

In terms of the present Union Civile proposals, it is likely that the only obvious effect on the Committee may be a need to amend the wording of any reference to “spouse” or similar in the various Rules applying to the States.

I trust the above is helpful but please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

**A Nicolle, Principal Officer**

### **Treasury and Resources Department**

Thank you for your letter of 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2015, in respect of the above. Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying.

There are a number of areas within the Department’s mandate where work is underway that takes account of the Strategy. These include the following:

#### **States Property Services (SPS)**

As a matter of course, when undertaking refurbishment works for properties under its direct control, SPS always now considers the opportunities for adaptations to assist disabled people, such as wider door openings, improved visibility of building features for the visually impaired and so forth.

By way of example, the Department currently has planning applications for a disabled ramp for the Guernsey Information Centre and a new disabled accessible toilet at the Portelet kiosk. SPS has also undertaken an upgrade of a number of existing public conveniences for disabled people to ensure that they comply with Part M of the Environment Department’s Guernsey Technical Standards relating to accessibility for disabled people.

In addition, when supporting other Departments with their capital construction projects, SPS will work with them where necessary to ensure that proper consideration has been given to the inclusion of such adaptations within their plans.

#### **Information Technology Unit (ITU)**

ITU continues to follow the accessibility standards for websites set by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) which provides guidelines and testing to ensure that online content meets the needs of the visually impaired in terms of layout, contrast levels and compatibility with assistive technology, such as screen readers that allow websites to be navigated using a text-to-speech facility. The target is to achieve a minimum of the W3Cs “AA” standard for all online systems and websites provided for the public. Whilst this represents the second-highest tier of accessibility, W3Cs own guidelines state that *“It is not recommended that Level AAA conformance be required as a general policy for entire sites because it is not possible to satisfy all Level AAA success criteria for some content.”*

ITU also seeks to maintain accessibility standards through rigid adherence to the “HTML” standards that govern how webpages are constructed, as this also assists those developing assistive technology.

### Income Tax

You will be aware that the Department has embarked on an Income Tax Improvement Programme. As part of this initiative, a Customer Advisory Forum has been established and arrangements have been put in place to ensure that the interests of disabled people are represented through the membership of this body.

### The Hub

The customer services counters (cashiers/payments) on level 2 at Sir Charles Frossard House have been redesigned. The counters now incorporate split levels, with the lower one accommodating the needs of wheelchair users. Each counter now also accommodates those requiring hearing loop access.

In addition, the work that has been undertaken recently to refresh the recruitment portal included steps to ensure it works with all devices and browsers (including third party applications users may have installed such as magnifying and speaking pages applications).

### Procurement

All tenders for States’ contracts are conducted using standard procurement documentation. A default requirement has been incorporated within this documentation to require bidders to demonstrate compliance with the States’ Disability and Inclusion policies that may be applicable to the project concerned.

In addition, the Department’s standard procurement documentation that is available across a variety of sources, including The Bridge, is being updated in accordance with accessibility guidelines around font type, font size, layout, justification and alignment etc.

I trust that the above is helpful.

**Deputy G A St. Pier, Minister**