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Submission to The Future Hospital Review Scrutiny Panel¹
Terms of Reference Three (TOR 3)
19 October 2020

Introduction

TOR 3 - Determine the lines of Ministerial accountability in the decision-making process and its effectiveness.

Ministerial Accountability

There are three areas of separate ministerial accountability covering the OH project:

- a. The Council of Ministers (CoM)
- b. The Political Oversight Group (POG)
- c. The Ministry of Finance

The Council of Ministers

We are not at all convinced that the CoM is dealing with the OH project at all, other than receiving updates. To verify this, it is recommended that the Scrutiny Panel asks for the minutes of CoM meetings dealing with the OH project in the past six months.

The Political Oversight Group

The POG's terms of reference are contained in the OH project document², dated 11th September 2019, i.e. six months after the Chief Minister's update on the OH programme of 3rd May 2019³. This rate of progress is typical of the OH project; cautious, slow and with very little publicity. This is reflected in the site selection process described in our submission on Terms of Reference Two submitted to the Panel on 3rd October 2020.

The POG has a parallel body, the Senior Officer Steering Group, working in conjunction with it. The memberships of both groups are:

The POG:

- Senator Lyndon Farnham (Chair) – Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture
- Deputy Hugh Raymond (Deputy Chair) – Assistant Minister for Health and Community Services
- Senator John Le Fondré – Chief Minister
- Deputy Richard Renouf – Minister for Health and Community Services

¹ <https://statesassembly.gov.je/scrutiny/Pages/Review.aspx?reviewid=359>

² <https://www.gov.je/sitecollectiondocuments/health%20and%20wellbeing/r%20our%20hospital%20programme%20update%20to%20states%20assembly%20ke.pdf>

³ <https://www.gov.je/sitecollectiondocuments/government%20and%20administration/20190503%20chief%20minister's%20report%20to%20states%20assembly%20on%20new%20hospital.pdf>

- Deputy Kevin Lewis – Minister for Infrastructure
- Deputy Lindsay Ash – Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources
- Deputy Rowland Huelin – St Peter
- Connétable Philip Le Sueur – Trinity.

The Senior Officer Steering Group

Also attending the group by standing invitation is Senior Officer Steering Group:

- Charlie Parker – Chief Executive Officer
- Caroline Landon – Director General for Health and Community Services
- John Rogers – Director General for Growth, Housing and Environment
- Richard Bannister – Interim Project Director
- Andy Scate – Group Director for Regulation
- Stephen Hardwick – Director of Communications
- Mike Thomas – Director of Risk and Audit.

The POG's TOR are:

- Political Oversight Group provides political oversight
- Senior Officer Steering Group directs and manages operational issues
- Clinical Group develops the health brief
- Delivery Group(s) focus on legal, procurement and delivery matters
- Citizen's Panel engages stakeholders to build consensus

The Group has requested and received the POG's meeting agendas and minutes, both of which are heavily redacted and reveal nothing of public interest, other than a record of the dates of the meetings. It is assumed that the Scrutiny Panel routinely receives both. If it does not, then it is recommended that they are requested as a matter of urgency and are reviewed for the record in this Panel's enquiries.

There do not appear to be any agendas or minutes of the Senior Officer Steering Group. It is therefore recommended that the Scrutiny Panel asks for these, if it does not already receive them.

The Ministry of Finance

It is noted that Deputy Lyndsey Ash, an Assistant Minister in the Ministry of Finance, is a member of the Scrutiny Panel and therefore will have first-hand knowledge of the finances of the OH project, including its accounts and recording expenditure to date.

Summary

In our view the lines of Ministerial accountability in the OH Project have been unnecessarily hidden from Public view. More importantly the process by which Ministers have reviewed, advanced and approved the considerations regarding the OH Project have not been disclosed to the Public. The lack of transparency regarding the OH Project does not befit a project which will undoubtedly commit the Island and the Public to the largest capital expenditure the Island has ever undertaken.

We would welcome the opportunity to review our submission to you in further detail.

Friends of Our New Hospital

Chair – Brigadier Bruce Willing CBE

Tom Binet – Graham Bisson – Peter Funk – Jean Lelliott – Graeme Phipps