



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

By:

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Update on Government Reform 2020

Friday, November 27, 2020

Good Morning **Mr. Speaker**, I am pleased this morning to provide this Honourable House with an update on the Government Reform initiative.

Mr. Speaker, I can advise today that responsibility for Government Reform now falls under the remit of the Minister of Legal Affairs and Constitutional Reform.

Honourable Members will recall that the Strategic Planning Framework was tabled in this Honourable House in May 2019. The planning framework serves as the starting point towards the building of a comprehensive roadmap to realise Government Reform.

The Plan highlights the **Current State** and anticipates a **Future State** towards a Vision of "***A future-forward Government for the people of Bermuda***" with the Purpose of "***Enhancing the lives of the people of Bermuda***".

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members will recall that our initial priorities were the "Information and Technology" components as well as the "People" components of the Plan. I am pleased to advise that significant steps have been taken to strengthen our public officers through enhanced training efforts as well as to improve and upgrade the Government's information technology infrastructure.

Simultaneously, the Government has started a process to assess the public value of existing services to determine which services will be offered in the future.

Mr. Speaker, the initial work started in FY19/20 with a series of Strategic Alignment workshops for the Executive Leadership Team and Management of the Public Service. Key performance indicators and metrics for all Departments were developed, set out in Business Plans, and ultimately included the Budget Book.

Mr. Speaker, in June 2020 the Management Services Section facilitated additional workshops. These workshops focused on assisting departments with further refining their mission, operating models, and opportunities for improvement within the context of business continuity and recovery following the COVID-19 business disruptions.

Mr. Speaker, these activities were an essential step towards the achievement of the Detailed Objective: **Develop and approve a 5-year Public Service Plan that requires the review and justification of services provided by Government by 2020.** The development of the Public Service Plan is expected to realize a future state where Government only delivers services that are justifiable and add value to society.

Mr. Speaker, the Government has already completed the pilot public value assessment. The initial step included the delivery of a reliable methodology and digital tool. A hybrid of the well-established APEX methodology was selected. The data gathering for the pilot took place as a part of the zero-based budgeting (ZBB) process for FY20/21. A public service value assessment was embedded in the digital forms completed during the planning period.

Mr. Speaker, the scoring model applied considers the population served, the significance of the service, and risk profile. The scores will be used to organise existing public services into five (5) categories of *Essential, Important, Needed, Desirable and Optional*.

Mr. Speaker, budget preparation for FY21/22 has commenced which means that the public value assessment is now in progress. Following analysis of the output, consultation on recommendations to inform the 5-year Public Service Plan will begin.

Meanwhile **Mr. Speaker**, the Government has been busy investing in the development of public officers. It is our intent that public officers' actions are driven by a customer service ethos and that the public service is driven by a culture of performance and accountability which is why "People capabilities" has been identified as a Government Reform priority as I indicated earlier. Progress towards the realization of these objectives is already underway.

Mr. Speaker, you would be aware that this Government embodies strong leadership and it is our intent to ensure that the public service is reflective of the capable, steady and proven leadership that Bermuda requires at this time.

Therefore, Government's Leadership Development programme was launched on 15th July, 2020 and a cohort of 46 public officers have been selected to participate in the programme.

Mr. Speaker, the programme, which will be managed by the Department of Employee and Organizational Development is designed to prepare senior officers to compete for Head of Department and Permanent Secretary posts as and when they become available.

There is also an extended programme that focuses on developing next-level leaders, as well as a management training path for those prime for further development of essential management skills.

Mr. Speaker, to further support the development of public officers, a centralised online platform for training course registration, accessible to all Government employees is now available. The system eliminates the silos and makes all training available to all segments of the Service which has not been the case historically.

Mr. Speaker, given the diversity of career opportunities, areas of specialization, and training opportunities within the Service, work continues with the application developer to include on-line registration for specialised courses offered by all Departments.

This centralization is aligned with the human resources amalgamation efforts currently underway bringing together the historic twelve Human Resource units across the Service, creating efficiencies and eliminating duplication. Much of the organizational development work to amalgamate the units and departments will be completed by the end of this fiscal.

Mr. Speaker, establishing the public service as an employer of choice, where talented individuals are rewarded fairly and valued over the long term is an equally important part of our efforts. Therefore, the existing rewards and recognition (financial and non-financial) initiatives throughout the public service have been identified and collated for assessment. Also, a Public Service Excellence Award programme has been designed with the aim of recognising, appreciating, and celebrating outstanding performance.

The Rewards Task Force is currently engaged in stakeholder consultation related to this and other rewards programmes.

Mr. Speaker, implementation of a rewards programme requires that we achieve the **Detailed Objective: 100% of public officers have completed annual performance appraisals.** I am therefore pleased to report that the Human Resource Management Information System (HRIMS) has been expanded to include a module for the digital completion and submission of Performance Appraisals. The expectation is a system which can be applied universally to assess the performance of **all** public officers at all levels and belonging to all collective bargaining units.

Mr. Speaker, the standard performance appraisal module in the HRIMS went live in October 2020 for forward job planning. In April 2021 performance appraisals for

BPSU staff will be completed and submitted in the HRIMS and it is expected that other areas of the Service will be transitioned to the new digital system thereafter.

Mr. Speaker, implementation of this digital performance management tool supports both our efforts to develop and recognize the talent within the Service as well as our efforts to achieve 100% paperless processing by 2023.

Mr. Speaker, following the roll-out of the Government reform planning framework last year, a Paperless Task Force was established to coordinate the activities of the relevant Government Ministries and Departments to make government services available to members of the public using the internet and mobile technologies.

A Paperless Plan was developed to facilitate the creation of a modern public administration, which is efficient, professional, and geared towards providing quality public services that address the needs and expectations of the public and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, while the Paperless initiative was already in channel, COVID-19 has been the catalyst for digital transformation, in particular, the Government had to transform services quicker than expected allowing us to complete the testing phase of the project ahead of schedule. During the period of the lockdown, the Paperless Team delivered thirteen (13) digital forms and applications to support COVID-19 control measures.

Mr. Speaker, the pandemic has led to almost all government departments making progress towards digital transformation.

In accordance with the paperless plan however, approximately twenty customer-facing Government Departments are now scheduled for Phase One of the Government-wide digitalisation effort to transform, in the first instance, customer-facing forms.

DotNetNuke (DNN) software is being used to achieve the objectives of digitalisation of services. A DNN roadmap has been developed that provides a blueprint for action that aligns digital initiatives with short and longer-term objectives.

Mr. Speaker, the forms initiative is designed to signal change. “Paperless 2023” is a complex initiative and a framework for a comprehensive approach has been set out.

Notwithstanding the use of a core-team that has already been driving this initiative, training for super-users throughout the Service is scheduled to commence in the first quarter to the New Year and will continue for a three-month period. The training will provide knowledge of building forms within the DNN content management system.

Mr. Speaker, super-users will learn best practices using software to build forms and basic applications, and will have the chance for hands-on application of new skills. The training course will highlight the new features available in DNN and how to optimise day-to-day tasks to include privacy, security and access control. Once Super-users complete training, they will provide support to the overall digitalisation initiative.

Mr. Speaker, through this training effort we are building internal capacity and preparing our employees for the technological shift in the delivery of public services. Overall our paperless activities are designed to strike an appropriate balance between an internal focus on efficiency and effectiveness and an external focus on creating value to society.

Mr. Speaker, this status update is a mere snapshot of implementation activities associated with the Government Reform initiative. Much has been accomplished during the period since tabling the Government Reform Strategic Planning Framework. The Government is acting on its plan with intent.

The Government has prioritized development of its People, who are our public officers, and Platform, which is our information technology, while simultaneously

taking the necessary steps to undertake a value assessment of all public services with a view to using the data to make sound data driven decisions.

I look forward to providing a further update following the outcome of the public service value assessment and expanding on the impact that its results will likely have on the delivery of public services in the future.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.