changing processes but who ultimately goes: “No, you have to do this”?

Chief of Staff:

That will be picked up with ... first of all it starts with the S.L.T.s within the departments and that is why I want to go to the S.L.T.s because at the moment they are reporting in whereas we want to be able to go to them twice yearly to say: “This is the progress that has been made over the last 6 months. This is what the issues are” but also it is picked up by the Chief Executive. If it is a bigger issue across departments there will be a discussion and debate about: “Should we be doing this or why have you set a target date for that when that is not going to happen in that timeframe because of other priorities you may have or other issues that come through.?” So it does come through the one-to-ones that they have with the Chief Executive, now the quarterly reviews they have with yourselves clearly, but also some of them do have meetings with the Comptroller and Auditor General as well. I do not know if you have meetings with all of them but certainly some of them do have meetings, particularly during COVID time, so they will be picked up there. They then have the ability through myself to be able to flag those with the Chief Executive and say: “When you have your next one-to-one there a number of issues here that you may need to resolve, we may need to give some extra support to.”

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Just finally, in terms of Internal Audit, is there ever at any time an intervention has to be made with Internal Audit, taking into account whether it is P.A.C. or C. and A.G. recommendations, you also have an Internal Audit as well? Is that utilised in any way to help implement?

Chief of Staff:

It is, and at the beginning they were an incredible support. They did a lot of the data cleansing and a lot of the independent review. However, they are a small team, so they gave us a lot of time in the first 6 to 8 months. They still do intervene, particularly around the close. They will do quite a bit of due diligence around the pending closure items, but clearly they do have their own work plan. They gave me a lot of support, which was really, really helpful and enabled I think P.A.C. at the time to have the assurance that what we were doing had been independently reviewed.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Okay, thank you.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

We will move to a couple of questions around COVID.

Dr. H. Miles:

Just a couple of questions. I am really conscious of time now. How have you monitored the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on implementing your recommendations?

Chief of Staff:

In terms of going forward or at the time?

Dr. H. Miles:

At the time.

Chief of Staff:

At the time. So at the time it was more around ... well, there are 2 elements. At the time it was more around the data entry, so we were conscious when people are not updating the tracker we know they are not because we go in to check what has been done. Now through SharePoint you get a notification so we can see what notifications we have had and what we have not, but at the time it was around the data entry. Then following on from that we did a half-yearly report, which was related to the Government Plan, that happened ... it came out in July 2020, I think. That looked at what all the departments were doing and they had to do a review of everything they were doing and they categorised it by "halt, defer, stop". Some of the recommendations, the work around that would have been caught up in that as well. Then departments were quite open with us when they had a substantial number of their staff that had been seconded into doing directly COVID-related initiatives where they said they just did not have the time or the resource capacity at that time to do that. I would say now we are coming back more into business as usual, particularly because of the move to SharePoint, which is much easier to update and much easier to have that quality of information there. I can see it coming back to more normal now and we did challenge some of the COVID-related issues in the last quarterly report when we had the conversations with the departments and said: "Is there more support we need to give you on a temporary basis because you have got staff directly doing other things?" but it is now coming back, I would say. I can see the quality of the information being put in and the more realistic responses being put into the tracker.

Dr. H. Miles:

Thank you. Can you update us on how your respective departments are responding to the recommendations that were made by the C. and A.G. in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Chief of Staff:

Generally or specifically?

Dr. H. Miles:

Have any of the recommendations been implemented yet?

Chief of Staff:

I think some have been implemented. I could not give you the detail right across the board but I know in terms of those recommendations which were particularly around the support scheme they put those into the finance law manual. Some have been delivered already but I would need to get some more detail and I can get a report specifically on the COVID ones if you want me to and provide that to you.

Dr. H. Miles:

That would be helpful, thank you.

Chief of Staff:

We have the ability to do that.

Dr. H. Miles:

Finally, how do you, as a department, demonstrate you communicate to the public the improvements to services when the recommendations have been implemented?

Chief of Staff:

I do not think we are there yet in terms of being able to openly demonstrate that. I think we can do that ... we do that through our performance framework and in terms of our operational business plans, but I think we are now looking and we perhaps wanted to have a discussion with you about putting a field in, which we call "benefits": what are the benefits of the recommendations? We have the ability to do that but we do not have that at the moment, looking at what we can do in terms of putting a field in that talks about what are the benefits to the Island and to Islanders from that, but if I am honest I would say we are not there yet on that. It is something we know we need to do in the same way we are currently looking at the outcome measures related to the tracker specifically. Again we are having discussions with the Interim Director for Analytics and Statistics because we are wanting to get some rich information around outcome measures. No other jurisdiction does a tracker in this way and we have got no one to benchmark to so, for me, saying how many recommendations have you closed being an outcome measures does not tell you a lot, so we are looking at what kind of outcome measures can we get that show the improvement. I would say we are still in discussions in that. We have spent quite a bit of time on it and it is something that I have flagged as part of the review that the C. and A.G. is undertaking. The independent reviewer knows of that and he said he will have a look at that and he will give us some support in terms of determining

that, but it is something that we absolutely know. It is quite easy to say these are the number of recommendations that are closed but it is the “so whats”, so what difference has that made, and I am fully aware we are not where we need to be on that. However, I think where we were in 2018 to where we are now is vastly improved.

Dr. H. Miles:

Thank you.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I think when I looked at question 19, I looked through the recommendations that were recently closed, I think one of the examples that would be clearly communicated to the public when we looked at the governance of Health and Social Care from 2018 when C. and A.G. recommended extending the availability of public performance reporting to increase focus on the quality.

[15:00]

It has been done this year after several communications that we had and we welcome and from here we can ... the performance report on health has been published and hopefully will publish the next one and this is where we can see the improvement. We are working but how we will bring this framework together would be another step. Any more questions from the members of the committee? No. First of all, thank you for your answers. It is helpful and they are in the process of developing things. For our benefit we would like to get the red recommendations and risks to understand clarity about dependencies, how does it work and where the dependency is an excuse and where it does work and what processes can be organised to address it. Also we are looking forward to understanding the categorisation and prioritisation process going forward to see that it will not have 3 ambers and will have clarity between green, amber and red.

Chief of Staff:

Yes, and I think that is something in a private briefing we are happy to have a discussion with you to share with you in advance of ...

Deputy I. Gardiner:

We will work together, sure. Thank you very much and the public hearing is closed.

[15:01]