

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO RULE 14 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

From	President, Committee <i>for</i> Employment & Social Security
To	Deputy L C Queripel
Subject	Operational matters of States Committees
Date of response	16 th December 2024

Question 1:

We often hear it said within the States, that Deputies shouldn't get involved in the 'operational matters' of States departments, i.e. procedures and processes. So with that in mind, are you able to tell me your committees' approach to that issue please?

Response:

The Committee *for* Employment & Social Security ('the Committee') is responsible for a number of operational functions including the provision of contributory and non-contributory benefits, the provision of social rental housing and the Job Centre, etc. It also oversees the delivery of functions operated by the Health & Safety Executive, the Guernsey Legal Aid Service and the Employment & Equal Opportunities Service.

On occasion, service users contact members of the Committee directly, or via a third party, including a States Member, to ask for assistance regarding a personal matter, to raise a concern or complaint, etc. On such occasions, with the service user's consent, Committee members bring such matters to the attention of the relevant operational lead so the matter can be fully investigated. Members never seek to instruct an outcome.

Occasionally, such cases can result in the identification of a policy issue for review. On such occasions, officers are directed to bring a briefing paper to a future Committee meeting for consideration.

Question 2:

Do members of your committee get involved in the 'operational matters' of your department?

Response:

The Committee's primary focus is on policy-making. The Public Service is tasked with delivering against that policy.

The Committee monitors the performance of the various service areas under its mandate through regular financial and management reporting. This provides the opportunity for members to challenge and probe where necessary and to discuss and agree actions for improvement.

Otherwise, members only get involved in operational matters to the extent described in the answer to question 1.

Question 3:

Do you/would you, and your committee object, whenever/if ever, Deputies do/did try to get involved in the 'operational matters' of your committee?

Response:

Members of the Committee do not object to receiving operational related queries from other States Members. However, the Committee would object if a States Member sought to influence, pressurise or seek special treatment on behalf of themselves or others, in respect of an operational matter. To clarify, I do not recall that this has happened.

The Committee notes that robust complaints, appeals and review processes exist which provide service users with routes to fair and impartial review and recourse if they feel they have received a poor service or are aggrieved by a decision of a statutory decision-maker.

NOTE: Under rule 49(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and its Committees, it is determined that Deputy Queripel has a direct and special interest in this matter and so has recused himself from consideration of this matter.