

Media Release

Date: 15 March 2022

Policy & Resources Committee submits recommendation for the review of the Bailiwick's COVID-19 response

The Policy & Resources Committee is publishing recommendations to the States for reviewing the Bailiwick's COVID-19 response.

The Committee believes the review should look at how well-prepared government was, and how well did the States do in operational delivery, in the context of responding to the pandemic. The States will be presented with two options for how a review could be approached.

The first would build upon a number of internal audits already planned or that have been completed as part of the States' debriefing for their key service areas, and to include a high-level desk top review to create a factual record summarising the impact on the Bailiwick. This would be a faster and more cost-effective option, follows best practice, and would assist the Scrutiny Management Committee in bringing a report to the States with flexibility as to whether further steps such as hearings are necessary. The Policy & Resources Committee is recommending this option.

The second option is for an individual or body to be commissioned to hold an entirely independent review. This is likely to come at significantly more cost, up to £250,000 dependent on the terms of reference agreed by the States. The costs would likely be greater if a cross profession Panel was established to complete the review. The Committee does not believe these costs are proportionate given there is an effective alternative, and given the world remains in pandemic status and the response is not yet over, even though emergency powers are no longer being used. The Committee is also very mindful of the current pressures on public finances.

Deputy Peter Ferbrache, President of the Policy & Resources Committee said

“This has been one of the most extraordinary periods in our recent history and it's been a huge challenge for the public sector, just as it has been for the whole community. Different jurisdictions responded in different ways to this new danger as the world tried to understand the risks and how to counter them. The Bailiwick has probably had a better experience than most other places in the world during

these past two years, but nonetheless it was a very hard time for many Islanders for many reasons. And we cannot ever forget that we lost friends and family to this pandemic. So it is of course right that we look back carefully at how we responded and ask ourselves tough questions, to see what we could have done differently, and learn from both our errors and our successes.”

Ends