

**THE STATES OF DELIBERATION  
of the  
ISLAND OF GUERNSEY**

**17<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**Proposition No. P.2024/55**

**Policy & Resources Committee**

**THE MATRIMONIAL CAUSES (BAILIWICK OF GUERNSEY) LAW, 2022 (COMMENCEMENT)  
ORDINANCE, 2024**

**AMENDMENT**

Proposed by: Deputy G A St Pier

Seconded by: Deputy T L Bury

To delete the proposition and replace with:

“Whether they are of the opinion:-

1. To approve the draft Ordinance entitled "The Matrimonial Causes (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 2022 (Commencement) Ordinance, 2024" and to direct that the same shall have effect as an Ordinance of the States.
2. To direct the Policy & Resources Committee to give consideration to raising the minimum age of marriage from 16 to 18, as part of any future review of the Marriage (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 2020.”

**Rule 4(1) Information**

- a) Proposition 2 contributes to the States’ objectives and policy plans, having regard to Guernsey’s international obligations, particularly in advance of the next round of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child reporting in 2030, which is also the United Nation’s pledge date to have ended child marriage.
- b) In preparing the proposition, consultation has been undertaken with the Policy & Resources Committee who, it is understood, do not oppose the amendment.
- c) The proposition has been submitted to His Majesty’s Procureur for advice on any legal or constitutional implications.
- d) There are no direct financial implications if the proposition is successful, but the work will, in due course, need to be prioritised.

### **Explanatory note**

Subsequent to the approval of The Marriage (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 2020, Royal Assent was given in April 2022 to the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022 to raise the age of marriage in England and Wales from 16 to 18. This was treated primarily as a child protection issue.

Whilst there is no evidence presently of forced marriages for children under the age of 18 in the Bailiwick, post-Brexit we are experiencing rapid and significant changes in the demographic composition of our population. It would be irresponsible to assume that the pressures which exist in some communities elsewhere for young people to marry before the age of 18 – and which drove the change in the minimum age in the UK as a child protection issue – will not in time impact our own community. The premise of the amendment is that it would be more responsible to plan to give consideration to this before, not after such an issue has become a problem locally – and in any event, in advance of the next round of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child reporting in 2030.