



THE ANGUILLA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME

December 2015 - May 2016

The Public Accounts Committee

The Public Accounts Committee is a standing committee of the Anguilla House of Assembly. It is established and empowered by Section 66A of the Legislative Assembly (Procedure) Rules, 1976.

Membership

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|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Hon Palmovan Webster, Member for Island Harbour | Chairperson |
| Hon Evalie A. Bradley, Member for Road North | Member |
| Hon Terry Harrigan, First Nominated Member | Member |
| Hon Paul O. Harrigan, Second Nominated Member | Member |

Committee Staff

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|-----------------|-------|
| Lenox J Proctor | Clerk |
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Chairperson's Foreword

13 January 2016

The Public Accounts Committee of the House of assembly is crucial to ensuring appropriate scrutiny of the way in which Anguilla's public finances are managed and conserved. I am privileged to be its chair and I am fortunate in having able colleagues, as committed, I believe, to the task as I am.

On 20th June 2014, Don Mitchell QC, in a letter to Father of the Nation, James Ronald Webster, said: "*The system of government that we have inherited seems almost designed to encourage us to give up our natural integrity once we achieve political power*".

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) was established at the Fourth Meeting of the First Session of the Eleventh Anguilla House of Assembly, on Tuesday, 22nd September 2015, in accordance with section 66A of the Legislative Assembly (Procedure) Rules, 1976. As the Speaker acknowledged, the PAC had never functioned properly, if at all, nor had it been given any recognition in the past.

The purpose of a PAC is to prevent waste or misappropriation of public funds and to ensure transparent accounting and reporting of government expenditure. The PAC is supported, in an Overseas Territory such as Anguilla, by the Auditor General, who is an external auditor and who should therefore be free of influence from Anguilla's politicians. He is appointed by the Governor without control by any local body such as Executive Council. His Report is laid before the House of Assembly.

The PAC uses the Auditor General's Report to examine how public funds were spent. Questions are asked by the PAC and inefficiencies or irregularities can be highlighted. By this means, civil servants are empowered to resist any unauthorised expenditure. To accomplish its objective, the PAC must be well informed, vigilant and active. It is notorious that the PAC has never functioned effectively in Anguilla.

With this in view, as Chair of the PAC I have already attended a course in London developed by the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies which led to a Professional Certificate in the Work of Public Accounts Committees and, in February, I and other members of the PAC and its officer, together with the Leader of the Opposition in the Anguilla Youth Parliament, will go to London to meet with members of the UK PAC, the UK Audit Office, representatives of the World Bank Parliamentary Strengthening Programme and other stakeholders, with a view to gaining more experience in this field and cementing long-term supportive relationships.

It will be our objective to identify key challenges Anguilla faces in implementing international best practices related to financial scrutiny, and to identify practical ways to implement them in the Anguilla context.

It is notable that PACs suffer similar shortcomings even in independent Commonwealth Caribbean countries. That the PAC works well in Bermuda is a credit to that community from which I hope we can learn lessons.

The public want more transparency and they want government to be more accountable. I intend that this Anguilla PAC should take bold steps in that direction. If I can sum up my objectives for the Anguilla PAC, I would say they include the following, although the list may well expand during the course of our work:

- As committee members, we are all united in the quest for value for money in public spending.
- One of our priorities must be to secure buy-in for our objectives by all civil servants involved, together with a change in the relationship between Ministers and Civil servants in terms of responsibility for ensuring proper accountability. We are not unique in having this need; the PAC in London faces the same challenge, albeit on a larger scale.
- We must hold government to rigorous account; not merely ministers, who are here today and gone tomorrow, but civil servants who are responsible for the execution of policy on a longer term basis.
- We need to demonstrate to the Anguillian public that we are effective in achieving our objectives, by drilling down to the true facts, by identifying major systemic failures which I believe exist in our current systems and by reporting our findings in a transparent and open way.
- We are not interested in lining shelves with reports that don't make a difference. We intend to be the first ever effective Anguillian PAC and to make a difference.
- We shall highlight success and achievements where we find them and we hope that the civil service will embrace the opportunity to show the Anguilla public beyond all reasonable doubt that they are on the people's side in the quest for properly regulated public finances, providing value for money and equal opportunities to all.

Introduction

The Work Programme details the activities of the Public Accounts Committee for the duration of the First Session of the Eleventh Anguilla House of Assembly. The activities are concerned primarily with capacity building, evaluation and planning. It will provide a basis upon which the performance of the Committee can be evaluated.

While the Work Programme indicates the intention and commitment of the Committee to undertake the stated activities, it is also open for revision as mitigating factors and changes within the operational environment occur.

Schedule of Activities

1.1 Third meeting of the PAC

Date: Dec 17, 2015

Place: HoA Meeting Room

Outputs: Review and adoption of the Draft Work Programme of the PAC, for the First Session of the Eleventh House of Assembly.

Identify desired outputs for the meeting with the Chief Auditor.

Review of CPA-FCO-HOA PAC Capacity Building Programme and development of ancillary objectives as necessary by the Committee, so as to maximise benefit from the programme.

1.2 Fourth meeting of the PAC

Dates: January 28, 2016

Place: House of Assembly Meeting Room

Outputs: The Committee is provided with a comprehensive briefing on the upcoming Visit to Westminster.

1.3 Visit to Westminster

Date: 1-5 February, 2016

Place: Westminster, London

Outputs: Provide a comprehensive introduction of the role and functions of the PAC to the new Chair, Members and Officer of the PAC of the Anguilla House of Assembly.

Facilitate exchanges between the Anguillan PAC and the UK PAC, Audit Office, World Bank Parliamentary Strengthening Programme and other stakeholders with a view to cementing long-term supportive relationships.

Identify key challenges Anguilla faces in implementing international best practices related to financial scrutiny, and identify practical ways to implement them in an Anguillan context.

Identify key issues and topics to be explored further in the following PAC Workshop.

1.4 Fifth meeting of PAC and meeting with the Chief Auditor

Date: 15 February, 2016
Place: HoA Meeting Room

Outputs: Increase members understanding of how the Chief Auditor functions and how the Office of the Chief Auditor can support the work of the Committee.

Develop an understanding of what is best practice in Chief Auditor Public Accounts Committee relationships.

Review the "terms of engagement" of the Chief Auditor of Anguilla and identify areas for cooperation with the PAC

1.5 Sixth meeting of the PAC

Date: 26 February, 2016
Place: HoA Meeting Room

Outputs: A Review and Evaluation of the Meeting with the Chief Auditor is conducted.

A review and evaluation of the Visit to Westminster is conducted

A review of the upcoming PAC Workshop is conducted and the planned programme is adjusted as necessary.

1.6 Inquiry into the personal emoluments and other benefits, entitlements, allowances and perquisites paid or issued to the members and officer of the House of Assembly (HOA)

Date: March-May, 2016
Place: --

Outputs: An evaluation of the responsibilities and duties of the persons in question is made.

A review the personal emoluments and other benefits, entitlements, allowances and perquisites paid to the aforementioned Members and Officer of the HOA; to include the amount, classification and source of payment is conducted.

The personal emoluments of the aforementioned Members and Officer of the HOA are compared with that of two other Caribbean jurisdictions with similar sized legislatures, populations and economies.

A determination is made on the adequacy and appropriateness of the personal emoluments and other benefits, entitlements, allowances and perquisites paid or issued to the aforementioned Members and Officer of the HOA.

Recommendations are made where necessary, for the achievement of greater value for money in the payment or issuance of personal emoluments and other benefits, entitlements, allowances and perquisites.

The report of the Inquiry is submitted to the HOA on the findings of the Committee by end of the first session.

1.7 PAC Workshop

Date: 4-8 April, 2016 (tentative)

Place: TBD

Outputs: Conduct an informative and inclusive introduction for all stakeholders on the role of PACs internationally and in Anguilla.

Facilitate discussion and build relationships and understanding between the PAC and relevant civil society stakeholders such as the Audit Office, Account Officers, and Government departments on their role, and remit in relation to the PAC.

Encourage exchanges and support from 'link' Committee through the inclusion of a Chair and Clerk of a relevant PAC in workshop

Facilitate workshop and discussion to create framework for implementation of international best practice in oversight of the Executive an Anguillan context

1.8 Seventh meeting of PAC

Date: April 28

Place: HoA Conference room

Outputs A Review and Evaluation of PAC Workshop is conducted.

An Outline of the Report of the Committee to the HoA is agreed upon.

The objectives and outputs for the PAC Work Programme for the Second Session of the House of Assembly are outlined.

1.9 Submission of report of the PAC to the House of Assembly.

Date: May 26, 2016

Place: HoA Conference Room

Outputs The Report of the PAC on its activities for the first session is laid before the House.

The Work Programme of the PAC for the Second Session is laid before the House.