

Access to Public Information Response

August 22nd 2014:

REQUEST UNDER THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION

Request sent on August 22nd 2014:

Dear Policy Council

In response to a phone enquiry early in August requesting details of all FTP quarterly reports received by the Policy Council, the council stated (11th August) that they do get published, essentially as part of the FTP annual report.

I also approached the Public Accounts Committee for copies of all these reports received to date. It stated that the Policy Council owned the reports and was willing to follow this up but suggested it would be reluctant to release the reports.

The annual FTP report that has been published only details the projects if a saving in excess of £100,000 has been made and the amount saved, but as we have seen with the response to a rule 6 question by Deputy Hadley there is much more information – the rationale from the department and the analysis from the, in this case, the States Treasurer and her recommendation to ministers.

I want to request the release of this information under the code of practice on access to public information for each project applied for and not approved or followed up on and each project applied for that has been accepted as an FTP saving when those projects are in excess of £50,000.

I believe the code allows for the release of this information. The States has agreed to a presumption of disclosure and culture of openness under the code. It also states that it will release any facts and relevant analysis which a department considers important in framing major policy proposals and decisions and also make available information about how public services are run, demonstrating accountability of service delivery. I also believe that in responding the Deputy Hadley the Policy Council has now set a precedent for the release of the information requested.

States of Guernsey response September 23rd 2014:

The Policy Council discussed this matter in detail at the Policy Council meeting held on 22 September. The Policy Council were of the view that exemption 2.4 (internal discussion and policy advice) would apply in respect of the advice you have requested but see merit in giving this further consideration. The Council noted that the Public Accounts Committee is undertaking a scrutiny review into the Financial Transformation Programme. It felt that, given the papers were likely to be subject to scrutiny by the PAC and in order not to prejudice the conclusion of PAC, it would be premature to consider publication of the advice prior to the PAC concluding its review and publishing its findings.

It has therefore been decided to defer consideration of waiving this exemption and will reconsider publishing this information following the conclusion of and publication of the PAC review.