

ASPECT 1 – COMMUNITY FOCUS

Through carrying out their general and specific duties and responsibilities and their ability to exert wider influence, Departments should work for and with the Island's community and, where appropriate, exercise leadership within the community by maintaining effective arrangements to:-

- communicate and engage with relevant members of the Island's community (including business) to encourage active participation;
- demonstrate integrity in building effective relationships and partnerships with other public agencies and the private/voluntary sectors in delivering services appropriate to local needs;
- demonstrate openness through consulting with key stakeholders including service users;
- develop and articulate a clear and up to date vision and corporate strategy in response to community needs.

To meet these principles, a Department will need to:-

- put in place appropriate arrangements and channels of communications to encourage individuals and groups from the community to engage with, contribute to and participate in the work of the Department and have processes in place to ensure that these arrangements continue to work in practice;
- make an explicit commitment to openness in all of their dealings, subject only to the need to preserve confidentiality in those specific circumstances where it is proper and appropriate to do so, and by their actions and communications, deliver against that commitment;
- comply with the Government's Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (see extract below).

**Code of Practice on Access to Government Information**

“Open government is part of an effective democracy. Citizens must have adequate access to the information and analysis on which government business is based. Ministers and public servants have a duty to explain their policies, decisions, and actions to the public. Governments need, however, to keep some information confidential, and have a duty to protect the proper privacy of those with whom they deal.”

The above paragraph, which is fully consistent with the underlying governance principles of openness, integrity, and accountability, is the opening statement of the document “*Code of Practice on Access to Government Information*”, which was approved and issued by the Council of Ministers with effect from 1 September 1996.