

3.9 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the Hospital Project Political Oversight Group (OQ.88/2026).

Will the Minister advise whether the Hospital Project Political Oversight Group has met since the new Government took office and, if so, what actions to address project risks were agreed and, if not, why not?

Senator T.J.A. Binet (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

Before I answer the question, just for clarity I think I should explain that after the election in 2022 the Hospital Political Oversight Group was replaced by the New Hospital Ministerial Group and that remains the most senior governance body up to date. That New Hospital Ministerial Group, which includes the Chief Minister, the Minister for Treasury and Resources and the Minister for Infrastructure, is due to meet tomorrow. From then on this will become a regular monthly meeting. In the few weeks that have passed since the formation of the new Council of Ministers, political oversight has continued through political lead meetings, which have taken place almost every week since early 2024. These meetings continued throughout the pre-election period and they have carried on ever since. In addition to that, update presentations are already planned for the Council of Ministers and later for all Sates Members.

3.9.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Given the enormity of this programme and the need for Ministers to be on top of their brief with regard to this, why is it taking so long for the Ministerial Group to have met for the first time?

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

I think we will find it has only been 9 or 10 weeks since the Council of Ministers was formed. Throughout August a lot of people were on holiday; that does not include me because I think most weeks we had a meeting with the political lead, and that is myself and an Assistant Minister.

[10:45]

We have met almost every week for the last 4 years and we have full cover on this. It has not bothered me at all that we have been 8 or 9 weeks without a meeting because this is probably the first time we have managed to get everybody together, and that meeting is happening tomorrow. Unlike some of the others in here, I do not see any particular crisis. I do not mind saying that I think the governance around this project has been excellent. I have got a copy of the governance arrangements here, if Deputy Feltham would like to see them later. I would read them through but it would probably take me the best part of 20 minutes. But I have the information there, if that is of interest to the Deputy.

3.9.2 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement:

Just for clarity, could the Minister just confirm which Assistant Minister he has been working with on this, please?

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

That is Deputy Rose Binet, who has worked with me for just over 4 years on the project.

3.9.3 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

I wonder whether the Minister would consider whether it would assist him if there were some independent support for the team that are considering the proposals and whether this might be something that the new Council of Ministers might consider as part of an independent critical friend to the process.

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

I am delighted to tell the Deputy that has been in place for a long time. Once a month Deputy Rose Binet and I also meet with 3 independent non-executive directors that I think they were brought on board at the change of Government 2½ years ago. No, sorry, I am already being corrected. They have been in place for the last 4 years, so we do have 3 independent non-executive directors providing that external oversight.

3.9.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

Could the Minister explain how it works? Will it be about receiving updates or will the Ministers there be making collective, actionable decisions going forward?

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

Could I just clarify whether that is the New Hospital Ministerial Group, comprising of the Chief Minister and the Minister for Treasury and Resources?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Yes.

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

Everything, if I might say, is put forward at those meetings and of course everybody there is free to make contributions on any and every matter, including the risk register.

3.9.5 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

For clarification, other Ministers can put forward points but the Minister for Health and Social Services has the final decision; is that the idea? It is not a collective responsibility within that group?

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

I will have to check on what the exact situation is. We have never had a situation where that has arisen. People's contributions are accepted for what they are and we move forward. I can find out what the technical arrangements are but, no, when we meet, people contribute and we have never had a situation where there has been any disagreement to date.

3.9.6 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Following his answers, could the Minister let the Assembly know who the independent advisers are and what their tenure is?

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

I have always been informed that it is not wise to mention names but I can, it is John Rogers, Nigel Minhane, and forgive me, you have caught me off balance there. Another lady that I have worked with for 4 years and I am afraid the name has gone out of my head. I will happily let the Deputy know afterwards.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Sir, and the tenure.

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

Sorry, it is Michelle Ryan. Sorry, it was just a senior moment.

The Bailiff:

Thank you, Minister.

Deputy L.F. Feltham:

Sir, the Minister did not answer the second part of my question, which is what the tenure is.

The Bailiff:

Yes. Do you know the terms of these individuals?

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

I cannot recall when their terms run out but I am very happy to pass on the information afterwards.