

THE STATES OF DELIBERATION
of the
ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

11th December, 2025

Proposition No. P.2024/64

Requête

The Establishment of a Committee for Housing

AMENDMENT

Proposed by: Deputy H L de Sausmarez

Seconded by: Deputy H J R Soulsby

To delete the original propositions and substitute therefor:

- “1. To direct the Policy & Resources Committee, in consultation with the Committee *for the* Environment & Infrastructure, the Committee *for* Employment & Social Security and the public-private Housing Forum, to establish before the end of this political term a Housing Commission tasked with facilitating and driving forward the delivery of housing in the Island, working with (inter alia) landowners, developers, investors and financiers, the construction industry, the Guernsey Development Agency, the Guernsey Housing Association and the States of Guernsey, and to review the effectiveness of the Housing Commission before the end of the 2025-29 political term.”

Rule 4(1) Information

- (a) The proposition contributes to the States’ objectives by supporting the policy and operational delivery of housing, one of the key Government Work Plan objectives.
- (b) In preparing the proposition, consultation has taken place with industry stakeholders, the Committee *for the* Environment & Infrastructure, the Committee *for* Employment & Social Security and relevant senior officers, and a draft shared with the Policy & Resources Committee.
- (c) The proposition has been submitted to His Majesty’s Procureur for advice on any other legal or constitutional implications.
- (d) There are no financial implications to the States of carrying the proposal into effect as the foreseen cost for 2025 onwards can be met from existing Committee *for the* Environment & Infrastructure budget.

Explanatory note

The creation of an additional committee of the States as proposed in the Requête would increase the size, cost, complexity and bureaucracy of government, add to the States' administrative burden, and further draw the responsibility for the delivery of housing into government and away from the private sector.

This amendment proposes an alternative approach, which has evolved from the meetings of the public-private Housing Forum and other stakeholder discussions, and which will streamline government and improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of meeting the Island's housing needs. This amendment proposes establishing a Housing Commission – a small, agile group of people with relevant experience, skills and expertise and with the necessary autonomy and delegated authority to achieve the States' objectives and deliver housing more expeditiously, with a chair or lead who would become the Island's Housing Delivery Champion.

There are some functions relating to housing – especially around the delivery of new units of housing – that would be more effective outside of government, and this amendment proposes the immediate establishment in this political term of a Housing Commission to take these functions on.

Unlike the original propositions in the Requête, which suggests it will require a minimum of £310k of additional funding per annum on top of the transfer of existing staff and budgets, this amendment does not create additional cost. The Committee *for the Environment & Infrastructure* can redirect up to £100,000 per annum from its existing budget from 2025 onwards to meet the operational costs of the Housing Commission as needed. Funding as needed for any additional projects over time would in the first instance be sought from reprioritised general revenue funding if it could not be raised through external partners.

In addition, significantly less officer time would be required to reduce the size of government by establishing a Housing Commission than would be required to increase the size of government through establishing and staffing an additional principal Committee.

Like the Guernsey Development Agency (the GDA), the Housing Commission will be established by the Policy & Resources Committee as a Limited by Guarantee company (LBG), remaining at arm's length from government but taking a strategic direction from the States – and reporting back to the States – through the Policy & Resources Committee and the Committee *for the Environment & Infrastructure*.

The Housing Commission will be responsible for implementing the States' strategic direction on housing by facilitating development by private sector developers and social enterprises and, as appropriate, by partnering with other parties in delivery. It will function as a delivery vehicle, proposals for which form part of the Guernsey Housing Plan. As such, the Housing Commission could establish commercial partnerships and work with developers and the community to deliver housing projects.

The establishment of an arm's-length Housing Commission, headed by a non-political Housing Delivery Champion, will provide a single focal point for enabling the delivery of housing in the Island, bringing together representatives of, and expertise drawn from, developers and the construction sector as well as funding agencies, investors and government. It will provide the certainty and stability required for establishing new models of housing provision (such as Build-to-Rent) and major housebuilding projects, which often don't fit neatly into political terms, facilitating better co-ordinated development.

The Housing Commission will be fully accountable to the States, which will continue to set the strategic direction and objectives. As a form of social enterprise, while it will be focused on the completion and delivery of housing, any profits would be invested back into the delivery of housing to meet the Island's needs.

A Housing Commission's mandate will include:

- A role as a delivery vehicle to directly provide new housing, and work with other parties (such as developers, housing associations and investors) to facilitate and drive forward housing delivery.
- Liaising between industry and the States to further facilitate housing development and remove barriers to development, as well as identifying sites.
- Facilitating joint ventures between private market and Affordable Housing market providers, for example, and to encourage specific offerings (e.g. key worker housing; tenures suitable for older people; housing to support the economy).
- Being a conduit for investment and funding options – including Build-to-Rent projects, for example.
- Providing information, signposting and support for housing developers and the construction sector, providing a single, streamlined and effective route into government.
- Working with the States, the Guernsey Housing Association and the Guernsey Development Agency to prioritise infrastructure delivery in the Island that will support and enable housing delivery.

The idea of a Housing Commission was proposed at the Housing Forum which includes developers, the construction industry and business representative bodies. Its key advantages can be summarised as follows:

- It reduces rather than increases the size and role of government, delegating authority for housing delivery to an expert and capable external body which would be better geared than government for housing delivery.
- It will streamline the role of government, which will rightly retain responsibility for strategic direction and the setting of strategic objectives, against which the Housing

Commission will be held to account. However, policymaking can be informed by the more expert input from the Housing Commission.

- It will result in faster, more efficient and joined up delivery.
- It will be better value for money, requiring fewer resources in terms of headcount and money for the States in comparison to keeping all of these functions in-house.
- It will provide an effective conduit between industry and government.
- A group of people recruited for having the relevant skills and expertise will be more effective than the establishment of another Committee of the States, and the members of the Housing Commission will have greater credibility.
- Like the GDA, a Housing Commission could provide the kind of continuity that spans across political terms, so would not be buffeted and constrained by the political process and could concentrate instead on delivering what really matters – new housing.