



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

STATES OF DELIBERATION

OF THE

ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

HANSARD

Royal Court House, Guernsey, Thursday, 12th December 2024

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Present:

Sir R. J. McMahon, Esq., Bailiff and Presiding Officer

Law Officers

M. M. E. Pullum, K.C. (H.M. Procureur)

People's Deputies

S. E. Aldwell	A. Kazantseva-Miller
C. P. A Blin	C. J. Le Tissier
A. H. Brouard	J. P. Le Tocq
Y. Burford	D. J. Mahoney
T. L. Bury	A. D. S. Matthews
A. Cameron	L. J. McKenna
D. de G. de Lisle	N. G. Moakes
H. L. de Sausmarez	R. C. Murray
A. C. Dudley-Owen	V. S. Oliver
J. F. Dyke	C. N. K. Parkinson
S. P. Fairclough	R. G. Prow
S. J. Falla	L. C. Queripel
P. T. R. Ferbrache	P. J. Roffey
A. Gabriel	G. A. St Pier
J. A. B. Gollop	A. W. Taylor
M. A. J. Helyar	L. S. Trott
N. R. Inder	S. P. J. Vermeulen

Representatives of the Island of Alderney

Alderney Representatives S. Roberts and E. A. J. Snowdon

The Clerk to the States of Deliberation

S. M. D. Ross, Esq. (States' Greffier)

Absent at the Evocation

*Deputy Haskins (indisposé); Deputy Leadbeater (relevé à 11h);
Deputy Meerveld (relevé à 9h 33); Deputy Soulsby (relevée à 11h)*

Business transacted

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States of Deliberation

The States met at 9.30 a.m.

THE BAILIFF *in the Chair*

PRAYERS

The States' Greffier

EVOCATION

Billet d'État XXII

8. The Government Reform (2024) Requête – Debate continued

Article 8

The States are asked to decide:–

Whether, after consideration of the Requête entitled 'The Government Reform (2024) requête dated 23rd September 2024 they are of the opinion:

- 1. To approve the reduction of the number of Members of the States' Assembly by 10, down to 28 Guernsey Deputies in total, such reduction to be implemented in time for the general election to be held on the 18th June 2025; and*
- 2. If Proposition 1 is approved, to direct the States' Assembly and Constitution Committee to return to the States as soon as possible and in any event not later than April 2025, with a policy letter containing such consequential and other recommendations as to committee membership, representative numbers, rule changes and other considerations as it may consider necessary.*
- 3. To direct the preparation of such legislation as may be necessary to give effect to the above decisions.*

The States' Greffier: Billet d'État XXII, Article 8, the continuation of the debate.

5 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Meerveld, you have just arrived, would you like to be relevé?

Deputy Meerveld: Yes please, sir.

10 **The Bailiff:** Okay, we will take you first.
Deputy Prow.

Deputy Prow: Thank you, sir.

15 Well, I have to say so far, sir, I am actually enjoying this debate. We started off around a motion presented by a former President of SACC and we had a bit of fun at his expense around his command of Rule 24. But I just would actually mention that that SAC Committee under that

President, whether we like Island-wide voting or not, delivered on a referendum from the people and they did it in short order. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Sir, this is the more not less debate.

I also very much enjoyed Deputy Gollop's opening. Deputy Gollop, always interesting, always intelligent, always balanced and, perhaps, lessons for all of us in there, sir. Indeed, sir, he often has an argument with himself and we have to wait right to the end (*Laughter*) to see what the outcome is. We always get a helpful history lesson and some political geography.

So, turning to the thrust of the amendment and the plea for more, I was struck when he was giving his speech to the fact that we had just previously had a States of Election and if you look around a packed Assembly Chamber you see that we actually do have a very large number of elected representatives in Guernsey and, I think, that actually does provide some of the diversity and input across society.

Perhaps the question is how they are deployed and perhaps for another debate, which I have craved for all this political term around Government reform, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) the role of the Douzaines and the Constables and the roles of the parish. Perhaps their roles could be expanded as they are in the UK around local government arrangements.

So I think one of the points that Deputy Gollop has made, and it is a very valid point, is around diversity of representation and democracy. We do have a local government system and, as I say, perhaps that is something we should bear in mind as we move forward. It is about how we, perhaps, organise our system.

Deputy Gollop spoke about other parliaments (*Interjection*) but interestingly in his opening he did not particularly mention the other Crown Dependencies. Now, I think this is interesting, what we have in the Crown Dependencies and in our Crown Dependency, actually, is very precious. We are a very small Island jurisdiction of 65,000 people, we need to maintain that. We do not want to end up in a similar situation as, say, the Isle of Wight.

We really need to look at the other Crown Dependencies who, actually, in perhaps economic ways are, in fact, our competitors and we need, as a Crown Dependency, to punch above our weight and we also need to be fleet of foot. Again, returning to the States of Election where we make a very specific decision, if you expand that out and everybody in the Chamber who was elected had five minutes to speak, we would still be debating now. So, this goes to my point around how we have to concentrate on the main issues and be fleet of foot.

Sir, I have said this before and I say this again, my favourite parliamentary system across the Crown Dependencies is the Isle of Man. The House of Keys has 24 elected members – yes – 24, four less than the number proposed in the Requête. My very good friend, Deputy Gollop, will rightly point out that the legislative functions contained in our legislative agenda items, and we have just been through those yesterday, so those on the order paper are conducted by a separate, small and mainly unelected Legislative Council, except for some Members of the House of Keys who sit on both.

The point is that they, I believe, have a very successful democracy and are a successful Government. So, sir, I cannot support an amendment which looks to increase the number of Deputies.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Burford.

Deputy Burford: Thank you, sir.

I am instinctively in favour of increasing the number of Deputies but paradoxically, perhaps, I cannot support this amendment. Deputy Gollop made some very good points yesterday including that a previous reduction of seven Members did not appear to yield improvements. Indeed, I think, most if not all of those who were present before 2016 would bear that out. It has resulted in greater divisions and potentially in a reduction of the quality of debate.

What is needed is a sufficient pool of elected Members from which to be able to draw enough people with the skills and drive to sit on the Committees, do the work and ask the questions and I

believe that pool is, potentially, higher than 38. In any case, it is not any lower. Now, this can cost more but we would do well to remember that the additional cost could be recouped 100 times over by having the overall skills in the Assembly to be able to make the right decisions or, equally, avoid the wrong ones.

I appreciate that Deputy Gollop is proposing keeping the overall pay bill the same but the principle holds and following on from what Deputy Prow was just talking about, the other Crown Dependencies. Interestingly, there is detailed academic research that has been undertaken on the appropriate number of representatives a country should have, whatever the size of it, and, after very detailed research, it came to the conclusion that the figure approximates to the cube root of the population.

Now, remarkably, in Guernsey's case, the cube root of 64,000, thereabouts, is 40. Interestingly, that formula also suggests Jersey should have around 47 Members, it has 49 and it suggests that Alderney should have 12 and it has 10. So, pretty much all of the Channel Islands are exactly where they should be and Guernsey is exactly where it should be based on that.

But on to the reasons why I will be voting against this amendment; there are three reasons and all are equally important to me. Firstly, any proposal to change the number of States' Members should, for good governance, be done as part of a holistic carefully researched and widely consulted process, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) not on the back of an amendment.

Secondly, this Island voted in a referendum in 2018 to elect 38 Deputies on one day in one Island-wide constituency and it would be extremely poor form if this Assembly were to override that binding decision on the back of an amendment, whether that is to increase or decrease numbers.

Lastly, the Venice Commission's Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters, which is also referenced in the Election Experts Mission report to Guernsey, states that:

The Venice Commission recommends that the fundamental elements of electoral law should not be open to amendment less than one year before an election.

We are a mere six months away. So, as attracted as I am to the proposal I cannot, in good conscience, make a decision that flies in the face of these three strong reasons I have outlined and so I will be voting against this amendment.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Murray.

Deputy Murray: Thank you, sir.

I am going to make no apology for being controversial, I think the Requête itself is controversial and I think that is what sometimes we back away from because we are looking for this myth of consensus. So I will be fairly specific. I am conscious that this amendment is proposed by the Father of the House, an individual who has seen a lot come and go in this very room and consequently speaking academically, at least, one would imagine there to be some wisdom attributed to the thinking behind it.

Well, despite being a Member of this Assembly for only a little over four years I have to say, sir, that I can find absolutely no evidence whatsoever of any wisdom or, indeed, any rationale for the proposal to increase our number by seven, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) regardless of whether there is an attendant cost to the exercise or not.

We are not told in the amendment why seven more Members would provide benefit to this functioning of Government or even in this Assembly other than it would appear that the various Assemblies that sat for 16 years from 2000 were, presumably, more effective than the 40 we now limit ourselves to. I say presumably because we are not given any particular explanation at all for that. That is a comment on the particulars, or rather the lack of particulars, of the content of this

amendment, which, I have to say, seems more of a whim than a considered judgement of an attempt to improve matters.

120 Deputy Gollop, in his address, draws parallels with some other jurisdictions, a refrain often heard in this place and for the life of me I fail to understand why anybody would wish to compare the functioning of the States of Guernsey with anywhere else, based on the number of their administration as a criteria.

125 But Deputy Gollop did introduce another aspect which he felt warranted an increase in numbers, that of representation; specifically DEI. **(A Member: Yes)** No. Apart from the obvious risk of tokenisation and I believe that to be a real risk in a sub-scale environment, such as ourselves, and in a democracy such a philosophy is likely to lead to or the overarching necessity, in my opinion at least, of merit and competency in a Deputy regardless of their stripe.

130 I might point out, by adopting the Deputy's own penchant for drawing parallels elsewhere that the identity politics crusade, initiated 15 years ago under the Obama Administration, has now singularly failed in the recent US election, not just marginally but demonstrably. Sir, it is patently obvious to me that it is the apparent lack of thought that has been put into this amendment that underlines the necessity for substantive change proposed in the Requête.

135 There is a pervading belief, evidenced by some Members who are, shall we say, survivors of more than one political term, that we can realistically look to the past in order to address the new and unique challenges we now face as a small sub-scale jurisdiction with both an international reach and an international interest in our affairs.

140 Back in 2000, we were still throwing off significant amounts of surplus revenue. We had not yet been confronted with the biggest threat to the functioning of the world's financial system since the great depression. Nor had we experienced our response in terms of Zero-10 and its necessary adjustments. **(A Member: Hear, hear.)** We knew nothing of COVID or how to survive it. Brexit was unheard of or its impact upon us. AI was just an obscure acronym and there were no energy concerns or expectations of a European war.

145 My point, sir, is that we are not living in the world of 2000, not even in the world of 2016, **(A Member: Hear, hear.)** the period referenced by this amendment. There is no rationale given to presume that having the same amount of Members that pertained then could navigate the types of challenges we now face or are still recovering from. The world has and is changed.

150 But, sir, in my opinion our structures and our methods of government have not evolved sufficiently to meet those challenges. We need decision making at speed. **(Several Members: Hear, hear.)** In fact, one of the advantages that we are supposed to have as an economy is that we can be fleet of foot, something mentioned several times this morning by Deputy ... Prow. I beg your pardon.

155 Frankly, the reverse is far truer. This Assembly format of 40 cannot prioritise. We talk of consensus, but what we really mean is a number of 21 agreeing, which is democracy in action but as is often the case, that usually means the other disaffected 19 are likely to come back and attempt to overturn challenging decisions.

160 Consensus requires substantive majority, such as we often achieve on a Friday afternoon on future business, when we are all exasperated from endlessly debating badly conceived amendments like this one. *(Interjection)* Without doubt, sir, regardless of the number of Deputies who sit in this place, if their calibre is limited or their understanding of matters insufficient or they have not done the necessary research to make sound judgement, then there will be simply no improvement for Islanders who, clearly, have lost confidence in us and in Government more broadly and it will remain poorly served and increasingly distrustful of this as an institution.

165 This can only be addressed in the means by which the electorate choose their representatives and whilst Island-wide voting had been an attempt to produce a wider selection of skills and experience and Deputies, we know for a fact that fielding 108 candidates for 38 places proved overwhelming for many voters.

If we now intend to have 45 available spaces *(Interjection)* it is not inconceivable that many more individuals will be throwing their respective hats into the ring except, of course, that in the

wisdom of the proposer and seconded the considerably reduced financial recompense may well discourage many of the more competent contenders to even consider standing at all.

This, sir, is an ill-conceived amendment that I would suggest will magnify the difficulties this Assembly already faces in bringing focus and priority to our decisions and I strongly recommend the Assembly completely rejected.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

As Members of the Assembly will have seen, this amendment calls for an additional seven Members of the States to bring the total number to 45, but it is entirely cost neutral in respect of salary cost by means of a proportional salary reduction for each Member from just over £43,000 to £36,341 at today's values. Effectively an increase in numbers but paid for by a pay cut for individual Members.

Sir, as we are in the festive season, the first question I would ask is: is this Assembly of turkeys ready to vote for Christmas? And it seems likely that the rhetorical answer would be no. I do not think people would instinctively vote for a pay cut, especially if Members think of their own circumstances first and miss the big picture: how this Assembly does its business and how we represent the people of the Island.

Sir, I often hear the argument that the States ran better when States' Members were unpaid. Now, there are many counter-arguments to that slightly rose-tinted view of the past, for example we have much higher pressure on budgets and the demographic challenge of an ageing population that simply were not present in days gone by.

But one important aspect in support of the view, though, is that there were more Members in the Assembly of that era. Later on in this Meeting another requête calls for a separate Housing Committee, in doing so, it would be de-integrating a separate function that had been rolled up and amalgamated across several States' Committees in past changes.

There is a strong argument that separate, more focused Committees with a clearly defined purpose can be more effective than political functions that have been carved out and distributed amongst a group of other Committees. Perhaps that is one explanation for why the States' Housing Committees of old were able to press on and build the States' housing needed in their era and provide dedicated political oversight to their maintenance and upkeep.

In the past, numerous single purpose Committees existed, or Committees with a very clearly defined function, that were able to dedicate their attention toward a specific task. The movement recently has all been in the other direction, to combine functions into large super-committees with very broad mandates covering a wide variety of functions.

In fact, we heard earlier on in the debate yesterday, sir, about the difficulty of having Arts funding rolled up with Education, Sports & Culture and that is one example of many where functions that were previously in separate Committees have been amalgamated into a single Committee. This amendment can be a step to reverse that trend, to return more towards a structure where Members are more able to specialise and more able to dedicate their attention to areas of policy that are of importance for the Island.

Turning back to the level of salary for individual Members, I do not agree that going all the way back to unpaid, almost voluntary, States' Members would be useful in today's world. In the past, the Island could draw on the talents of local business owners, including horticultural growers and the like in a way that would not be possible in today's world where so much of our industry is part of larger UK and European organisations. We would end up with an Assembly where only the retired or those wealthy enough that they could have the means to support themselves, could be Members. That would not be a good outcome for fairness or broad representation of ordinary Islanders.

220 But a pay level of just over £36,000 proposed in this amendment is a good middle ground. It
would continue to allow people from all walks of life to support themselves without favouring or
being exclusively an option for the well-off. I would, personally, be willing to make that sacrifice in
terms of salary if it meant that we could get an Assembly that is more focused and dedicated to
225 solving the issues the Island faces. In my view, politics should be approached in the spirit of
service. It is something that people should put themselves forward to do in the interest of serving
the Island and trying to make it a better place and certainly not as a career move.

In my time in the States, I have found that one of the hardest tasks is introducing new ideas. It
is easy enough to support an existing policy and it is not too much trouble to oppose one, but
bringing a new idea is genuinely hard work. There just is not the support in the form of political
230 parties or professional policy functions of Committees to develop new ideas or to take a different
approach.

In my view, reducing the number of Members would diminish the States further. It would
become, simply, an executive body able to vote *Pour* or *Contre* on any pre-prepared options
presented, but with little other function. The role of individual Members reduced to something
235 like a political cheerleader or a mascot. A facade fronting up ideas that come from within the
organisation to present to the public, rather than being able to develop or create new ideas and
bring them to a point where there is a proposal to vote for. If we want the next Assembly to be
one that can pull in both new blood and new ideas and have the dedication to drive those ideas
forward with new proposals, then make the decision today to support this amendment.

240 Sir, that was going to be the end of my speech but I did think that I would add a short analogy,
because I have a lot of respect for Deputy Helyar and what he was trying to achieve with his
amendment to reduce numbers, but I think it is just a failure of perception to perceive the
Assembly as if it is a single team.

If the Assembly were a single team and there is a lot of study, I come from a software
245 engineering background and going back a long time there has been a lot of research looking at
how teams function and the number of members in a team. There was a canonical book called
The Mythical Man Month, which was a collection of essays from software engineering from 1975,
which talked about the problems of scaling and the problems of how as you add members of a
team you actually can see decreases in productivity because as the number of members of a team
250 increases you actually get more time spent by individual members communicating with every
other member. So you have a linear increase in the number of people but an exponential increase
in the amount of communication that each member has to do with every other member.

So, I can see it just seems like a simple failure to say, well, if we reduce the Members, we would
reduce that amount of communication and we would, therefore, get more productive results. But I
255 think that is just a mistake and Deputy Prow also mentioned that really it is the structure that is
important and all the direction, certainly in software engineering around the world has really been
about how to structure teams so that they can scale more effectively and one of the most recent
examples is to structure your technical product into micro-services so that you can have small
dedicated teams of between five and nine members that work on a specific area and have defined
260 methods of communication between each other.

That sort of structure in the States is where, I think, we currently could improve. We have this
structure where we have these large Committees, if we had smaller more dedicated Committees,
as had been the case in the past, we might be able to achieve more productivity and that is why I
would support this amendment, sir, and ask other Members to support it too.

265 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Roffey.

Deputy Roffey: Thank you, sir.

270 I am not a turkey, (*Interjection*) I have no vested interest in how many seats there will be
available at this election or what Members will be paid in the next Assembly, so I hope I can look

at this with some objectivity. Frankly, I thought that Deputy Murray was rather harsh on Deputy Gollop. I stood yesterday to allow this to be debated, not because I am going to vote for it but because I think it is a perfectly plausible concept that we should have more Deputies rather than fewer. It is perfectly intellectually justifiable and I actually think that Deputy Gollop put forward quite a convincing and well-argued case in his opening.

He seemed to me to speak with far more sincerity, to be frank, than the opening of the Requête itself; far more conviction. I think sincerity is the wrong word, but conviction. However, I think he is wrong in several respects. He harked back to the larger Assemblies in the past and where he is absolutely right is, please Members, do not think there is some kind of correlation between the size of the Assembly and how much infighting that goes on. **(Several Members: Hear, hear.)**

The first three Assemblies I was in all had 57 Members and while there were some spectacular individual spats between Members, I think the degree of organised factional warfare was actually far less – **(A Member: Hear, hear.)** it did not really exist back then. So, I do not think there is that correlation and, therefore, that argument attached to the Requête, which we will get on to later, I do not think holds water.

However, nor do I think we should just look back then and look at numbers. Yes, there were 57 Members in the first three Assemblies I sat on but it was a different age and politicians were different creatures. In those Assemblies I would say, at least, half of the Members did not do that much politics.

They grew their tomatoes, they ran their hotels and for two or three days a month they would spend a couple of afternoons or mornings on a Committee that they were on and come in here for a couple of days and that was that. *(Laughter)* These days, and I blame the public, I can blame the public *(Laughter)* because I am not standing for election, I would not advise any of you lot to do it, but I can blame the public, they should demand that we are almost full time politicians or, at very least, busy part time, where they say, where is he, he has disappeared, I have not heard from her.

I think that even 40 semi full-time politicians smacks me as rather over Government for a community of our size. I think it does generate work because we have to be doing something and, therefore, we are creating work for each other. So, personally, I think there is some case for a modest reduction, but we will get on to that in the main debate and I agree, very much, with Deputy Burford, you have to be careful about the process to arrive at that, these are not light decisions to be made on the fly.

Deputy Gollop's strongest argument was about better representation if we had 45 and a more diverse Assembly. Sir, I went back home last night and looked at the press report from the day after the last election and looked at the next seven people down. I am not actually sure that this Assembly would have been that much more diverse.

When I was looking at it, I also looked at the 10 Members that came in at the bottom and, interestingly, at least one, I think Deputy Moakes has actually signed this Requête, obviously he does not feel he should be here. *(Laughter)* Well, I think that at last unity has broken out because, I think, they are probably right.

The other thing that confuses me slightly about this amendment is the bit about pay. We have not a blind idea of what the level of pay is going to be for Deputies in the next Assembly. We are awaiting an independent report on what people should be paid. Actually, I think we have waited slightly too long because if there are people out there in careers who are wanting to stand and do not know whether they will be able to afford to stand, they should probably know by now what quantum of remuneration is going to be available in the next Assembly. But as we have no idea what Deputies will be paid in the Assembly of 2025 to 2029 how can we say that we can reduce it proportionally? Reduce what? That does really, slightly confuse me.

So, sir, I think there were plausible arguments well put forward but, on balance, I think that the days of the large Assemblies, even though they had some strengths, I think, we have moved on from there.

I have to say they did have a lot of strengths. I think Deputy Murray is wrong to say that they never had to face the sort of challenges that we have had today. When I came in, in the early 1980s, it was at a crisis point financially. The tomato industry was spiralling downwards, disappearing and the finance industry was, yes, it was just incipient, but really had not come.

The blood on the floor of the Budget debates and poor old Deputy Wheadon lost his seat because he proposed closing the Forest School and all because of trying to ... sorry. I think large Assemblies did prove their worth in those days but I think that things have moved on, I do. I think the complexity of some issues, I do agree with Deputy Murray, has probably increased but the main thing is that we are demanded to be pretty much semi full-time politicians by the people of Guernsey and I think 57 of those or even 47, with respect, would be far too many.

The Bailiff: Deputy Le Tocq.

Deputy Le Tocq: Thank you, sir.

I will not be long because Deputy Roffey has stolen most of my thunder. I was going to start by saying this nostalgia is not what it used to be (*Laughter*) because, I think, some of the speeches I have heard today, including some of Deputy Roffey's I have to say, are sort of looking back with rose tinted spectacles at the past.

I think the problems we have had in this Assembly and maybe in the last Assembly, I certainly experienced in my first Assembly, which was an Assembly of 57 Members back in 2000. There was, we used to refer to it as, bunker mentality. Certainly, there was probably, at least, a dozen bunkers in the Assembly and it was not easy. There were personalities and clashes and all those sorts of things.

Which comes back to the point I was making, initially, on behalf of P&R at the start, that I do not think the numbers really make a lot of difference to that. I know that there are some in the Assembly that feel that they do, but I really do not think they do. I think there are other implications, for example, back in the first Assembly that I was in with 57 Members the vast majority of us were working as well. We had jobs to do, admittedly, mine was only one day a week and it was a Sunday (*Laughter*) and I was probably working illegally, actually, on a Sunday but, nevertheless, we all had other things to do.

I was talking with Deputy Dyke on the way down here and my experience, both in terms of that first term and in the past through my father, who was a Douzenier for many years and, therefore, got involved, the experience was that far more was delegated to our Civil Service and to, indeed, the Bailiff's Office and the Crown Officers to come up with policy and to do the work that we are expected to do, and rightly so, today back in those days than is the case today.

As a result of that we do need to look at this in the round and, therefore, an amendment that just focuses on some figure that, apparently, will make things far better, I think, is quite wrong. I do not think that has any weight. In fact, I note that Deputy Burford was talking about this magic cube root figure, she did not mention Sark (*Laughter*) which, I think, the number of Conseillers in the Chief Pleas is probably well over double the amount it should be, but we do not want to bring any disrepute onto Sark at the moment.

There is not anything magic about this, I really do not believe so. The numbers are the numbers and we need to make it work. We need to get, obviously, and encourage the right candidates to stand and there are, therefore, other implications to that. I cannot support this amendment even though, like Deputy Roffey, I do believe Deputy Gollop gave it a good opening argument from that perspective. But really, I do not think this is what we should be concentrating our time on and, therefore, I cannot support it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Queripel

Deputy Queripel: Thank you, sir.

375 In his opening speech Deputy Gollop said his rationale behind wanting to increase the number of Deputies was because he was concerned about the issue of under representation in the Assembly and he focused specifically on women, young people and disabled people. So, in effect, what he was saying was if we reduce the salary of a Deputy then that will attract those representatives to court. But does Deputy Gollop have any proof that that will be the case?

380 If he has, then surely he should have provided us with the evidence in his opening speech and under the rules he is not allowed to introduce new arguments when he responds. And neither did his seconder, Deputy Matthews, provide us with any evidence when he spoke. He may think he did, but his speech was just opinion, it was not evidence based, well, I certainly did not hear any evidence in his speech and I did listen very closely to what he said because I was hoping he was going to provide us with that evidence. So, sir, that is the fundamental flaw of the amendment, a distinct lack of evidence and I cannot support it I am afraid.

The Bailiff: Deputy Dyke, do you want to offer an apology to Deputy Queripel for the fact that your phone went off?

390 **Deputy Dyke:** Yes, I do apologise to you, Deputy Queripel.

Deputy Queripel: I accept that, sir.

395 **The Bailiff:** Also ensure it will not happen again.

Deputy Dyke: I will make sure that does not happen, thank you.

The Bailiff: Thank you. Deputy Moakes.

400 **Deputy Moakes:** Thank you, sir.

First of all, I would just like, again, to thank Deputy Gollop, I thought his speech was very interesting and I mean that seriously (*Interjection*) and actually provided us with some really useful, as always, insights into some of the history of the Chamber and how the number of Deputies has both increased and decreased over time.

I would also like to directly respond to Deputy Roffey's comment about the fact (*Laughter*) that I referenced this Requête. He is absolutely correct, I am and do you know what, I thought we were elected to make decisions that were in the best interests of the Island; that is why I am on the Requête.

410 I did not become an elected Deputy to make decisions to make sure that I was re-elected again. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) So, yes, I was in the bottom 10 and if this Requête is successful and I come in the bottom 10 I have done myself out of a job, well, fine. I think it is in the best interest of the Island (*Laughter*) to reduce the number of Deputies and I will stick to that. I have stuck my head above the parapet previously to make the decisions I think are right for the Island and I will continue to do so for as long as I remain a Deputy; end of.

415 Anyway, getting back to this amendment, this is my first term, it might be my last, actually, as well (*Laughter*) if this Requête is successful, who knows, but I have seen how elected Deputies have applied themselves to being a Deputy and everyone is different. I see those who sit on multiple Committees and others who do not.

420 I see some who get involved with Sub-Committees and many other bodies and others who do not. (*Interjection*) Now, I am not making a judgement on anybody when I say that because I know for a fact that some Committees are massively busier than other Committees. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) I know that some Committees have an awful lot more heavy lifting, there might be things going on that make them busier. So there are multiple reasons why things vary.

425 But what I do have to say is that I believe there are opportunities for Deputies to take on more responsibility. We do not need more Deputies. What we do need, I think, to do as a whole, all of

us including me, is all of us step up, look to see what opportunities there are for us to take on a little bit more responsibility and share some of the burden and I think we would contribute an awful lot more towards the Island if we could do that generally and that is my point on this.

430 Thank you.

Deputy Inder: Sir. Rule 26(1), please.

435 **The Bailiff:** Can I invite those Members who wish to speak in debate to stand in their places. Is it still your wish, Deputy Inder, that I move a motion? So, subject to hearing from the lead requérant and the proposer of the amendment that there be no further debate. Those in favour; those against.

Members voted Contre.

440 **The Bailiff:** I will declare that lost.
Deputy Aldwell.

Deputy Aldwell: Thank you, sir.

445 I am a member of this Requête because I really wanted it debated because we had heard different people had gone on different Committees, nothing actually on the Committee, and nothing had come out of it and every time we said, well, what is going to ...? 'Oh, we cannot talk about it', we did not hear any more.

450 So, I thought it would be really nice to actually look at this because we should be looking at this. Obviously this is my first term and it has been really interesting for me sitting on two of the Principal Committees and more sub-committees than I can throw stones at but, having said that, it is really interesting and I have had a wonderful four and a half years.

455 But what I learned was, coming in, that we had to listen, we had to learn, we had to research and there was going to be a lot of work. When we first came in there were 20 inductions and through the last four years there have been lots of presentations. What I also noticed coming in when we attended the inductions was a lot of new Deputies did not bother to go.

460 They did not bother to go and learn the job, go and learn what they needed to and also, we have had so many presentations and there are probably two or three that I did not attend, but every time someone brings a policy letter there is a presentation because you need to learn, you need to research because you are going to be voting on these things. Lots of Deputies did not bother to go but they may have voted against something though they had not actually been to understand.

465 So that was, I felt, wrong. If you are in here to do a job then you need to learn, you need to listen and you need to research. So, I could not really imagine why we would need an extra seven Deputies because I know there are –

Sorry, I do give away.

470 **Deputy Oliver:** Thank you, Deputy Aldwell. I would just point out that sometimes Deputies do have to miss meetings because they are in other meetings. So it is not always just they want to miss them, they are in other meetings but there is a vast majority that do not turn up to many things.

475 **Deputy Aldwell:** Yes, a lot of Deputies do not turn up to many of the meetings. They have not attended any of the meetings over any of the presentations and there are a lot that did not attend any of the inductions. So, yes, some did, some did not. But we were there to learn, to research and to listen.

So, there have been quite a few Deputies that have not been on any Committees so I, as one of the Members that brought the Requête, did not actually agree with 10 because I think that

there should be a consultation, but I do agree that very easily we could lose five and they would not –

480 Sorry, yes, I will give way.

Deputy de Sausmarez: I am really grateful to Deputy Aldwell for giving way, but I really would like to hear her response which is why I am not waiting for my own opportunity to speak. I actually agree with her point about attendance at meetings, etc. I am wondering how Deputy
485 Aldwell can reconcile that problem with the proposed solution and the Requête of reducing the number of Deputies; how is that going to help? We are still likely to have just as many Deputies who do not bother turning up and, therefore, the problem is exacerbated, surely.

Deputy Aldwell: Thank you.

490 Well, I think that people need to realise there are a lot of new Members in here that did not bother to go to lots of things and I think for the next term they need to understand if you are going to stand then you need to actually put your heart and soul into your job (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and so if you do not want to do that, then do not stand. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear!)

People will understand that there are some Deputies that do not and they will think shall I vote
495 for them because they have not bothered to attend. So maybe that is the question. Maybe the question should be, how many meetings have you attended, did you bother to go to the presentations, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) did you bother to go to the induction, did you actually bother to research? That might be a question that people could ask when they want to elect their Deputies.

500 So it has also been really interesting on Committees and I would actually say that three Members and two non-voting Members would probably do the same job as five Members and I know that Deputy Meerveld has said, well, you know, you just have a pal and things would just get passed through.

I know Deputy Cameron is in the media about that, he does not get on with the Committee,
505 but many things we do get on with, many things we agree within Committee, there may be one or two things that we do not, but most of the things within the Committee we do get on with; but that is for another day and because I honestly and truthfully believe that we do need a full consultation and we do need research done for lowering.

I would not agree to 10 and the remainder of the people on the Requête they understood that
510 I agreed with five. I really believe that not adding any more, there are lots of Deputies that have not been on any Committees, I cannot imagine that there will be just excess Deputies, really. I think it needs to be worked out more for the jobs to be allocated.

But I also believe that Deputies standing need to understand that there is work to be done and I know that when we went out for Education to ask if we could have an extra Member, when we
515 lost Deputy Murray, it was really surprising. People that just sat on one Committee or were not on one, they did not want to know; 'Oh no, too much work.' So that was really interesting. But no, I am not going to support this amendment because I really do not think we need to have any more Deputies, backbenchers, we need to have everybody involved and we could really get rid of five.

Thank you.

520

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

Members, I would ask you to think carefully about what we are doing today. What are we here
525 for? I am going to read out a quote:

Certainly, it ought to be the happiness and the glory of a representative to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence and most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him. Their opinion high respect, their business unremitting attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasures, his satisfactions to theirs and above all, ever and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own.

Not my words, sir, Edmund Burke, 1774, and a letter to the electors of Bristol. So why are we here navel gazing trying to decide who or how many represent the people? We should be getting on with the business of representing the people. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) We have a Budget which has no revenue attached to it, we have a housing crisis, we have all sorts of policy letters which are stacking up which we will be debating two weeks at a time come January, February, March and April. Please, let us get on with the business of representing the people. Let us vote this amendment down. Let us vote the Requête down and get on with what we should be doing. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Thank you, sir.

I am just going to read a couple of lines from SACC's letter of comment on the Requête, the original part:

The starting point for determining the numbers of Members in an Assembly is the function of the Assembly, rather than the number of Members thereof.

I think that applies for this amendment, I think it applies to the Requête. There are so many hypotheses flying around about what will happen, we will all suddenly get on better with each other, we might not get on better with each other, (*Laughter*) we will attend more meetings, we will attend less meetings.

None of that is relevant. Rule 17(6) should have been invoked so many times. That is how we would speed things up in here, if we actually learned the Rules of what we are meant to be doing. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) So, please, Members, we do not need more speeches about what will happen with seven more or seven less. Let us just get to a vote.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Brouard.

Deputy Brouard: Thank you, sir. (*Laughter*)

I think I am going to be the outlier here again. I am going to be, probably, supporting the amendment. Deputy Le Tocq said the numbers are the numbers but the numbers are actually very important because if you have, and you continue to have, Committees like E&I, ESS, Health, P&R, Education, Home, Economic Development and you decide, and I think it is a good number, to have five on a Committee straightaway you need 35 Members to be able to fulfil those, unless you are going to start doubling up.

Now, if you add in another Housing Committee that is another five, that is 40. So, by the time you have filled all the main Committees with one person not doubling up, you basically have committed to, at least, 40 Members. So we have very little spare numbers for those who do not want to step up and this comes to Deputy Moakes' point.

It needs everybody to step up and I agree with him. But some people do not. There are some people who have not stepped up, there are some people who cannot step up. There are some people that have been ill, there are some people who have been on holiday. There are some people that have been on parliamentary things and some people have just not been invited. (*Interjection and laughter*) Some people have knocked on the door and still not been allowed in. (*Laughter*)

So you do need to have some sort of margin to be able to allow for all the foibles that the electorate very kindly put into this Assembly. You are not going to be able to have, magically, the electorate are not able and it should not be that they were going to, somehow, magically fit 28 perfect Deputies that are just going to fit into Health and P&R and the right person for Scrutiny.

It is a challenge when we come together at the start of the term. I think it is amazing how well it has worked every time I have been in the Assembly that we have managed to find enough people to do the job. But I must admit, it was a struggle for me on Health. There are some people that wanted to but could not because they were already on another two Committees. There are some people that ... well there are a lot of reasons why they did not want to.

So you do need to have, unless you are going to say that the Government and the parliament are, literally, going to be completely merged, you make it very difficult. The other alternative is that you go down to three on a Committee. Well, okay that is fine, so you and your mate and one other. You start to have a very different type of decision making process. You are not going to get that diversity with three; one is on holiday, one is sick, one is away, two of you will just be able to out vote the other one. You are almost getting to a ministerial system.

If we are going to go to a ministerial system, and I do not mind that in some ways, I do not mind a dictatorship as long as I am in charge of it, (*Laughter*) but you would need to have, and I think it touches on one of the Deputy Aldwell's points, let us have then a proper review of how we are going to do it (**Deputy Aldwell:** Hear, hear.) and all the other bits and pieces.

But, intrinsically, I feel quite happy to increase the numbers to give us that diversity to be able to pick the right people for the right Committees, as much as you can do. But I think, just reducing it down it almost puts sackcloth and ashes on just to say, we have listened to the electorate they want less of us, but it does not necessarily mean we will have better decisions because we have got two people arguing instead of four people arguing together.

So I will be supporting this but I would probably more support and suggest to Members that if you are going to do this let us do it properly and have a proper review of all the implications of it as it goes through.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Vermeulen.

Deputy Vermeulen: Thank you, sir.

I welcome this Requête. I think if you always do what you have always done you are always going to get what you always got. So is this Assembly perfect with the Deputies voted in? Probably not. Is it going to change with the next election? It definitely will. Do the Committees have to be exactly how they are structured? No, they do not in the future.

It is obvious that things are going to have to change. There has to be some sort of reform and that is obvious because things really are not working. The public are telling me they are witnessing paralysis by over-analysis in the States of Guernsey. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) So that is probably why this Requête has been brought.

You could be excused for thinking we are getting in the Christmas spirit, sir, and it is a game of, as you see on the TV repeats, Bruce Forsyth's Play Your Cards Right with Deputy Gollop saying higher, higher (*Laughter*) and others saying lower, lower and others saying, no, stay how you are. We are getting closer to Christmas and that is where we are with this.

I do not think, when people talk about sitting in an Assembly with 57, I am pretty sure that the speeches were not 30 minutes, they were much shorter, much more concise speeches which came out and I still do not find the urge to pontificate for 30 minutes to get what can be got out in three or four minutes, sir.

So a smaller Assembly could work. It would mean, perhaps, less Committees. It possibly might mean, perhaps, less meetings of those Committees and less people on them. But the point that Deputy Matthews made, he did not think all these businessmen want to come into the States; quite the opposite. I get people from finance saying they are willing to give their time up, pro bono, they do not want any payment. They want this Island to succeed and they are willing to give up their time.

So it might be that you –

Yes, I am willing to give away.

Deputy Matthews: I thank Deputy Vermeulen for giving way because I am in full agreement that I think it would be very useful to try and bring Members of the business community in, certainly as non-voting Members or on sub-committees and to be able to bring their expertise along to help the Island.

What I do think is very difficult is where you are asking for people to become full-time Deputies when they have a role within an organisation where they are effectively an employee and the organisation is a European organisation or a UK organisation because I think that these days the amount of exposure that a politician is put under it makes it very difficult.

Someone who is building their career and is focused on areas outside of Guernsey, I think, is very unlikely to want to go and put themselves forward to be a States' Member, effectively, almost a full-time politician and suffer that type of criticism. I do not think you are going to get the uptake that you would have had back in the day when people were self employed and they ran their own local businesses.

Deputy Vermeulen: Well, you are wrong on that matter, (*Laughter*) because, as I said in my speech, I have had a number of people, very concerned about how things are in the Island at the moment, willing to give up their time to come on Committee, to meet with Committee and just to provide their input to help us. So that might well be the way forward in the future.

So which way is Deputy Vermeulen going to vote on this amendment? For me, I am not going to support this particular amendment. Am I going to vote on 10 less? I want to, sir, I really want to when we when we look later on speaking in general debate. So if we are looking at less Deputies five less, perhaps, might be more where it is. I will wait to hear the full debate, but we are back to that game of cards. Anyway, there it is, sir, there is my input.

Thank you very much.

The Bailiff: Deputy Blin.

Deputy Blin: Thank you, sir.

First of all, I would like to commend Deputy Gollop with the amendment. I know it is very binary in the media and talking with various parishioners saying, oh my gosh, here you are, it is costing a lot of money to the Island and then along comes Deputy Gollop increasing the cost massively on top of that and he always wants to increase taxes, etc. However, what I do see with this and why I commend this amendment is because he understands politically, historically how it works.

Now, we cannot go back to the 57 as it was before but it is a meaningful step towards strengthening the governance and the parliamentary structure here. Now all of this is about serving the needs of our Island, that is what the whole objective of this is. So this should be about our community and the Island. Things change and we need to change. We do this in other areas and we need to be agile and remember agile is a period of four-plus years. We look at something we try it, we see it, we do not have to be perfect.

I have heard the conversations and it worries me a little bit when we start talking about who turns up to meetings or Committees or the things there, that will happen whatever you do, it happens in businesses, it happens in committees and sub-committees; that will always be the case. It is more of a case of the direction of what we want to do, are we remembering we are serving the public?

So, the speech I am making here, more or less, will encompass the speeches on any other amendments. If, and I think it was mentioned by maybe another Deputy, this was about, right from the Requête to the amendments, reviewing and looking and seeing, because it is odd to say we are going to change the number, whether it be up like Deputy Gollop's or down as Deputy Vermeulen was giving the analogy of the game, we have not actually gone the other way. Shouldn't we be looking at the Committee structure and how that is going to impact the rest?

680 We all do different Committees and I sit on a number of Committees and I get involved with, outside the Committees, with other structures and whether it be the ... *[Inaudible]* fair trade as well as the important Committees including overseas aid, which I see is targeted on one of the amendments which I will talk to separately.

685 But the key is this, what will the impact be on the various Committees, how will it affect the work we do? We remember that we have a large Civil Service and we have responsibility to work with the civil servants. So, if we are going up, we can spread responsibilities and can spread the workloads, we can be agile across, we can be more accountable, we can spend more time with it. If we go down, we are creating a more executive or leaving it to some and hoping that in that smaller group everyone will be working harder than before.

690 So, this is not about creating the unnecessary bureaucracy, it should be about the enhancing or the efficiency and the effectiveness of everything we do. So, expansion, for this amendment, will allow better representation, better distribution, better responsibilities and governance is not static so it will adapt.

695 But as I said, I am going to be consistent on my views on this. I will probably not support Deputy Gollop's, even though I do think it is admirable to bring it through and up but I will also be looking the same on the reductions. I may consider maybe a smaller reduction but I do not think I will until I hear that it has been calculated the right way round, telling us what we can do and how we can do it.

700 So, on that basis, I will advise, in spite of being grateful that it has been brought, I will not be supporting it. But also, I advise that we should all consider, unless we actually understand the impact this is going to have, the last analogy I will give was I will say lifeboats. By removing, I know it is the opposite, but by removing a Member of the lifeboat crew are we saving money or are we causing more damage? That argument goes both ways but I do thank Deputy Gollop for bringing that and I thank you, sir.

705 **The Bailiff:** So, I am going to turn to the lead requérant, Deputy Helyar, if he wishes to speak on Amendment 1.

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

710 Well, I am winning in the bingo. I think I managed to get 20 points and one of them used three times within the first hour and a half. I am very reluctant to be mean to Deputy Gollop, not least because it is Christmas, but also because he has a political superpower which is that he is able to suggest things like this with absolutely no electoral consequences whatsoever to suggesting it (*Laughter*) and so I am reluctant to be mean about it, but if I was being mean I would just say it is a silly amendment; it really is.

715 It has a hole in it the size of a small planet in terms of the logic. Sir, we have heard that everything was great when we had 57 Members. I do not know if any of you can think back to those days and the black and white photos in the press of the line-up of the team, but it was not very diverse and inclusive.

720 So, the same argument that we had about, we need more diversity and inclusion and that is why we need to put the numbers up, is exactly the opposite of what we had when things were, allegedly, much better than they are today. Of course, the decisions that were made in those days, 20 or more years ago, were the things that have led us to the penury that we are in now (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) because not adequate provision was made for our future. So, really, was it that good? I cannot see this has had a huge amount of support. So, I am not going to waste very much time in summing up other than just to say please can we move on (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) more Deputies is certainly not the answer.

Thank you.

730 **The Bailiff:** Finally, I will turn to the proposer of Amendment 1, Deputy Gollop, to reply to the debate please.

Deputy Gollop: Well, thank you to Deputy Helyar for his Christmas bingo and good cheer and, in a way, I liked what Deputy Vermeulen said about higher or lower. People will recall that over the years I frequently said, I am afraid we are going to end up with higher expenditure. Deputy Ferbrache very much alluded to that recently and I am afraid that is where we usually go, despite the majority going in other directions.

To start with Deputy Helyar, although I will go in sequence and I think there are quite a few points to make because they are relevant to other aspects of the Requête as well. Deputy Helyar's point about the original States, which Deputy Roffey and others were Members of when we had 57 Members, not being particularly diverse has a resonance. There is certainly a strong element of truth there, but it was a different society.

There were more part-time Members. There was not, supposedly, a full-time salary although, as I said, people could claim and that era contained many able Members who are predominantly hoteliers, retailers, farmers, horticulturalists, builders, advocates to a degree, tomato importers, car garage owners, all kinds of people. In many of those instances those industries have changed and we could not go back to those days even if we wanted to because the Island has transformed.

But on the diversity point, I think the last election, had we had 45 instead of 38 the voting patterns could have been different. Somebody said there would not have been that much difference, well I do not want to overly indicate individual candidates who did not quite make it but there was, for example, a strong environmentalist campaigner who we know, there was a strong campaigner for autism rights and parents, there was somebody who was a well-known artist who also represented diversity in other respects and there was a bus campaigner who would have been a strong financial voice. I think we lost out not having those people, personally, but that is beside the point.

Deputy Helyar's point about the diversity, of course, I think diversity applies in a different way because one of the advantages of a larger States, say 45 or even 38 not 28, is you have got a slightly greater chance, I will not just say of having loads of brainy and capable people as Deputy Murray would want, but of people who have had a background in a specialism and we have sometimes had a situation where we have not had many Members who have been expert on the sea, for example, we did when the late Captain Paint was a Member.

We sometimes need more Members, I am not one of them, who have got a solid knowledge of building, surveying and construction. We have got a few like that, but not that many. I would argue we have not got that many people here who are really knowledgeable about IT contracts. At one point we had four advocates in the Chamber, now we have two. We have a greater chance of diversity of professional backgrounds and I think that is important.

Starting with the other arguments, we started with Deputy Prow who was quite kind. I am aware of his support for, well, he was kind, the Isle of Man, but I would point out that the Isle of Man has always had 24 elected members. Unlike us they have not downsized and that enabled them, perhaps, to go to an executive ministerial system. But they also had what amounted to a Legislative Council that was appointed. It has evolved into a second Chamber of, predominantly, political people. So, in a way, they have 33 politicians but some of them are indirectly elected.

During the Island Games, which was a great event for Guernsey thanks to Deputy Dudley-Owen and her team, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and Dame Mary Perkins and everyone else, what was interesting is the media covered some of the other communities who joined us and it was quite interesting to see the relative sizes of their political assemblies.

The Western Isles has 29, not far off Deputy Helyar's but, of course, they only have a population of 20,000. The Isle of Wight has 39 but, of course, the Isle of Wight is part of a legislature of a bigger kind and, I believe, Anglesey has 35 for a population of 49,000. So, actually, what has been suggested in the Requête, and which I am counteracting, is actually not out of the way from us.

I point out that there were elections in Sark yesterday. They are still counting or re-counting and, of course, their Assembly is comparatively large but they still had quite a few candidates. I would point out, of course, that comparing us to counties like the Isle of Wight or Anglesey and

the Western Isles or other areas in the UK is actually inappropriate because we are a parliament, we are part of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. We send delegates, regionally and worldwide, and we make laws.

We have our own laws on companies, taxation, abortion, many crimes. We are not a local council receiving legislation. We have to have critical numbers to run things. We own an airport, we own a harbour, we own our water; we own all kinds of things. We have national responsibilities (*Interjection*) in almost every area and I think, therefore, the size of our parliament needs to reflect that.

Deputy Matthews, I thank him for his support and the point of myself putting the pay element, which is on a second draft, the original one just noted the point that it was assumed it would be less, is not to get embroiled in a Members' pay argument; that is a completely different topic in debate, although I think it is linked to the Machinery of Government to a degree. It was to counteract the views Deputy Blin and others raised that I was saying let us increase the cost of Government, it was to keep it within the current level of payments to make a point there and Deputy Matthews is right about the dedication needed and those points.

Deputy Roffey made some excellent points and I know over the years he has argued that, perhaps, too many States' Members at one time and we needed to reduce and maybe we have got more or less the balance right, unless we really rethink it through.

I would argue, actually, the point has been made by several speakers, which I would a bit dispute, that the States' Members of the past did not always do politics. Yes, there were Members who just went to events, it seemed to me, (*Laughter*) who specialised in that more than today and there were those who specialised in parochial representation, but there were many more Committees in those days and if you look at the Red Book from the 1990s or 1980s or millennium you will see many Members sat on three or four Committees and I would argue they sit on more Committees than today.

To just name one example, Advocate John Langlois, I do not know how he managed to be a senior practitioner and chair Housing and chair Island Development and be the Deputy Chief Minister on Advisory & Finance and on Civil Defence and do many other things to. Those Members really worked. I think it is a little bit of a myth that they did not work and in some ways because they were more involved with operational issues than we are today they actually did more time, but that is a different matter.

Deputy Burford, I very much respect her arguments and, to a degree, I agree with them actually because this really should be holistic, it should be based, it should have reference to the referendum and the wider conversation and I will come on to that in, perhaps, subsequent general debate. I agree with the point that the Vienna Commission makes clear that we really should not be making these changes so close to a general election and I think that very much applies to this.

Deputy Murray made a robust challenge to myself and you can imagine that sometimes the Policy & Resources meetings can get a bit truculent because sometimes I get the impression people think I am being irresponsible. (*Interjection*) He always stresses, and I do not disagree with him here, well I do actually, (*Laughter*) he says States' Members need to be very able, hardworking and competent (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and fundamentally the right calibre. But he cannot guarantee that the electorate will deliver those people (*Laughter*) or the candidate selection. We look at the American election, some of us might look at President Trump as having great qualities and others would not but he won an election and you see that in many different countries.

The argument that he made, and Deputy Queripel made too, forcefully, was I had no evidence to back up that what I am saying is better. Well, I am afraid they are right. What I am saying is entirely subjective (*Interjection*) although it is based, I believe, on a reasonable case of historical success that I think some Members who remember those days would point out.

But let us look at the Requête. I did not force this debate, I only placed an amendment to a Requête that some of us did not want to see. In fact, the Machinery of Government was postponed and if you look at the Requête there is reference to, 'recent re-runs of mooring fees, fixed penalty fines, closure of the hotel schools,' and you have got here expressions like,

'Guernsey's governance is failing,' 'the failure of the current government system to make binding decisions and move forward are being consistently challenged by disaffected minority who lost a political vote.' And then we go onto, 'All too often years of work are being undermined by ill-considered sectarian,' I do not think there is much religion in them but who knows, 'and highly irresponsible amendments.' That is in the Requête. That is not really evidence based it is a piece of eloquence it is a piece of rhetoric.

The Requête comes from the same stable as my amendment, except my amendment has the advantage of having a certain evidence base of the happy days when we had 45 Deputies from 2000 to 2016. Now, Deputy Roffey reminded us that there were crises in the past like when the horticultural industry kind of collapsed and there were nearly 2,000 people unemployed and there were housing crises.

But let us remember, and I am not with rose tinted spectacles here, the 16 years between 2000 and 2016, when we had 45 Deputies, the States made the decision to buy Aurigny, whether that was wise or not perhaps people would argue, the States made the decision to buy oil tankers, the States made the decision for Zero-10, naturally I am correct (*Laughter*). The States facilitated the Policy Council, the States made decisions on capita, the fundamental transformation, the fundamental savings review, the States changed its budgetary basis and we restructured the hospital system.

There were many challenging decisions made in those 16 years, in many ways more than now. So the argument that it is all based on the numbers is, I think, misleading. Can people disprove that 45 is a worse number? We got into different areas. Deputy Oliver made a good point about Members not turning up for presentations and so on and good reasons they might have.

Surely one of the downsides of 38, let alone 28 and why 45 is a more useful number, is you are more likely to have an absenteeism because those Members have more work to do on bigger Committees and do bigger Committees covering more and more areas really work? I would argue in some areas they have not and that has been a downside.

Talking of numbers that several Members mentioned, I thank Deputy Brouard for his support, when we had 45 Deputies and the Ministers, we had 40 seats on ministerial Departments and the Chief Minister role, so we had 41 roles in Government and actually we had 14 roles in scrutiny, plus five on legislation which had its own identity.

When we changed to 38 Members, we actually got 46 governmental roles, including Transport and DPA and so on, and we had only three roles on Scrutiny because Public Accounts disappeared; although I appreciate Scrutiny does use other States' Members in different contexts. So, we actually saw a significant shift away from Members who would be focused on the Scrutiny role to more Principal Committee roles.

So, we actually ended up with more roles to do with Government than we had before when we had less Members. So, not surprisingly, we have the issues Deputy Aldwell mentioned of some Members not working but, actually, when I look around the 40 of us we not only have Alderney Members working on these Committees, but I cannot think of any States' Member who has not sat on at least one Committee this term.

They may have not sat on Committees and then rejoined or been on Committees and not be on any at the moment. But we have all participated and on the rare occasions when Members have not been involved with Committees, I would say there are two reasons for that, one is we have a minority of very hard working Members who have a job and if we are not going to pay realistic pay, and Deputy Murray made the curious argument that if we reduced the pay we would attract less candidates of calibre, which is an interesting argument.

But the main reason Members do not sit on Committees is they have not been chosen. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) We have got several people who stood to go on Committees and they missed out; they do not make the cut. So, I think that argument has been overused but, actually, our Committee system would work better with 45 Members because you would have more people. I do not like the word backbenchers but you would have more people who would be able to focus on a role.

I have met Members who say, 'John, you should not be lazy, you should be on as many Committees as possible because Committee work is what the States is about.' Well, it is, but I would say our primary role is not to be on Committees and have loyalty to our Committees; our primary role is to represent the people and vote in this Assembly. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) Our primary function is that of being Members of the legislature and to vote here and I think we forget that, or at least we do not emphasise that enough.

The other issues that Deputy Aldwell and Deputy Oliver referred to about Members not attending presentations and perhaps having wildly different attendance commitments from those who are really busy and doing Committee meetings three or four times a week, and many more things, to those who are not doing much, that could be solved.

I have said to SACC, I had an aborted amendment, I failed yet again, I wanted them to publish either online or in another form, Members' attendances at functions so we would actually be able to see whether we do have the right number of 38 and whether everyone or most people would not and that has not happened. We do not get that anymore so I am afraid we have lost the opportunity to make an evidence-based evaluation on that point as well.

Deputy Blin clearly is a fan of the smaller Governments but not necessarily cheaper Government. If we had the right calibre or the most trenchant of Members, who were asking difficult questions, who maybe reconstructed a Public Accounts Committee or maybe if we had a stronger audit function, we may well have the extra quality of Members who would, actually, save the taxpayer money by looking for savings.

I do believe that if we had a stronger Public Accounts function and a stronger backbench commitment and maybe, perhaps, separate some of the functions we currently do altogether in certain Committees like P&R, we would actually be more cost effective. So, I think that the Members would, actually, potentially save us money and not knock us.

So I think when we are putting out a message for the new body of candidates to be as diverse and equal and inclusive as possible and to represent the community, male and female, different sexualities, different backgrounds, different ethnicities perhaps, different careers, I think if we are doing that and at the same time we are saying we are going to reduce your numbers, that is a very negative message.

I think the arguments that we would attract more candidates with 45, well so much the better. The electorate would then have a greater choice and they would have a greater number of representatives, maybe more people who would also involve the parishes more, maybe more people who would take up constituency cases.

The biggest criticism I have heard in this term is that there are less Deputies involved with those kind of cases and dialogue with the parishes and so on. So I think that as we have been brought into this situation and I wanted the Machinery of Government issues to go away because I think we were confusing, yet again, how Government works and how many Members we need.

Here is another point. Many Members are saying that if we change our Machinery of Government we would need less Members; we are putting the cart before the horse. Well, actually, if we are going to more of a ministerial executive system, we very well might need more Members rather than less to give an effective scrutinising function, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) as we have seen in Jersey where I think their system of professional panels is, perhaps, more useful than some of our history in that respect.

So, if my 45 lacks an evidence base surely that point can equally be made about any amendments calling for less Members, Deputy Inder's one or the Requête itself. So I urge Members, actually, to give this the benefit of the doubt (*Interjection*) and support the case to actually see if we cannot improve the quality and happiness of our Assembly by going for what, in a way, was a tried and tested model when we had for four terms, 45 Deputies.

The Bailiff: Deputy Soulsby, Deputy Leadbeater, you both arrived recently. Is it your wish to be relevée?

940 **Deputy Soulsby:** Yes please, sir.

Deputy Leadbeater: Yes please, sir.

945 **The Bailiff:** So that gives you the opportunity to vote on this amendment. It is now time to vote on Amendment 1, proposed by Deputy Gollop, seconded by Deputy Matthews and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting please.

There was a recorded vote.

Amendment 1

950 *Not carried – Pour 3, Contre 33, Ne vote pas 3, Did not vote 0, Absent 1*

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Brouard, Al	Aldwell, Sue	Le Tissier, Chris	None	Haskins, Sam
Gollop, John	Blin, Chris	Roberts, Steve		
Matthews, Aidan	Burford, Yvonne	Snowdon, Alexander		
	Bury, Tina			
	Cameron, Andy			
	De Lisle, David			
	De Sausmarez, Lindsay			
	Dudley-Owen, Andrea			
	Dyke, John			
	Fairclough, Simon			
	Falla, Steve			
	Ferbrache, Peter			
	Gabriel, Adrian			
	Helyar, Mark			
	Inder, Neil			
	Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha			
	Le Tocq, Jonathan			
	Leadbeater, Marc			
	Mahoney, David			
	McKenna, Liam			
	Meerveld, Carl			
	Moakes, Nick			
	Murray, Bob			
	Oliver, Victoria			
	Parkinson, Charles			
	Prow, Robert			
	Queripel, Lester			
	Roffey, Peter			
	Soulsby, Heidi			
	St Pier, Gavin			
	Taylor, Andrew			
	Trott, Lyndon			
	Vermeulen, Simon			

The Bailiff: So, in respect of Amendment 1 proposed by Deputy Gollop, seconded by Deputy Matthews, there voted in favour 3 Members, there voted against 33 Members, 3 Members abstained, 1 Member is absent and, therefore, I will declare Amendment 1 lost.

955 We will move on to Amendment 2 and I will invite the proposer, Deputy Inder, to open debate on Amendment 2 please. Deputy Inder.

[Amendment 2](#)

To insert the following at the end of Proposition 2 –

"OR SHOULD PROPOSITION 1 NOT CARRY:

1. To agree that
 - a) the number of People's Deputies specified for the purpose of the constitution of the States of Deliberation shall be reduced from thirty-eight to thirty-three, and
 - b) the reduction shall be implemented in time for the general election to be held on 18th June 2025.
2. To agree that the number of Alderney Representatives specified for the purposes of the constitution of the States of Deliberation shall be proportionate to the population of Alderney relative to Guernsey, and to direct the Policy & Resources Committee to enter into negotiations with the Policy & Finance Committee of the States of Alderney for the purposes of giving effect to this and to revert to the States by 14th March 2025.
3. To agree that the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee shall be constituted by a President and two Members who shall be Members of the States and to amend Appendix A to the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees accordingly.
4. To agree that the post of President of Overseas Aid & Development Commission shall be held ex-officio by a Member of the Policy & Resources Committee, the allocation of such duties to one its Members to be decided by the Policy & Resources Committee and to amend Appendix A to the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees accordingly.
5. To rename the offices of the Presidents of the Scrutiny Management Committee, the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee, and Overseas Aid & Development Commission from "President" to "Chair" and to amend the Rules of Procedure as may be necessary.
6. To delete "President of the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee" from Section 12 of the Rules for Payment to States' Members of the Rules for Payments to States' Members, Non-States' Members and Former States' Members.
7. To delete "President of the Scrutiny Management Committee" from Section 12. of the Rules for Payment to States' Members of the Rules for Payment to States' Members, Non-States' Members and Former States' Members.
8. To agree that these changes are to come into effect on 1st July 2025.

Deputy Inder: Sorry, sir, just opening my speech thing. That is not ready.

960

The Bailiff: Are you not going to make it up like you usually do? *(Laughter)* **(Several Members:** Oooh!)

Deputy Inder: A bit harsh.

965

Sir, Members, when Deputy Helyar opened on the Requête he argued that the reduction by 10 Members would cut costs, save time and there would be no impact on democracy. I do not know what confidence Deputy Helyar or the requérants have in the success, or otherwise, of the Propositions and this provides an alternative and a potential compromise.

970

So, Members, what this does is it provides an insert into the main Requête, it is not to delete, it is an insert. It is purely an alternative, in quantum, with an option to vote discreetly vote on how Members may feel, how the reduction in States' Members may be divvied out. Therefore, if in main debate Proposition 1 fails we would then move to this Amendment as Proposition 3.

975

So, if a reduction in 10 Members fails, you would then have an alternative vote to consider whether you agree that a reduction in the States' Members by five is an alternative. Propositions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 provide Members with choices on the application of the reduction in States' Members through positions on one of the Committees and the closure of another presidency and, of course, the negotiations with the States of Alderney and the reduction of Alderney States' representations by one.

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Members, I will refer you to Rule 4(1) information on this amendment, the insertion of this will have the consequential effect of giving Members an option of saving around one quarter of a

million annually; a £1 million saving over the life of the next term and I would like to thank Deputy Parkinson for seconding this amendment.

Thank you.

985 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Parkinson, do you formally second Amendment 2?

Deputy Parkinson: Yes I do, sir.

990 **The Bailiff:** Thank you very much. Deputy Le Tissier.

Deputy Le Tissier: Thank you, sir.

I am a bit surprised, in fact, shocked to see this amendment from Deputy Inder. In my brain, old as it is, I thought I recalled a speech by Deputy Inder earlier this year that was relevant to this subject. So, I trawled through *Hansard* and I found it. It was on 25th January 2024. It was actually
995 on page 120, if anyone wants to look at it.

Deputy Inder said:

On Wednesday the 18th October 2018 the people of this Island went to referendum. The decision was as follows; Option A, one Island wide electoral district.

And the next one is the key:

1000 Each voter would have 38 votes at each election. Each Deputy would serve for four years and an election would be held every four years for all Deputies.

Then he went on to say:

That was the decision of the people of this Island. This is not for us to start playing around with one of the most significant votes this Island has ever taken.

(Several Members: Hear, hear.)

This is not the job of this Assembly.

1005 I repeat that:

This is not the job of this Assembly. The job of this Assembly is to adhere to the will of the people.

1010 So I would ask Deputy Inder, what has changed from his very passionate speech in this Assembly in January 2024 that we should not tinker with the arrangements voted on by the people we represent? He was adamant then but now, in an apparent about-face, he has now proposed a reduction of five Deputies. Now, I am genuinely interested to understand Deputy Inder's U-turn. That is the first point I want to make.

1015 Then secondly, there is nothing in this amendment to suggest why five is the right reduction. Why not one, five, eight, 20 or whatever; was it a game of roulette? Place your bets. Five red, so five it is. So, my second question is, where is the research favouring five in place of 10?
(A Member: Hear, hear.)

1020 In the main Requête, and I am going to speak on that, there is at least some effort at some research but there is nothing on this one, apart from the fact that it is a compromise. Now, I also want to briefly question Rule 4(1). **(A Member:** Hear, hear.) The first one states:

The Propositions contribute to the States' objectives and policy plans reducing the size of the States and allowing for more effective decision making.

Third question, I was not aware that the States' had voted on an objective of reducing the size of the States. When was that decided? (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Could Deputy Inder tell us? Otherwise, it is a misleading statement? I do not think I am allowed to say false, so I will say misleading.

1025 Now, others have mentioned the principle of good governance, I think it was Deputy Burford this morning. Do not make changes just prior to an election. In other debates on other subjects over the months, many have emphasised that Guernsey needs to practice good governance. I agree, but hey-ho, we will just go ahead and change the number of Deputies just before our next election, because it is our pet project. Do not do as I do just do as I say.

1030 The last point I want to make, which I do not think anyone has mentioned, and I was going to bring it up in the main debate but I will bring it up now and I think this would have to be answered by the Law Officers, it is the new electoral roll, it has been open for a short while and I believe over 5,000 people have signed up.

1035 They have signed up for an election of 38 Members; it says so on the website. They have not signed up for 33 or 28, they have signed up for 38 and, as I said, it says so on the website. So, if this Requête, in general, or this amendment, in particular, passes how does that effect the people that have signed up, some might say, under false pretences? They thought they had 38 votes, now they are going to have 28 or 33, how does that work? Will we have to start off a new roll or we will just ignore it?

1040 So, with that I will say thank you, sir, and sit down.

The Bailiff: Thank you. Deputy Burford.

Deputy Burford: Thank you, sir.

1045 This Requête has spawned a number of amendments which, together, present us with up to five potential options, should they all be laid, and they are to reduce the number of Deputies by 10, reduce the number by five, keep the same number by voting for one of the Investigation Committees or by voting everything out, or increase the number by seven which, actually, we have dispatched.

1050 Indeed, it would be possible today to reduce the number and at the same time set up a review Committee to review numbers, but I hope Members would agree that would be rather ridiculous, fettering the Investigation Committee before it even began. But from that smorgasbord of options, one can see the attraction of this particular amendment.

1055 Members may reason that five Deputies is not many, the public will like it, we are only removing people from seemingly unimportant Committees like SACC and Overseas Aid anyway, it is middle for diddle on all the options, what could possibly go wrong? (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) The answer is quite a lot.

1060 Now, at this point in my speech, sir, I was about to quote the same quote that Deputy Le Tissier has, so I will not subject Members to it again. But it was one made by Deputy Inder, with some vehemence, back in January and the one part, in fact, that Deputy Le Tissier missed out from the quote was that Deputy Inder said we should not be doing this, i.e. messing around with the referendum decision of the people of this Island, (*Interjection*) on the back of an amendment and I, actually, agree with him on that part (*Laughter*) and I think that is really key because I think there are cases where we may well come to the conclusion that we do want to make changes, but not on the back of an amendment laid six months before the end of a political term to a requête about reducing it by twice as many. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

1065 I had hoped in the dying days of this fractious Assembly that we could have been getting on with delivering for the public (**Several Members:** Hear, hear!) instead of all this navel gazing but look at how much of this meeting is about us (**A Member:** Yes.) and not the people of this Island. 1070 (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

Looking at other Propositions in this amendment, because it is not merely the reduction of five, I have no issue with calling the Presidents of the Parliamentary Committees Chairs instead of

1075 Presidents. I am not and never have been seduced by titles, but I do question what on earth we are doing today laying amendments to debate such trivial issues as the name of the person who presides over a Committee.

Equally, I have no comment on the pay of such positions as set out in this amendment but, again, we should not be debating our pay, up or down, (*Interjection*) in this Assembly; that is for the Pay Review Body. (**A Member:** Yep.) (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) The explanatory note states, erroneously, that reducing the number of Members on the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee to three would bring it in line with Scrutiny, but this is manifestly untrue. Scrutiny has five voting Members and, sir, Members of this Assembly elected each and every one of them to those positions which illustrates, yet again were it needed, the pitfalls of trying to do these things by amendment.

1085 In any case, having five Members gives greater breadth of thought, input and experience to a Committee. With only three Members, and accepting that might often be two due to illness or absence, we are leaving policy formation to be made with little broad ranging debate at Committee level and a greater chance of it hitting the buffers when it comes to the Assembly.

1090 While I know Overseas Aid inspires a range of views, it really is something that needs to be done by someone who has a genuine interest. That will not necessarily be one of the five people who end up sitting on P&R who, in any case, have a pretty full schedule without adding anything to it. It is not as if the President of Overseas Aid only does that role so it is not saving a Deputy by dumping it on P&R.

1095 Of course, I am affording the re-organisation proposal in the amendment too much gravitas. It is far more likely that the proposer chose a reduction of five as being the number he thought might fly and then set about reverse engineering the reduction in roles to fit. Is that really a responsible way of doing this? I do not believe it is.

1100 The final selling point in this amendment relates to how much money will be saved for the taxpayer; (*Interjection*) about £200,000 a year, less than 1/30th of 1% of the annual budget. Indeed, in terms of a household income of £65,000, it is equivalent to less than £20, but here we are wasting hours on it and one of those five culled Members may well have had the skills in different areas to have saved the taxpayer a great deal more than that.

1105 I have my own views on the right number of Members for this Assembly, as I expect every single Member does, (**A Member:** Yes.) but I will not be supporting any motion to either reduce or increase numbers by amendment. It needs to be done properly and future amendments afford this opportunity. This is poor governance in the extreme, please vote against this amendment. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.)

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Murray.

1110 **Deputy Murray:** Thank you, sir.

1115 I am not going to change my tone either, unfortunately, but start as I mean to go on. However, since it is Christmas, I will give the Deputy a kiss, well, actually, two as it happens. Compared to the previous amendment (*Laughter*) this is a well thought through and quite specific amendment in that it provides guidance on where the proposed reduction of Deputies should be affected.

1120 From my perspective, however, it does not go far enough but I can see that in comparison to the Requête a number of Members would see this as a compromise. My position, however, is that we are way past compromise. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) This might represent an incremental move towards change but I have considerable reservations as to whether that will be sufficient to impact the speed at which change is washing over us and, importantly, whether or not the public will simply see this as just a few turkeys voting for Christmas through which very little real change or improvement will occur.

I do believe there is appetite amongst many Islanders for a change because many simply do not think this is working. In fact, sir, in contrast to one of the main planks of the Requête, that

1125 Scrutiny be an independent function not a political one, this amendment would ensure that we lose the opportunity for Islanders to recover some trust by having a non-political entity keep Government's feet to the fire, to deliver on its promises or explain why. We should not be marking our own homework. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

1130 I do not subscribe to the notion that you have to have been in this Assembly to be able to scrutinise whatever we choose to pay those with that responsibility. That, to me, seems like a 'jobs for the boys' form of red nepotism that just perpetuates but does not necessarily challenge sufficiently group think. It is in creating that independent external body that we have the best chance of recovering trust in this institution, as is proposed in the Requête, not merely reducing the payment to the President.

1135 I take a similar view of the proposal to reduce Members of SACC – the body charged with primarily regulating and overseeing how we conduct ourselves or assessing whether or not we have, as individuals, conducted ourselves appropriately or, indeed, honourably to sit in ultimate judgement on our peers, notwithstanding the intervention of the Commissioner in the process. It is deeply flawed, in my opinion.

1140 Again, it is the public who will be satisfied by independent oversight and governance by Members of Members' behaviour, whether the concern arises from within or without the Assembly. The public want transparency in decision making free of any political motivation, overt or covert.

1145 Now, I do agree with Proposition 4. The Island of Alderney and its place within the Bailiwick and consequently its representation in this Assembly needs consultation and exploration. Our relationship, based primarily around the 1948 Agreement and partial fiscal union, is not working satisfactorily for either party and it could be much improved, but that is a broader objective, however, if the number of Deputies is to change then that consultation, at least, should be undertaken, albeit it would clearly be quite limited in the timeframe being made available under this amendment.

1150 Finally, sir, I turn to the proposal for Overseas Aid being proposed here. Again, I find myself feeling this does not go nearly far enough. In my view, sir, whilst Government must provide the sufficient support that it can afford to the third sector or international aid or to grants to the Social Investment Fund or, indeed, to a whole host of grants administered by various Committees, 1155 as we do today, that money should be centrally provided but delivered outside of Government altogether.

If we are seeking to make Government more efficient, then we need to focus on those services that only Government can deliver. There are a whole range of very dedicated and capable people working in the third sector, far closer to the needs of those they already serve, who are far better 1160 placed to decide how the money from Government should be allocated and, for me, that includes overseas aid which should not, along with a number of other grants, be ring-fenced for particular recipients.

We already have a highly developed third sector who are able to recognise and, therefore, prioritise the money that we presently administer through historic arrangements, to some extent, 1165 or SLAs which are grant specific but not necessarily needs specific, given the Island's overall circumstances.

I would question, for example, why Overseas Aid should be funded preferentially via a percentage mechanism automatically when pretty much every other Island charity has to make a case for funding. Moving responsibility from a separate President of the Commission to P&R –

1170 **Deputy Blin:** Point of correction.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Blin.

1175 **Deputy Blin:** Just to clarify, it is not correct. The GDP ratio, whether right or wrong, is used, for example, by the UK and other jurisdictions. That is the method used.

The Bailiff: Deputy Murray.

Deputy Murray: Thank you.

1180 Moving the responsibility from a separate President of the Commission to P&R for Overseas
Aid is, in my opinion, just moving the deck chairs around again. We need far more to be done in
this whole area of grant funding, which I accept goes beyond the scope of this particular
amendment, but as I have already stated the speed at which change is washing over us means far
more than tinkering around the edges, simply because it is the best we can get this Assembly to
1185 accept just before Christmas. I urge Members to demonstrate to the public their willingness to
embrace change and reject this amendment.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

1190

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

Here we are again and I am going to repeat what I said before, why are we discussing,
debating how many Members we have got when we have got much more important things to be
discussing? (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) But I am going to contribute to the debate and, perhaps,
1195 extend debate.

So we know that in modern times representative democracies have played a leading role in the
advancement of human rights education and technology as we can show on an Island, national or
even a global scale. At the heart of every representation there is democracy and there is a
centralised parliament, an Assembly of elected citizens who are delegated by their constituents to
1200 exercise the legislative power.

Yes, this has an operating cost and it has been shown in Rule 4(1) and as Deputy Burford
picked out as well, about £200,000 a year. But in the scheme of things a £600 million budget, it is
a drop in the ocean. So this operating cost and in the shadows of political scandals, economic
crises and social turmoil people have questioned the effectiveness of their jurisdiction's costly
1205 political and administrative structure and have claimed that a reduction of the number of elected
representatives would reduce deviant behaviours and enhance efficiency of parliamentary works.

However, there has been no sound analytical framework to determine the optimal parliament
size of a given jurisdiction or to ensure an adequate representation and cost effectiveness, which
are both in the public interest. This amendment is evidence that there is no evidence used to
1210 determine that size.

Some mathematicians argue that a principle of maximum modularity can provide some reliable
guidance on how to determine the absolute number of representatives required for efficient
public representation in a democratic jurisdiction. Some argue that this principle may, therefore,
provide a transparent reference point to inform public policies.

1215 Generally speaking, the ideal number of members of parliament has to strike a balance
between efficiency, in terms of the share of power held by each of them and their ability to realise
their agenda and optimal representativity. For example, the ability of the MPs to promote the
instances of their voters in proportion to their number and that is what we are talking about
today: numbers.

1220 So, the efficiency concept has been at the core of a flourishing line of research, amongst
political scientists and electoral engineers, since the early 1970s. Researchers have revealed the
effect of different electoral systems on the efficiency and stability of political architecture in
relation to the size of the corresponding Assembly.

1225 Both the problems of efficiency and relative representativity have been investigated for a long
time in the political science literature and share a common denominator; they depend directly or
indirectly on the absolute chamber size. Deputy Burford, in her previous speech, briefly
highlighted that, in recent times, political scientists and technocrats have heavily relied on the so-
called cubic root law, the CRL, used extensively by the Estonian Taagepera.

1230 He devised the cube root law to accurately and scientifically determine the optimum size of a unicameral Assembly. The latest population information for Guernsey indicates that the population, as at 1st July 2024, was 64,280 and, using the above, the cube root of that population count is 40.05824, if you want to use all the decimals.

1235 So, the 38 Members that we have got, using actual political science, seems correct for Guernsey and it is not just Guernsey; Deputy Burford mentioned Jersey, she also mentioned Alderney. Other jurisdictions seem to have got it about right too. Canada's population cube root is 335, their lower House of Commons has 338 Members.

1240 The Folketing is the unicameral national legislature of the Kingdom of Denmark, its cube root of its population is 180. They have 179 Members. One of the oldest surviving parliaments in the world, the Althing in Iceland was founded in the year 930, its current population cube root is 71 and they have 63 members. The same as Lithuania, is the unicameral legislative body, they have it just right if using political science, which I believe is what we should do, their population cube root and elected Members are both the same at 141.

1245 So, if we are trying to determine what size government we want on the hoof and only six months before a general election, then please let us learn and use a tried and tested scientific method in our approach. Members, I would urge you to reject this amendment (*Interjection*) and more so the Requête in totality and let us get on and actually represent the people in what we are supposed to be doing.

Thank you.

1250 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Meerveld.

Deputy Meerveld: Thank you, sir.

1255 I am going to oppose this and vote against this amendment, as I will be doing on any amendment that suggests changing the numbers on the floor of this Assembly against what the electorate has already voted for in a referendum and in too short a time period before the election and in a completely arbitrary way.

1260 Deputy Murray, when he spoke against the Deputy Gollop amendment described it as badly conceived and with an underlying lack of thought and there seems to be a drive here that we want to reduce Deputies. Why? Is it because we want better decision making? Is it because we want to save a bit of money for the Budget? Or is it virtue signalling to the electorate just before an election?

1265 But where is that thought on the correct number in the original Requête? Why is it 10, why not 12, why not 15, why not seven and now why not five? How do we know that any one of those numbers is going to give us a more effective Assembly? Is it a problem with the number of Deputies in the Assembly that we should be addressing or the mechanics of Government, is that the failure?

1270 If we want to improve our Government we need to support one of the amendments that calls for a review to be done properly (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and whilst, yes, there was a Government review done this term, despite what Deputy Le Tocq said yesterday, I did not change my mind at any time. I was the only politician on that Committee, that working group, who was there the whole time.

The P&R representative changed three times during that time and with it came different views on what was right and what was wrong. So that process was an abortive process that needed.

1275 **Deputy Soulsby:** Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Soulsby.

1280 **Deputy Soulsby:** I believe Deputy Le Tocq was also there. There were two representatives from P&R, two representatives from SACC and a non-States' Member, advocate Tom Kerry.

Deputy Taylor: Point of order, sir, Rule 17(6). I am not sure what the make-up and who attended the Government reform, whatever it was, has any relevance to whether this amendment should be adopted.

1285 **The Bailiff:** In terms of relevance, Deputy Meerveld is, as I understand it, expanding upon why this particular amendment should be voted against. So he has got the latitude to do that.

Deputy Meerveld: Thank you, sir.

1290 Deputy Soulsby's interjection was incorrect because whilst Deputy Murray, I believe, replaced Deputy Le Tocq –

Deputy Inder: Point of order, sir,

1295 **The Bailiff:** Point of order, Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: For the purposes of consistency I was castigated a few months ago, I think it was an amendment that Deputy St Pier was ... it may even have been the amendment that Deputy Le Tissier, and I have boxed this in, this is just about insertion. We now appear to be moving to debate. So, all I really want to hear, for the purpose of consistency, is for Members to let us know why this should not be inserted because that is all I have done.

Deputy Taylor: Point of order, sir.

1305 **The Bailiff:** You cannot have, Deputy Taylor, a point of order when a Member is making a point of order. (*Laughter*) So, Deputy Taylor, can you just sit down, let Deputy Inder finish.

Deputy Taylor: Point of order may be used to erase, to draw attention to a breach of the Rules of Procedure when a Member is talking. Deputy Inder is not doing a point of order.

1310 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Taylor, you are not allowed to speak unless you are called, I have called Deputy Inder to speak on his point of order.

1315 **Deputy Inder:** So, really, sir, it is just about consistency and application of the Rules. I have stayed away from the actual arguments of why certain Propositions should or should not be ... the argument for the Proposition should come to the main debate. I was stood down on exactly the same matter when I made those arguments a few months ago and I am wondering, for the application of consistency, this is just about inserting some Propositions when they can be voted in or out of the general debate.

1320 **The Bailiff:** So, in relation to Deputy Inder's point of order, he is right to draw attention to Rule 17(6), (**Deputy Inder:** Thank you.) which says that debate must be relevant to the matter before the Meeting. The matter before the Meeting is this Amendment 2 which is proposed by Deputy Inder, seconded by Deputy Parkinson.

1325 Deputy Inder is right to say that what he is seeking to do is to add a raft of additional Propositions as an alternative. This is not the opportunity, unless any Member wishes to say 'I am speaking in general debate and therefore I will forego my ability to speak once all the amendments have been dealt with to address matters outside of the amendment.'

Deputy Meerveld to continue please.

1330 **Deputy Meerveld:** Thank you, sir.

The reason I am talking about the Machinery of Government Working Group is that it was looking at a broad range of changes to the way this Assembly functions. This amendment

bringing and putting into debate a whole list of amendments, broad reaching amendments, (*Interjection*) doing the work of what, or trying to override on the back of one sheet of A4, the work of a much broader group and a much more considered approach.

So the reason I refer back to the Machinery of Government Working Group is we need a group like that to do this work properly. We should not be, six months before election, restructuring this Government on the back of one sheet of A4 plonked in front of us at this time with a combination of navel gazing and populism.

Going back to some other points raised. Again, there is a perception in the public domain that we should all be full-time workers, we should be working this full time and certainly the reduction of Deputies would end up forcing all of the Deputies elected next term to either work harder or the Assembly may struggle to populate the Committees and all the other working groups.

Later today, we will discuss a housing requête which would require another five Deputies. We will also, in this debate, discuss a special Investigatory and Advisory Committee which, although it does not stipulate the number of Deputies on it, I am quite sure we will end up probably at five as well.

So, in the same breath as talking about reducing the number of Members, we are also talking about increasing the work and commitment of a reduced number of Members and, as I say, there is no science here. This Requête, 10 people, why is that right? Why wasn't Deputy Gollop right to say seven?

Deputy Inder: Excuse me, sir, point of order.

The Bailiff: Point of order, Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: Based on your direction, almost certainly, Deputy Meerveld is getting very elevated and is quite clearly heading in towards general debate and has still not explained why this should or should not be inserted. It really is quite simply, does he want to insert it or not? If he does not want it inserted just sit down and vote against it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder, in identifying a point of order you have to identify what the breach of the Rule is. (**Deputy Inder:** Sorry.) In relation to what Deputy Meerveld appears to be attempting to do is to say, vote against this amendment because it is not as good as some of the other amendments and, in any event, it is dealing with matters that might be addressed by a States' Investigation & Advisory Committee. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) So, he is giving his reasons as to why Members should not support this amendment. So he is not, in my view, breaking the Rules at the moment.

Deputy Meerveld: Thank you, sir.

That is exactly right. I am trying to say why this amendment should not be supported by this Assembly. Deputy Inder also made a play of the fact that this is going to save £200,000 a year and as Deputy Burford pointed out, that is a tiny fraction of a percentage of our overall Budget. It is not a significant amount of money. It is also not a significant amount of money in view of Government expenditure.

Also, it is worth remembering that when we sit in Committee in a room discussing States' business, invariably, we are the lowest paid people in the room. The person taking the minutes of that meeting is invariably on a higher salary bracket than the Deputies in that room. In some ways we are the cheapest labour the States has.

So, again value, what is the value of a Deputy? Are we earning that money? Well, again, there is the long discussion we had on States' pay but to give an example from personal anecdote, I have always been very goal driven and one of my goals as a young man was to get my basic salary, not including bonuses, housing allowance, car allowance and pension, etc. to US\$250,000 a year, roughly £200,000 a year.

1385 I hit that target in 1996. I am now working for a quarter of what I was earning in 1996 and if you adjust that for inflation that would now be £400,000 a year and I would be earning about a seventh. So, again, are we trying to save money here or are we just virtue signalling? I would argue, actually, another point in reduction of Members.

1390 I have interviewed and hired people into three figures, well past 100. I have, unfortunately, had to fire some of these people because they did not live up to the potential that was illustrated during the interview process and those interview processes were incredibly sophisticated and in-depth.

1395 When the public elect Deputies it is a far less intense process. We elect Deputies on the hope that they will perform well. Now, it is a fact not all people do. When I came into this Assembly I naively thought, in 2016, that Government could be run more like a business. It was a bit of a culture shock to realise that it does not, your business experience, domestic or international, it does not matter what your experience is in the third sector, nothing truly prepares you for being a politician and working in Government. I had to adapt to that to make myself a more effective representative for the people.

1400 Some of the Deputies I voted for at the last election may have been well intentioned, highly skilled and able potentially, but they have not adapted to being politicians. They do not understand the mechanisms. Therefore, it is a random selection of people provided to us by the public.

1405 **Deputy Taylor:** Point of order, sir.

The Bailiff: Yes, point of order, Deputy Taylor.

1410 **Deputy Taylor:** Well, sir, I am not sure what the relevance of the ability of any individual Deputy elected in the last election has on this amendment.

The Bailiff: And I think that is right. I was struggling, Deputy Meerveld, to understand the relevance of what you have been saying recently.

1415 **Deputy Meerveld:** Right, okay. Well, sir, the relevance of my statement, just to clarify, is you have an amendment here asking for a reduction in Deputies and part of the justification is a reduction in cost and I would argue that if you want more effective Deputies, considering the fairly random nature of an electoral process, you actually should be electing more, as Deputy Gollop suggested, rather than fewer and that goes directly to what is being stated on this amendment. Also that a cost savings of £200,000 is, almost, irrelevant in a £650 million Budget and that what we want to be looking for is the value that Deputies bring to the States, not simply trying to reduce the number of Deputies to make a small saving.

Thank you, sir.

1425 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Parkinson.

Deputy Parkinson: Thank you, sir.

1430 Well, I can be extremely brief and, in general, I think we spend far too much time discussing matters pertaining to our role as Deputies including our remuneration, etc. but fortunately I do not need to say very much because I think Deputy Inder has said most of it already. As seconder of the amendment I think it is important that I do say something.

1435 When this amendment was laid the only Proposition on the table from the requérants was that the number of Deputies be reduced by 10 and, I think, instinctively both Deputy Inder and I felt that that was unlikely to succeed, that the extent of the cull would be unlikely to find favour with Deputies and was venturing into the unknown in terms of what an Assembly of this nature could achieve with a sharply reduced number of Members.

The purpose of this amendment is simply to give the Members of the Assembly options. As Deputy Inder has said, this does not seek to strike out the Prayer of the Requête, it simply says if the Proposition to remove 10 Members fails then this option of reducing the number of Members by five Deputies and having an adjustment, probably, to the Alderney Reps is something else that the States might consider.

It, therefore, basically urges a more gradual approach to a streamlining of the States and, if this amendment succeeds, instead of having two options before them, Members would have had the option of reducing the number of Deputies by 10 or voting against the Requête and leaving the number of Deputies at 38 ... If this amendment succeeds there will be another option on the table which Members can support or not, as they wish, when it comes to general debate and the final votes and that would be to reduce the number of Members by five. My own view on that is simply that I think the States would function perfectly well with five fewer Members or five fewer Deputies, and potentially one fewer Alderney Rep and we could see how it works.

It may be that in the next eight years or so the States may want to look at the issue again and potentially reduce the number of Members further or, perhaps, revert to a higher number. But this simply gives the States the option of a more gradual approach. It says, why not look at reducing the number of Members by five and seeing how it works?

Personally, as I have said, I think the States would function perfectly well, other Members may disagree but at least you would, in supporting this amendment, have that option on the table and, therefore, it would be in play. So that is all I have to say, sir. I think Members should support this amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Roffey.

Deputy Roffey: Thank you, sir.

I do take the point that this amendment is only to insert another option or set of options, but on speaking of this amendment why would you insert options unless you thought they had some inherent worth in their own right and, therefore, to address what the proposals that we are seeking to insert is, I think, speaking on the amendment.

I think I have come partly from the same place as Deputy Gabriel. I do not buy the cube root theory, I have to say, I am not totally convinced over that at all. I suspect if you really searched the world for other examples you would find quite a lot of parliaments that work well that bear no relation to the cube root. Okay, well, I have not done the research, but I am not convinced of setting Assembly sizes by mathematics, to be honest.

However, another point that he made, and a number of people have made it so I will not labour it, is a common theme here, is actually it is really bad parliamentary practice to make radical changes to the make-up of your parliament (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) in the run up to an election and it is equally bad practice to do it without a proper dispassionate review and seeing how it would work and actually having a proper researched policy letter coming forward.

So that is my stance on all of the amendments and there are three amendments and you can term them as you like, that will allow exactly that sort of review that, I think, is needed before making any changes to something as fundamental ... and it really is quite fundamental. I know we are being castigated for talking about ourselves but when a requête is brought like this I think it is going to stimulate that sort of debate and I do not think it is actually unimportant, the make-up of a parliament.

Sir, one common theme, both in the Inder amendment debate and, actually, the debate that went before it is, 'Oh, things are pretty rotten at the moment, we are not doing really very well, are we? It has not been very successful so, a change must be a good thing but let us have a change because you cannot just keep doing the same thing.'

Well, there is absolutely no guarantee that a change will make things better. Although I hate the concept of going to a party system, I think, there is one problem with the non-parliamentary party system and it is this that electorates everywhere fall out of love with their government and

in hard times, we have seen it in the UK, we are seeing it in France, we are seeing it here, they fall out of love even quicker and in today's social media world that is amplified beyond all reasonable scope.

What happens in all of those other places is, 'It needs a change, the ruling party is making a hash of it let us bring in another lot.' Now, we cannot do that because we do not have a party system so, we need a change we are making a hash of it so let us change our system of government.

That is, to me I think, the narrative that is coming out and it really does smack of a bad workman blaming their tools. I am not sure that it is just an easy target, the system of government. So I am not going to vote for this because I think we need a proper considered review and any changes should be decided upon well before an election but also I want to come in on a few of the actual aspects here.

Four, I do agree very much, actually, I think we do need to look again at the level of representation from Alderney because when I was first in the States, as we said before, there were 57 Members of the States. So, it was roughly one in 30 Alderney Reps compared with Guernsey Reps as that was roughly the population gap as well.

As we have reduced our number overall that proportion has gone up and, I think, needs to be looked upon, although I would say that if we do go down to one Alderney Rep I think there needs to be the capacity for an alternate because if one of us is sick or cannot make it here, well there are 38 of us at the moment representing one constituency, if an Alderney Rep, and there was only one, was sick, there would be no representation from a whole community and I think that that would be wrong.

As for the reduction of SACC to three, I know others disagree but I believe in our Committee system and at one stage I did favour, maybe, looking at Committees of three but my view has changed on that. I really think it is going to be moving towards a Jersey system. I think the Committees of three are not really Committees, they are Ministers and two assistant Ministers and if people like that approach, then that is fine, but do not fool yourself that it is a Committee system that brings in a diversity of views and the proper debate that goes on around that.

The Overseas Aid one, I do not really get at all. I am not sure how it saves the post. I was the first Chairman of the Guernsey Overseas Aid Committee and I was also President of the Board of Health at the time. There is nothing in the Constitution now that stops it being somebody that does something else, being Chairman of the Overseas Aid. So, I do not see how that works.

As for reducing the President or getting rid of the presidential allowances for Scrutiny and SACC, I actually do think that it is fairly perverse that the Presidents of those two Committees, as I understand it, get the same presidential uplift as a Principal Committee. I also think it is quite perverse that the Presidents of the DPA and CSB do not get a single penny in presidential allowance.

I personally think – (*Interjection*) not for being a President of STSB, I get one for being an ESS President, but in the next Assembly, if nothing changes, whoever is President of STSB they will just get the flat rate, there is absolutely no up-rate at all for being President. However, we have asked an independent panel to go away and look at our pay structure and part of what they are looking at will be presidential allowances.

I know, I engage with them and said that what I think should happen is that there should be a much smaller upgrade for the Presidents of the non-Principal Committees, but that there should still be one; that may be or may not taken on board by them but it seems to be perverse to pre-empt the debate we are about to have, sometime soon I hope, on the results of that independent panel.

But I think my main point here is I am not unsympathetic to reducing, in a modest way, the number of States' Members, I really am not, and I have been consistent in that narrative over many years. But it has to be done on the basis of a well thought through and considered review that garners the evidence, looks at the consequences, puts numbers alongside systems of

1540 government because the two are absolutely interrelated and it should not be done on the 11th hour coming into an election because that is universally regarded as really bad practice.

A Member: Hear, hear, good practice.

1545 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Dudley-Owen.

Deputy Dudley-Owen: Thank you, sir.

I am going to put my cards on the table straight away. I do not need to think too hard about this particular amendment, I am voting in favour of it and I would suggest that others do too because, I think, it broadens the choices on the Requête. I found it quite interesting to listen to a couple of the previous speakers because I actually do think we have got evidence now to warrant a change in numbers.

I think in the eight years that I have sat in this Assembly and worked in the States in a position in Government and especially the last four, the evidence for me is overwhelming that there are five Members too many in this Assembly (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and I am not going to get personal about this but there is a considerable difference in terms of the workload which speaks to the point that Deputy Meerveld made about are we, as a body corporate or as a body, providing value for money?

I really do not believe that we are. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) We are not providing the value for money because we are not providing the amount of ... not everybody is gainfully employed. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Now, this may not be their fault, the opportunities may not have arisen, it might not have been their ideal but, actually, there are some people working very hard, and it was the same last term, and others not really working to their capacity.

I think that is something that we should be driving a change for because when Members are earning a fee, it is not really remuneration but it is a fee, for the time that they are spending as an elected politician that time should, in the main, be gainfully used towards the purpose of governing the Island and that is not the case for all Members. It maybe a little bit difficult to listen to comments like that but it is, actually, the case.

So, I think it is an absolute nonsense to say that we are providing value for money (*Interjection*) and to try and compare it to a salary or a role in the private sector and to say, well we could be getting more in the private sector. Well, this is our choice, this is the job that we chose to take, we knew what the terms and conditions were and actually to do something that is probably, for me personally, one of the biggest privileges, the biggest amount of job satisfaction that I have ever got and I could ever get in doing this job. I am happy to take a pay cut from what I might get in the private sector and I think that every single person in this Assembly should feel that and if they do not maybe they should be wondering about their position.

But I also think that the evidence there is clear insofar as three Members sat on no Committee at all at the beginning of this term, (*Interjection*) three members and we were not able, in this Assembly, to provide a job for them to do (*Interjection and laughter*) in terms of ... Well, we were not. (*Laughter*) It has illicited laughter but all seats were taken in Committees.

So we had three Members who did not need to sit on a Committee because we also had other Members who were sitting on two Committees and some of those Members sitting on two Committees I absolutely take my hat off to them (**Several Member:** Hear, hear.) and respect them deeply, Deputy de Sausmarez, Deputy Roffey, the amount of work and how they manage to do all their work, keep all the plates spinning in the air is beyond me. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) I find it difficult as a President of one Committee, let alone the work that they do in their senior roles on their very busy Committees.

Yet we have Members who have not sat on any Principal Committees. There is a real disparity here (*Interjection*) and certainly what Deputy Roffey is saying that he does not get an up-lift as being the President of the board of STSB. So he is paid the same amount if he was just on that

Committee alone, as someone who is not doing any Committee work whatsoever and only has to turn up in this Assembly once a month for three days.

I will give way to Deputy Burford. But I probably will not give way to others because we have got time limits.

Deputy Burford: I thank Deputy Dudley-Owen for giving way. She refers to people not sitting on Principal Committees, now the Principal Committees only comprise six of the Committees, they do not include P&R, Scrutiny, SACC, STSB, so I think, perhaps, she did not really mean Principal Committees.

Thank you.

Deputy Dudley-Owen: I thank Deputy Burford for her interjection there because, yes absolutely, it was not just Principal Committees there are other Committees as well, such as Scrutiny Management, that are vital, actually, for the work that we do in this Chamber.

However, the point I am making is that there were simply not enough ... it was like a game of musical chairs, the chairs had all been taken and three Members were left wandering around, occasionally trying to rock people in their chairs or Committees off their chairs and it has just been very unhelpful.

I am sorry, I did say I was not going to give way, Deputy Oliver, so I do apologise, sir, through you because I am just conscious of our time.

However, I think just to get back to some of the points as well just raised, that we are here to set the strategy, we are here to set the policy. We are not here to do the action and, actually, it is very interesting we have got sets of Rule 14 questions, helpfully asked by Deputy Queripel, of Committees about exactly that matter, about the extent to which Members get involved in operational matters. And my view very strongly – and I have espoused this many times publicly and it has been a great frustration, I think, to some of my colleagues who do want to get involved in the operational matters that I will not and the Committee that I sit on (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) I encourage strongly not to.

We employ very well qualified individuals who have got the skills, and that is very relevant, who are ably skilled and well remunerated – possibly they should be better remunerated in a lot of instances – to do the jobs. If we want to do that job you need to go and see our CEO and you need to apply for a job in the Civil Service.

We are here to set the strategy and that is where we should be and quite simply this term has proven, as did last term, that we do not need as many individuals in the body corporate as we have got because some people are not involved and actively engaged in setting that strategy and I think that is a real shame. I think they have missed out, I think that the electorate would not expect that.

And it is also a real shame that we do not have evidence that used to be collated by the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee which started to speak to our attendance as well; attendance at Committee meetings. Have people actually been able to attend or have they been absent? It is irrelevant why because we have all got lives to live and people have other commitments as well but if you are making a commitment and you can make it, unless it is ill health, then you should be making those commitments or you need to consider the commitment that you have made.

So I want to just quickly run through some of the areas that Deputy Inder and Deputy Parkinson are recommending, that the Proposition needs ... this is an addition to the Requête, so where it says to insert the following the end of Proposition 2 or should Proposition 1 not carry, to agree that essentially we reduced by five and that this will be implemented in time for 18th June, and I agree with that and also to hold negotiations with the States of Alderney.

I value our Alderney Representatives immensely and the work that they do in carrying the message back to Alderney and representing their Island of the Bailiwick in this Chamber, but I think that if it is a numbers game then that is something that does, logically, need to follow in terms of being looked at.

States' Assembly & Constitution Committee as a Parliamentary Committee, I will absolutely agree that can go down to three Members and also the Overseas Aid & Development Commission; absolutely. This is not about personal people, this is not about individuals. I think that the work done on that Committee is really good but I do think that that can be rolled into a foreign affairs and external affairs strategy. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) I think it is really important that those, and Deputy Blin and I (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) have talked about this before when we have been on trips, (*Interjection*) about the synergies between External Affairs and how he and I have really welcomed being able to get involved in more of that work.

Renaming the Presidents of Scrutiny Management Committee and States' Assembly Constitution Committee does fit, because if a President is the leader of a political Committee having a Chair of the Overseas Aid does feel better (*Interjection*) as they are Committees of, presumably, Policy & Resources Overseas & Aid Development would become and also the Parliamentary Committee.

Again, it has been a long time coming, the pay review. In actual fact I had forgotten about it, such is the importance of it and certainly on my agenda because, as I say, the pay is less to me than the reward of actually being able to serve my Island and I think that there has been a disproportionate uplift for those Committees, to be honest, in terms of what Deputy Roffey was saying and the exposure, because it might be a view that those of us who are on the higher profile Committees carry with us, possibly, a greater burden in terms of reputational damage and ability to get employment outside of the States once we step down from these roles or no longer serve in this function just because of the sheer amount of airtime that we get, not that we ask for, but that, you know, it is absolutely understandable that people are interested in the work that we do and in this day and age of social media and media focus is so sharp that we do get a lot more of that and it does risk our personal reputations on occasion, especially where media does not report in an unbiased and unbalanced way. I think if we think about –

Deputy Taylor: Point of order, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of order, Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Rule 17(6), again. I am not sure the Member's perception in public social media has to do with the amendment.

The Bailiff: I agree with that. Deputy Dudley-Owen, I think that we are straying away from what is on the face of this amendment into other matters.

Deputy Dudley-Owen: Possibly, sir.

The Bailiff: Can you bring it back to the amendment?

Deputy Dudley-Owen: Yes, I am drawing to a close now and my point was specifically in relation to the public nature of a lot of the presidential roles on the Principal Committees actually taking a greater risk and also greater workload than those that are mentioned in the amendment's proposals 8 and 9. Anyway, suffice to say, I hope that other Members get behind this amendment too, please.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Thank you, sir.

I think the requérants and Deputy Inder are being unfairly castigated here by saying they have brought this at the 11th hour and we are debating something so important. But I actually think

1695 the reason the requérants have brought this forward is because the work of the P&R Sub-Committee has failed to come forward (*Interjection*) and this has forced Deputies who feel passionate about this issue and feel something needs to be done to have brought forward the Requête and then the consequent amendments we have had.

1700 Very fortunately, through this Requête, we now have the report of the Sub-Committee published and I do not know if, actually, all Deputies have read that because it is quite easy for things to get lost in letters of comment because, I think, this report makes for very interesting reading and clearly the Sub-Committee has put in a huge amount of work. It has been very unfortunate that there have been changes to the political composition but they have clearly done a lot of work.

1705 They have also reviewed the work that was previously done. So, this is work that is being built on many other bodies of work, such as the Harwood Report, so the findings and some of the recommendations that are coming of that report are there and I just want to point out, I really encourage this report to have more airtime through media and the public and potentially this debate.

1710 I highlight some of the things that I have picked up from that report, which I very much agree with. The Sub-Committee's initial view that the main issue needing to be addressed is the inability of Government to set and deliver on strategy and after much deliberation the Sub-Committee came to the opinion that the issue is very difficult to resolve fully without moving to a more executive style of government.

1715 Again, these are all conclusions that many of us feel and are aligned to and this is, again, based on a lot of consideration of a lot of work this term and previously. I highlight that one of the recommendations that the Sub-Committee has reached, the Sub-Committee by a majority suggests that consideration be given to reducing the number of Deputies by four to 34 and also that the number of Alderney Representatives be reduced from two to one.

1720 So the recommendations of this Sub-Committee are very much close to what Deputy Inder is proposing. He is out by one, one person. So, this is not Deputy Inder making things up on the floor of the Assembly this is, actually, completely in support of what the work of the Sub-Committee has reached.

1725 Obviously, that is not the only recommendation, it has to be taken in the whole and there were other, I think, very interesting and pragmatic solutions. I really regret that they have not been brought to this Assembly and that we are not able to act on them for the next political term because what we are going to be facing now, if none of the Propositions whether through amendments or original Propositions, go ahead is that, again, we are stuck with no change for another, potentially, five years.

1730 That would make it 15 years from the time the former Reform of Government took place with no further changes when actually, I think, there is a lot of ground, as Deputy Dudley-Owen says, and evidence and support for the direction of change. I also remind Members that we have had the work of the Savings Sub-Committee, where we conducted the public and staff and Deputy service and the question about the number of Deputies was very central to it. There were a lot of submissions made supporting the idea that there should be a reduction on Deputies and it is one of the recommendations included in the Savings Report. Yes, it is not going to fill the black hole but it will go ahead in helping with the savings.

I give way to Deputy –

1740 **Deputy Murray:** I thank Deputy Kazantseva-Miller for giving way.

1745 It was just to say that yes, in the list of savings in areas these areas were covered to be investigated but were not. So it does not mean that the amendment today, although it is based on ideas that were shared amongst the Assembly, it was not taken further to calculate the impact on the Committees and everything else. So, yes, I agree it was covered but no, it was not in detail and hence there is so little detail in this amendment.

I thank you.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Thank you.

So, I think just to confirm, that idea is pretty much part and parcel, it is not in the tier one but it is part and parcel of the recommendations that were taken and the understanding was that some of these recommendations would have come through the Machinery of Government reform work that P&R was conducting and now it is being, potentially, delayed to the next year.

So, again, there is, I think, an overwhelming public support for this direction of travel in terms of reducing the number of Deputies we have got and interestingly, we have been given this magic number, the cubic root of the population, as something that potentially we can hide behind. But I think, as Deputy Roffey very much said, I am sure you can equally find as many, or probably more, instances where the parliament size does not in any way, shape or form relate to the cubic root and, in fact, Deputy Gabriel himself gave me the example of United States Congress but more closely to our shores the Isle of Man.

Deputy Prow actually very much in his earlier speeches made reference to the Isle of Man, where they have a bigger population of 80,000, from memory, and they have 24 Members in their parliament Chamber plus there is a second camera as well, but 24, that is very far away. So my point is we have been given this magic number that could be used as an excuse, another good excuse to hide away because we do not hit that number. We have been given that many excuse many times. Deputy Burford is very good in giving us the red herring to work with and let us not hide behind excuses to stop making decisions.

In terms of this amendment, I am certainly drawn to some of the Propositions, not others, but as outlined, this gives us the choice to do something. I very much agree with what Deputy Murray said in that this is not going far enough. Absolutely, it is not going far enough, but if we do not support something, again, we are kicking the can further down the road of lack of decision. As we have done many times in this political term, it is very easy not to make any decisions.

There is always going to be an excuse that we can set up something else and another investigation Committee and blah, blah, blah in the future and I think we still have to do that because whatever we approve today, or not approve, is not going to go far enough. But it will go somewhere and, I think, the direction of travel in terms of even just that first Proposition of reducing the number of Deputies and looking at Alderney Reps, I think it is the right direction of travel.

So, Deputies, it is very easy to hide behind indecision and inaction while actually a lot of work has already been done. This is not coming out of nowhere, this is coming based on, actually, a lot of work, including the work of the P&R Sub-Committee. So the choice, I think, is quite simple continue kicking the can down the road for another five years ... because future reform will have to be from the next political term. So we are looking at another five years delay, we will be just stuck with what we have got.

So, imagine what can be achieved in that 15 years' time and imagine how little we can achieve as Government. So, I think this is the right direction of travel. It has been supported by a report, by public perceptions, by the work we have done at the Savings Sub-Committee level. I think we just need to start being a bit more brave to make decisions and if there is further investigation next political term about Machinery of Government and we really feel that we have gone too far, we can change that. That is what we have got, we have got the power to change.

So next political term we can make amends again. This is what it means being flexible, this is what it means being a Government that can act and react to the challenges and the decisions we have got in front of us. So let us not lose this chance we have got today by hiding behind more and more excuses.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Thank you, sir.

It is interesting, there seems to be an awful lot of interest in SACC and I know we have got a policy letter from them later in the meeting where everyone is spilling out how they want to change the rules, what they want to do. So it is interesting here that there would be a suggestion about reducing the salary that goes to the President of SACC.

But that is something I could potentially support. I think that the reduction in pay for Scrutiny, which is not a reflection on Deputy Burford or Deputy Meerveld because it would come into effect for the next term that is –

I will give way to Deputy Burford. (*Laughter*)

Deputy Burford: I was just going to confirm to Deputy Taylor that when I had my interview with the Pay Review Committee one of the suggestions I made is that the Presidents of the parliamentary and the interim Committees, such as the DPA, should have their salaries reduced to in between States' Members and Principal Committee Presidents. So, I do not take any offence. In fact, I agree with him.

Thank you.

Deputy Taylor: Okay, that is an interesting interjection. I will give way to Deputy Oliver in a moment, if she really wants that? I will give way to her.

Deputy Oliver: It was actually a point of correction to what Deputy Burford said because the DPA do not actually have anything. So we are on zero as it is. Did you say up or down?

Deputy Burford: Oh, up, it was a mistake.

Deputy Taylor: Point of order 17(1), you are speaking directly to Members (*Laughter*) and another point of order, 11 something, you are giving a point of correction to a point of correction, but I gave way so it does not matter, but I will get on with my speech! (**A Member:** In a moment.)

Yes, I would be minded to support those reductions, it is not significant sums of money but we are here, it is in front of us, it is something that we could, potentially, realise. But then I am not entirely sure that we can because of the way that the amendment is drafted because the very first line is, 'after Proposition 2, or should Proposition 1 not carry then we have 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.' So, I am not convinced. If we were to support this reduction by bigger numbers, then we would lose our opportunity to then make further savings. I am not quite happy with the way the wording is on that.

The next point I just want to raise is related to the consultation that was done and then the actual workability of this because it acknowledges that there is no consultation with the States of Alderney and I am wondering how Deputy Inder got to this 14th March date. That seems to be the submission date for a States' Meeting, but how that would interact with the States of Alderney who have just had an election. So, if Alderney Representative Roberts or Alderney Representative Snowden could pick up on this.

My understanding is that they are not actually going to have official roles in the Alderney Government until mid-January. I will give way to hear what you say.

Deputy Inder: If it helps, Deputy Taylor, actually reading this, this is actually by negotiation. So it does not necessarily happen by the start of the next term. This is directed by negotiation. If those negotiations do not happen then the Alderney Reps remain as two Reps.

Deputy Taylor: Yes, I thought that might be the case because it just looks to me that the consultation or negotiation period is far too short where you are having a change of people in different positions that are not even established in Alderney and if this amendment was passed in this substantive Proposition, how likely are P&R going to be able to come back with anything

1850 meaningful from a negotiation with someone who has literally just got into their seat within the last couple of weeks.

So, that is my concern. On balance, I probably will not vote for this because I go back to my previous points that we should not be setting the numbers to suit, we should be setting our responsibilities and what-not and then we set the numbers. But I just wanted to get those bits off my chest because I have sat for ages.

1855 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

1860 As Deputy Dudley-Owen was kind enough to point out, I am probably one of the busier States' Members and referring to a point that Deputy Aldwell made earlier, I also do make a point of attending as much as I possibly can. I do not think I have ever missed a vote in this Assembly in my entire parliamentary career, for want of a better word, my service and it is very rare that I have ever had to miss a Committee meeting and only then through work and I do try to make it to all
1865 the presentations, etc.

But I do agree with Deputy Dudley-Owen's point that there is some unevenness in the distribution of how that work is distributed among various States' Members but Deputy Parkinson in seconding this amendment has said, making the same point as Deputy Dudley-Owen, that this States could function perfectly well with five fewer Deputies. I might be tempted to agree with
1870 them if – and it is a very big and totally hypothetical if – *if* we could choose which five that are not there.

I just do not think that we are going to change the proportion no matter how many Deputies we have. I do not think we are ever going to change the proportion of the people who are less likely or less able to do the same amount of work as others and that is where, I think, this theory
1875 that underpins the core tenet of this amendment falls over.

Now, actually, I have had some very interesting data and I thank the States' Greffier's team for providing it, but they have provided me with some analysis of the number of roles that are not just limited to the senior and Principal Committees, etc. and I think it is important that we recognise that there are a number of roles, that may be smaller and roles that we do not
1880 necessarily think about, but nonetheless they do provide an important function and I will single out the LRP, for example, as one of those.

I think it does carry out a very important function. It does not get much praise or glory and actually Deputy Fairclough is, I think, the poll topper in terms of the number of different Committees he sits on and the LRP is, indeed, one that he is a Member of as well. But actually,
1885 when you look at the number of roles that have to be filled there are a total of 79, actually, across the full range.

That is a lot and there are only two Members, or three, depending on how you classify which roles you are going to count, that currently serve on none of those and they are actually all people who have very definitely pulled their weight at an earlier stage in the term because they are
1890 currently Deputy Ferbrache, Deputy Helyar and Deputy Mahoney, who does have a role on the CPA, so depending on whether you want to count that or not.

But those are all people, I think everyone in this Assembly would agree, who have certainly pulled their weight for some of this political term. So, although I do agree that there is some unevenness in distribution, I do think it is important that we recognise that, actually, the
1895 parliament itself has got a really important function.

So it is not just about those higher profile roles which attract a lot of attention and probably do have very significant workloads. We as an Assembly, we as a parliament, irrespective of what Committees we serve on, we do have a really important role to play and so the number matters and I am thoroughly persuaded by the arguments that are being put forward by the likes of
1900 Deputy Burford and Deputy Roffey that this is absolutely the wrong way of going about any

changes. It does need proper consideration and for that reason I do not think that these Propositions are worth inserting via this amendment and that is why I will be voting against it.

A Member: Hear, hear.

The Bailiff: Deputy Prow.

Deputy Prow: Thank you, sir.

I can be extremely brief. The reason for that is the first class speech from Deputy Kazantseva-Miller. I am not going to repeat the points she made. I think she made some very good points.

Sir, I am going to support this amendment. I think when Deputy Inder opened and when the seconder, Deputy Parkinson, made his speech they both have made it absolutely clear this is about giving options around the Requête that were there. I am not sure that I am convinced by every single part of it, but I wholeheartedly thank them and accept that those options are very welcome.

The only other comment I really want to make was I perfectly understood, particularly the points made by Deputy Burford. I was much more confused around the arguments that were put by the President of SACC, Deputy Meerveld. On this theme of, well actually a requête an amendment to a requête on something as important as this should not be the way forward, well let us analyse the reason why the Requête was brought, why the amendment was brought.

It is because despite being in the Government Work Plan a reform of Government, which I think just about everybody in this Assembly to a greater or lesser degree agree with, this was not forthcoming. We have had no submission from Policy & Resources. To be fair to Policy & Resource, and for the avoidance of doubt my comments are not particularly directed at them, *per se*; in their wisdom they decided to put this out to a sub-group of P&R and that failed because of a lack of consensus, nothing could be agreed and there is no criticism of Deputy Le Tocq in this, I have had conversations with him about this. I think he tried when he was involved in this his very level best to find that consensus; it was not forthcoming.

So that is the reason why requêtes, not only this Requête, there is another requête coming, that Members have felt a need to bring to this Assembly some form of reform of Government. It has not gone the full hog that it needs to but I completely support the Requête, because I would because I am a requérant, but I absolutely support this amendment. It gives us options.

The other point I would make, I was a bit confused about the, 'Well, is this the right way forward? Amendments on the floor in the Assembly to make this sort of decision?' Coupled with the very interesting cube root theory. So, do we have that debate or do we just go down the cube root theory? I leave that for the Members to consider.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Well, it is 12.30 p.m. Are you going to be very long, Deputy Blin?

Deputy Blin: Yes, sir. *(Laughter)*

The Bailiff: Okay, well maybe everyone needs some sustenance before that, then. So we will now adjourn till 2.30 p.m.

*The Assembly adjourned at 12.30 p.m.
and resumed its sitting at 2.30 p.m.*

**The Government Reform (2024) Requête –
Debate continued**

1945 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Blin.

Deputy Blin: Thank you, sir.

I would like to almost talk on two parts. One is on the amendment itself and the Requête and also, specifically, I would like to talk on Propositions 6 and 7 because they directly affect the role I currently hold. I will start off with the amendments as a whole, obviously the Requête and the amendments.

So we currently sit where we are with our 38 Deputies and 'this was a decision of the people of this Island and it is not for us to start playing around with one of the most significant votes in this Island on the back of an amendment.' Those are the words of Deputy Neil Inder from *Hansard*, 25th January 2024. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

So I start with that and it is trying to say that we stick with consistence. As I spoke during Deputy Gollop's amendment the summary was basically, I think it is interesting to look at it, if it was a review it would be very important. But I can honestly say I do not understand how this has been brought about and the purpose of this amendment.

Also what I had done when I saw, specifically, Propositions 6 and 7, I did communicate with Deputy Inder to ask if he could just talk to me about it, so I could maybe clarify a few things and the response was, no, you will just see what it is. I took the same steps with Deputy Parkinson, who is currently not in the Assembly, but when I referred to him to ask him about the motivation, etc., he sort of clarified to me with a bit more information than I received from Deputy Inder, but the primary motivation of the Assembly is to reduce the size of the Assembly and to make the States' Meetings more productive (*Interjection*) and some of the Committees which are over-manned could be fulfilled by others.

He also clarified that it was not reflecting negatively on the individuals discharging the duties but more of a reflection on the size of the jobs, so that helped me to understand more. So, I could go through the impact of the reductions and there would be reduction representation, representatives, increased workload, risk of centralisation and more power amongst a few, the impact on certain values and, potentially, undermining public trust and false economic justifications, etc. But what I would like to do, though, is more also specify and, for the benefit of Members of the Assembly, I would like to express or explain a few other points.

So Propositions 6 and 7 of this amendment specifically recommend that the post of President of Overseas Aid & Development Commission (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) shall be held in *ex-officio* by a Member of Policy & Resources Committee. So, if this amendment were to be successful, I need to emphasise through you, sir, to the Assembly that the first priority in regard to any possible changes to the Commission and in the absolute forefront of all our minds has to be the ultimate beneficiaries of the life changing and lifesaving aid provided by Guernsey to vulnerable communities in the developing world.

The procedures and processes of how this is achieved are important but we must also remember that the beneficiaries themselves are our main focus. I wish to highlight that the workload of the Commission is, perhaps, heavier than the States fully appreciates. The Commission receives, on average, 175 grant aid award applications each year for both the single-year and multi-year projects.

All of these applications have to be individually and carefully considered by the President and the Commissioners, both in regard to the merits of each proposed project and the very necessary due diligence to safeguard taxpayers' funding. In addition to this, the Commission receives an average of 10 disaster and emergency relief applications each year which, by their very nature, have to be considered urgently.

Then there is the community partnership applications of up to nine years, the President is required to read and assess every single one of these, approximate 200, applications, detailed

applications, as the President has one out of the seven votes. Then there are the other various matters that arise, including changes to the policy, the budget, the management of projects and reporting which in the developing world can be challenging.

Liaison with the media, promotion of the Commission's work through events and, by the way, I will add late night shopping. We have an event in the Health Promotion Unit, meeting with charities and I would say that during the peak period of the Commission's annual cycle of funding rounds, from March to July, the work of the President of the Commission is comparable, in my case, to work I undertake with both the DPA, the volume of meetings, and also in the Offshore Wind Sub-Committee; so it is considerable.

During this period the Commission often meets twice a month for two to three hours on each occasion and then the rest of the year, once a month. So, I note that the Requête itself refers to the Overseas Aid & Development Commission by including it as an example of a Committee that SACC should consider making an external function (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) as part of the proposed investigation and recommendations to be brought back to the States.

So, of course, if the Requête is successful and I have to emphasise that the first priority in regard to any possible changes to the Commission, and in the absolute forefront of our minds, has to be the ultimate beneficiaries of the life changing and lifesaving aid provided by Guernsey to vulnerable communities in the developing world. The procedures and processes of how this is achieved is important, but we must always remember that the beneficiaries themselves must remain as our main focus.

So, my main concern is that it has not been defined in the Requête what external function actually means. Would it become a Commission completely independent from the States of Guernsey or would it take another form? At the current time if the Policy & Resources Committee is mandated, under its duties and powers, to advise the States on the policy framework regarding overseas aid developments and it, therefore, has to approve any changes to the Commission's operational policies, would an external function ensure that the Guernsey Government was being seen to comply and fulfilling its international obligations as a mature, independent jurisdiction, as this Requête raises uncertainty about the future of the Commission, which I know from first-hand experience, is undertaking excellent work thanks to its experienced volunteer unpaid Commissioners? So, I would urge caution.

Now in regard to the Commissioners, it seems that the Commission has been referenced in the Requête, which the main focus is on reducing the number of Deputies as a way of easing the workload on the proposed smaller number of States' Members and having smaller groups in general.

So this aside to the main purpose of the Requête is, perhaps, a little odd as the Commission is the only States' Committee, with the exception of the Ladies College Board which consists of just one States' Member, the President, with the remainder of the Commission currently being six non-States' Member volunteers.

The Commission also has just a single officer. It appears that the Commission, as an example of a Committee that could be considered to be made an external function is, therefore, rather tenuous. It also gives the impression that it was added as an afterthought and not properly thought through.

The other point I would like to raise is also the comments made by Deputy Murray. We were talking about the *ex-officio* role but in Deputy Murray's speech he also spoke about the fact that we calculate based on a GDP, but in other areas we do not. I would also like to remind that we are well below the target of where we are meant to be within and there was an extant Resolution saying we will rise to it.

But as you will have noticed we have always stuck with the support of P&R, we have just stayed doing what we can, we know we are not catching up with it but we continue. I appreciate we are digressing but I think it is very important for Members to understand that the role of the Overseas Aid & Development Commission does take up a lot more time and if your objective is reducing Deputies, this is not the right way to go about it.

I would also like to refer to a comment made by Deputy Dudley-Owen and it was regarding the fact that, in conversations, we have spoken about that some of the work we do with Overseas Aid Commission does blend correctly and works very well with External Affairs. I did not mean that as to say they should merge, but I do feel they go hand-in-hand, so it was really to clarify that it does not mean it would integrate.

I would not wish to put on the plates of any of the Members of P&R to have to add this role to their role, to go through the parts that are there and I also see there is an inference that if this goes *ex-officio* and there is a funding just to let us say an arm's length body or a charity organisation to fund, that is not the purpose of how it works for the Overseas Aid Commission on how we approach our duties.

Then I see there is the comment about changing the titles, that the President would no longer be the President, it would be a Chair. Well, quite frankly, as I do currently sit in that Chair that would not be a bother me at all, but why are we dealing with names of roles and things? Already our Chief Minister, I would term him as President of Policy & Resources and Chief Minister in another part; Deputy Le Tocq, who is head of External Affairs and is also referred to as Minister of External Affairs; there are various titles.

So those, once again, it just seems like fluff on the amendment, it does not serve any purpose. So, if this is a potential back door for those who do not support Overseas Aid & Development Commission funding then I can see that angle there, but that is a gift of P&R for something we do and to fulfil other obligations internationally for the work we do.

The other aspects, which really just come down to dropping the number of Deputies, I still do not agree with the consistent ... well, if we are going to be consistent and like Deputy Inder himself said, we do not change this on the back of an amendment. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) If this had been done as a review and it was then looking at the Committees, how they would structure, this is a strong, large piece of work required to fulfil this and not for the next election.

Now I am aware that Deputy Le Tissier had a question to ask, 'Well what happens as we have already released all the papers for the electorate to vote, and they are presuming it is going to be for 38 Deputies?' But, apparently, I think we will be hearing later on about that and I suspect it is not going to make much difference from what I understood.

In conclusion, I think I will come to the conclusion because I have lost a bit of the section there. So, look, I would really ask Members to reject this amendment. (*Interjection*) I would ask, as well, that we would separate the Propositions when we come to this and I would ask that we all consider preserving the integrity, the independence of the Overseas Aid & Development Commission.

I would also ask that we do not, at this point, reduce the number of Deputies and it will be the same consistent vote for myself, whether it be by five or by 10 unless there is, first, work on reviewing all of this to actually come up with a more pragmatic solution and I will just use my other analogy I used before about a lifeboat, by reducing the number of people in a lifeboat you may think you are saving costs but are you actually being more effective for the community and helping the individuals you wish?

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Just by way of clarification on what Deputy Blin has just said, there will be a single vote on Amendment 2 which, if successful, will put into the set of Propositions all of these Propositions. There will then be a vote, if necessary, on what would be Proposition 3 and then we will see where we are thereafter. So that is how it will run.

Deputy Mahoney.

Deputy Mahoney: Thank you, sir.

I was just going to try Rule 26(1) please.

The Bailiff: Well, in that case, can I invite those Members who wish to speak to please stand in their places. *(Laughter)*

2100 **Deputy Mahoney:** Yes, please.

The Bailiff: The motion is that there be no further debate on Amendment 2, other than hearing from Deputy Helyar and from Deputy Inder. Those in favour; those against.

Members voted Contre

2105 **The Bailiff:** Well, we will have a motion then, please as there has been a request for a recorded vote. I will call it lost, *au voix*. Will you now open the voting, please Greffier on the Rule 26(1) motion proposed by Deputy Mahoney.

There was a recorded vote.

Rule 26(1)

2110 *Carried – Pour 11, Contre 24, Ne vote pas 3, Did not vote 1, Absent 1*

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Aldwell, Sue	Blin, Chris	Burford, Yvonne	Oliver, Victoria	Haskins, Sam
Cameron, Andy	Brouard, Al	St Pier, Gavin		
De Lisle, David	Bury, Tina	Taylor, Andrew		
Dyke, John	De Sausmarez, Lindsay			
Ferbrache, Peter	Dudley-Owen, Andrea			
Helyar, Mark	Fairclough, Simon			
Mahoney, David	Falla, Steve			
Murray, Bob	Gabriel, Adrian			
Parkinson, Charles	Gollop, John			
Queripel, Lester	Inder, Neil			
Trott, Lyndon	Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha			
	Le Tissier, Chris			
	Le Tocq, Jonathan			
	Leadbeater, Marc			
	Matthews, Aidan			
	McKenna, Liam			
	Meerveld, Carl			
	Moakes, Nick			
	Prow, Robert			
	Roberts, Steve			
	Roffey, Peter			
	Snowdon, Alexander			
	Soulsby, Heidi			
	Vermeulen, Simon			

2115 **The Bailiff:** Will you please close the voting, Greffier. So the outcome on the request for a recorded vote was that there voted in favour 11 Members, there voted against 24 Members, 3 Members abstained, 2 Members did not participate in the vote and that is why it was declared lost.

Deputy Le Tocq.

Deputy Le Tocq: Thank you, sir.

2120 I just thought I would stand up a few minutes before in case you might call me. Sir, I was not going to speak *(Laughter)* except – I do not think I have ever said that before! – *(Interjection)* except Deputy Blin got me to my feet.

I support overseas aid and I think it is really important, for all sorts of reasons, that we have an Overseas Aid Commission and that we allocate a certain proportion of our income as a community to overseas aid.

2125 One of the major reasons why I support that is because it does help us in terms of international relations. I am regularly surprised at the number of representatives of other countries who are surprised themselves that we devote a proportion of our income to international development and we take it seriously.

2130 However, the way in which we do that does not need to be in its current form. I was a past President of Overseas Aid, admittedly, 20 years ago or so and I was instrumental in bringing the reforms that brought it to the current constitution that it currently holds. However, that was because I felt it was a good stepping stone towards a more arm's length type of body because the policy for overseas aid is quite clearly and squarely within the mandate of the Policy & Resources Committee. It is to do with international relations and the Overseas Aid Commission is not a maker of policy, it is a receiver of policy.

2135 Secondly, sir, I would say that whoever chairs Overseas Aid will have a busy schedule, certainly for large chunks of the year, not for the whole of the year, but for large chunks of the year. But it is not absolutely essential, first of all, that if what is envisaged in this amendment was to take place that the lead for External Relations on Policy & Resources is the Chair of that Committee.

2140 I think all that is required is there is someone in the Assembly who could be the responder for various questions and take responsibility for that part of the mandate. In a sense, that is already the case because the policy issues with regard to overseas aid, as I have said, already rests with P&R.

2145 But as we all know, I hope, what one individual can carry, and this has been referred to already in debate, is dependent upon the ability of that individual (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and, therefore, we should choose people to undertake roles who have that ability and the capacity to take on whatever it might be. So I do not think we should be going for the lowest common denominator in every case. So that is certainly not a big issue for me with regard to this amendment.

2150 All I would like to say, in terms of the proposal to reduce the numbers by five instead of 10, is that, and as I have mentioned before, from my perspective as one of the two longest serving Members on the previous Reshaping Government Sub-Committee, we came to the conclusion that within the current setup of the Assembly that we could continue to operate in an effective and efficient way with five fewer Members and with that, as well, there is the opportunity for further redevelopment and reform in terms of the make-up of Committees, etc. So, in a sense, it is a compromise but it is a compromise that has been investigated and deemed appropriate. So I am actually supportive of this amendment from that point of view.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

2160

Deputy Gollop: Thank you.

2165 This amendment is a bit of a round-robin, it is a bit of a mixed bag of ideas and insights and some, perhaps, I am more opposed to than others. But I think I will leave Proposition 3 for the moment because I think that is the main line, but first of all, look at the Alderney Representatives. Now of course the number of Alderney Representatives that we have has been formally specified in Law and, as a matter of interest, when we had Island-wide elections the first time around, or actually the second time around, because we had Island-wide Deputies from 1900 to 1918 ...

2170 But in the era of the Conseillers, 1994 to 1998, the pre-elections, two elections and one by-election involved candidates all travelling on planes to Alderney. Deputy Ferbrache will remember that and others who, perhaps, are present today and they canvassed for votes and in at least one instance, I think it made a material difference to the winner and certainly a difference to the placings. So, the way Alderney has been represented over the years has varied.

2175 When you start looking at numbers the smaller you go, if we went to 28, then clearly Alderney becomes somewhat over-represented. At 38 it is interesting because, effectively, we have one representative for 1,700 people, I think, at the moment, something like that. Of course, if we went to 28, we would have one representative for just over 2,000 residents in Guernsey.

The point has already been made to me today that the population has increased so, in some ways, we are going backwards in that respect. But with 33 it would be in between. But when you look at the calculations of how many people should come from Alderney at the current level of 38 it works out at, I think, one and a quarter people from Alderney, or one and a half and, actually, their electoral role is slightly bigger than ours, perhaps because of the type of the electorate and their average age, they are motivated to go on the roll.

So, how can you have half a person? Well, maybe I am only half there, (*Laughter*) and if you look at other places like the Scottish Parliament Assembly and even the Westminster Assembly they over-represent Island's. Even America, America was mentioned earlier, they have two senators for Hawaii, which is the same number as for New York and California, much more populated states.

There were attempts by David Cameron and, more recently, Boris Johnson to revise the constituencies to give the Conservatives more of an advantage, I suspect – it did not work – to equalise them. But they made exceptions for the Western Islands, for Orkney and Shetland and for Anglesey, and those communities are currently over-represented compared to the average constituency in southern England or London or wherever.

So, to my mind, you not only have to look holistically at how Alderney can be represented and people who have read the paper that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller referred to, there were ideas, I think, about perhaps Alderney Representatives sitting on spending Committees or non-voting or whatever, but it is a difficult question and it cannot be decided just like that and if we went down to one, on a whim, then apart from the legal and inter-Island relationships, we would actually be under-representing Alderney. So I think that is a point to bear in mind.

Coming on to 5, this might entertain Members, there is this proposal from Deputy Inder and Deputy Parkinson to reduce SACC to a President and two Members. Well, actually, this is true, one day I was ill and could not attend the meeting or got there very late and I got to the Royal Court Library and it was over, the meeting, and yet it was scheduled for three hours and Deputy Meerveld informed me they had gone quicker without me (*Laughter*) and I was a Member of the Committee at the time.

Indeed, other people who visited the Committee have said on occasion when there are only three Members the meetings go a bit faster than with four or five. But it is not all about speed. I think the Committee has been ably chaired by Deputy Meerveld and it has been innovative including, not only to changing our procedures and codes of conduct, but also the attempts at a proper induction last time and training.

But the one downside of the Committee, I felt from the outset, was the collection of five politicians who sat on it were all moderately similar. I think we were all males of a certain age and, possibly, we lacked diversity and I think for SACC to really work ... I have a vision of SACC – a bit controversial this – it is not just about leading our Assembly and reforming our governance and improving the way we debate, and I think a lot of the arguments as to why we should have a reduction in Members come down to the fact that people look at the States' Assembly and say he is going on too long, or there are issues about behaviours and length of speeches and all the rest of it.

But I felt with the SAC Committee that we also have a role as being a kind of trade union for States' Members. We should be there to represent our interests as distinct from the public sector or the Civil Service or non-statutory bodies and, therefore, you do really need not only regular consultation with all of the Members, I am not sure we have done that enough, but you need to have different kinds of people on the Committee and reducing it to three, I think, would go against that.

I understand where Deputy Le Tocq is coming from on overseas aid because I remember, like an elephant here, that I was on Deputy Le Tocq's Overseas Aid Committee and then it got wound-up, much to my disappointment. But Deputy Le Tocq continued his role when he became a Minister on the Policy Council and Deputy Roffey had the role as well, as I recall, for a term.

So it can be done in a different way, his suggested in Policy & Resources. Speaking personally, as a new Member of Policy & Resources I think the workload we have got is huge. (A Member: Hear, hear.) We are trying to cover everything from external relations to employment conditions to Law, to Treasury, to many other things, we are actually doing the work of four or five of the old States' Committees, but that is a different topic.

I do not see, really, why we are spending too much time, like Deputy Burford, on changing from President to Chair and when it comes to payment to States' Members I am aware that a report has been produced but I do not feel that this debate, really, should be about States' pay at all.

We are going off on a complete tangent there and I would also make the general point that there are some Members, as Deputy Dudley-Owen has said, who do not appear to be pulling their weight. Well, I am afraid that is life and it may be the electorate who have to decide whether the Deputies have performed well or not and publishing attendances would also help.

But I would also make the point that there are Deputies who stood for roles who have not got them and there are other Deputies who do a lot of work, for the sake of argument, with community activities and constituency work and, I think, those points were made ably to the States' Pay Review Board and I think they have taken them on board because there is more than one kind of Member and I think Deputy Meerveld would agree with me there.

As a general aside, I would say women Members or persons of that gender actually work harder than male Members, not just because there are fewer of them but I think they often research more but they also have more constituency cases of a sensitive nature; but that is another topic.

I do not want to get into reduction of President salaries. We know Overseas Aid Commission does not even attract that. I think Deputy Blin has done a good job. I think he has raised the profile in everything from the art gallery and I think the fact that we have a President who can answer questions is useful but as Deputy Le Tocq says, that could be done in a different way.

But I think this really does skate across the pond: we are everywhere. We are Overseas Aid, we are looking at Scrutiny, we are looking at Alderney and that is not good because the Requête that has been placed, which I am respectful to in a way, I think it is an odd requête because there are numerous arguments made by Deputy Helyar within it about why we are dysfunctional and I would agree with some of them and agree that we should have a greater direction.

People have often portrayed me in the earlier debate as a dinosaur who looks backwards, actually, I have always been a vigorous supporter of looking at a more ministerial executive form of Government. But weirdly enough, the Requête makes a lot of points, it questions whether we need an in-house Scrutiny Committee, for example, but the Propositions are very limited. They are basically just reduce to 10 and encourage SACC to come back with lots of reforms very quickly that might not actually be the Propositions or Resolutions in there, because SACC may consider that they will have to put other things across.

So, this is an amendment full of Propositions on minutiae which is not actually germane to the Requête because although the Requête is about the Machinery of Government, its only specific point is the reduction to 28. So, that mystifies me and, as you can imagine from my earlier speech, I am not in favour of reducing us just like that to 33 and I would reinforce the point, which actually was a weakness in my amendment to if I am honest, that not only do you need to really put a lot of evidence for the perfect number of States' Members but the referendum that we honoured, with perhaps the wrong option winning but that is what won, that was the system we had, the referendum was clear about electing 38 Deputies so we should, at least, have a big consultation period, or maybe another referendum and, therefore, going from 38 to 33 fails that test.

Deputy Murray, perhaps, gave this an easier ride than my amendment but I do not think there is a real evidence base here and my amendment was just a response to the base reduction from 38 to 28, whereas this nuances it to 33. But in reality, it brings in a whole new lot of issues, has a different view on Scrutiny from the Requête but the Requête does not have a Proposition for it.

Where I do agree with Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is many members of the public always say cut States' Members' pay or cut the number of States' Members or cut civil servants pay but we cannot just be a slave to populism and she is right that, I think, I did want a green paper published.

I think we, perhaps with hindsight, should have published the report earlier but we all feared that we would end up with a debate that would be hurried with loads of curious amendments and would not really get to where we want to go and joining that particular group late, I do not believe Deputy Meerveld kept on changing his position I think he was pretty consistent, he did not want to see Executive Government introduced just like that and he did not want to see a huge slashing of Members and I was a Member of SACC and we were told what was going on, sometimes it was a bit awkward at times to listen to.

Then I joined the Committee for real on P&R but, of course, I did not agree with everything there. I actually think there are a lot more things we should do. I think it was not that focused on the reduction to three Members, which I have got some sympathy with the Committee and I definitely think it did not analyse whether we should follow Jersey and the Isle of Man to a more ministerial executive system; it was a dog's breakfast. It even suggested reintroducing a policy council. It was not the right report but at least it should have been published. So, I think we would be best to look at things in a more measured way and await later amendments.

The Bailiff: Alderney Representative Snowden.

Alderney Representative Snowden: Thank you, sir.

It is an interesting debate, it feels like a long debate and we are not really getting very far very quickly, and we have got lots more to come. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) But anyway, I think we have got other important matters we do not seem to be dealing with but we will try and concentrate on this one.

Just talking about, I think Deputy Gollop raised about, Island-wide voting and potentially people in Alderney being able to vote for, not Guernsey Deputies but whatever they were called down there, I think that is something that should actually be looked at. There are 1,400 votes, potentially, in Alderney and I think it would change, maybe, the attitude or response in this Assembly to Alderney with some of the big ticket items that come up because there will be more of a Bailiwick thinking about it rather than, maybe, just a Guernsey focus about it. So I think that should be looked at.

I do have to point out that although I thank Deputy Neil Inder for putting this amendment here through you, sir, I think you potentially tried to do too much in one amendment because you have got quite a lot going on here. It is interesting, but it is way too much, in my view, on the floor of the Assembly put in with this amendment.

Regarding the consultation with the States of Alderney, there has not actually been any consultation with the States of Alderney about changing their representation with the Alderney Reps and you do have the 1978 Representatives of Alderney Law and you do have the 1948 Agreement.

So, in answering Deputy Taylor, I think, who raised a question before lunch regarding Alderney about the timeline that you mentioned on here, which is 14th March 2025, I cannot speak on behalf of the States of Alderney because we have not discussed this in any detail but I do not think it could actually be done by the timeline even if the States of Alderney were supportive with the timeline that you have put into this amendment regarding it.

As I say, I am a bit concerned that we are going a bit too quickly, too fast with all of this and I think it actually comes back to, I think, we may have failed with actually having the review that we were meant to have two or three years ago, whenever it was meant to happen, and gone through the right process. You would have proper consultation with the public, Alderney and Guernsey public, you would have had a consultation with the Deputies and moved forward but for some

2330 reason that has got stuck in translation and now we are on to the amendment on the floor of the Assembly trying to move things forward.

So I think, unfortunately, it is a nice try and maybe this was the idea to have a debate about this and how we move forward before the Guernsey elections but I do not actually think ... Also one other point, which I should mention, which is quite important, I think one Deputy raised that 2335 it would go 38 to 33, potentially and Deputy Neil Inder replied that, well, actually, if Alderney does not agree the Alderney Reps could stay at two.

Well, I appreciate that, thank you, but I am not quite sure that is actually maybe the gist of this amendment that you are putting forward. So you could be dropping to 33 and then still having two Alderney Reps, if the States of Alderney did not agree with it. So, I am not quite sure that gets 2340 you where you want to get to anyway.

As I said, I think really there needs to be more urgent work taken on this and a proper process followed (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) rather than this amendment, I would say, on the floor of the Assembly, trying to do quite a lot.

I am happy to give way to Deputy Roffey.

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Deputy Roffey: Thank you.

I am interested to ask Alderney Representative Snowdon, Alderney have just had a plebiscite on who their Representatives should be next year. If, during the course of next year, there is only going to be possibly one Representative, is it the person who came top in the poll or would it 2350 have to be rerun on the basis of people may have voted differently had they just been choosing one Representative?

Alderney Representative Snowdon: Thank you, Deputy Roffey, a very good question well done on asking it.

I think, obviously, we just had three elections, the States of Alderney elections for five 2355 Members, the Presidents election and the plebiscite which indicates the States of Alderney. As I say, we have not discussed this in any detail but the people that are voting were voting for two Alderney Reps. So, I would presume there would be another election, but I cannot say what would be the outcome, that would be for the States of Alderney and the people of Alderney to decide 2360 depending on how we move forward.

However, there is the 1978 Law that needs to be resolved, the 1948 Agreement and whether, actually, Alderney agrees to any of this as well. So I think, as I say, a lot of hurdles that I cannot really see it, even if you had everything lined up, coming in on that side of it.

One important point is that if you did drop to one Alderney Rep, how would the States of 2365 Guernsey be having more oversight, I would say, on important transfer services in Alderney because you only have one Alderney Rep down here? Obviously that Alderney Rep would be trying to put the views of Alderney down here, but would the Deputies be coming up to Alderney more at all because there is important Bailiwick infrastructure in Alderney? I wondered how that would work.

2370 Anyway, at the moment I would like to thank Deputy Neil Inder for putting this amendment here, but it is too much in here for me to support.

Thank you very much.

The Bailiff: Alderney Representative Roberts.

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Alderney Representative Roberts: Thank you, sir.

A reduction in these numbers from 38 to 33, in my mind, is not really the solution we seek, because all of this seems to be going round and round in circles with people of different views and I cannot see this at this time, just before an election helping anything at all. I think we have 2380 got nothing to gain but the big losers here will be Alderney because you can lose five Deputies here, but we would lose 50% of our representation. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Fifty percent of our

representation goes it is like throwing out 17 Deputies from here; it is the equivalent. For that reason, I cannot support it. The Alderney public voting on Guernsey election is an interesting subject because there are 2,000 people down there and maybe we would come closer. You know, you could vote on ours, we could vote on yours. I do not know, but it is an interesting thing that we could talk about.

That is all I wanted to say, that I cannot support it. I thank Deputy Inder for bringing this forward, but for that reason of the disparity between the loss of our Alderney Representative against the loss of the Deputies, it is just disproportionate.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Ferbrache.

Deputy Ferbrache: Sir, I just really want to speak on the last point raised by the two Alderney Representatives. I think I have shown myself all the time I have ever been a States' Member as supportive of Alderney and I will continue to do so during the time I am here. My view is this, in relation to where we are, this is a composite amendment and as the Bailiff has already directed that you either vote for it or against it.

If it then becomes part of the main Propositions you can vote against the individual bits, we have been told that. For the avoidance of any doubt, for our two good friends from Alderney and the people of Alderney who may be listening, I am going to vote for this amendment but I would not vote for that individual Proposition to reduce the numbers.

Even if we did not have all the legal bits, etc. because Deputy Gollop gave the statistics, it is 1.71 people, I think, per whatever it is, 1,710 people, roughly, per elected representative in Guernsey and 1,200 and something for Alderney, or thereabouts, those are the figures. Now, you cannot have half a person, so I would not be in favour of any reduction in relation to Alderney at all, in relation to where we are

Whilst I am on my feet in relation to Alderney, Christmas, as I say, is now 13 days away not 14, it will be 12 tomorrow and we will be here tomorrow, I would like to say something in relation to the last speaker. Now whether or not that is an indulgence or not I do not really mind, we are going to lose him very soon. He has been a great representative for his Island. **(Several Member: Hear, hear!)**

I welcome his successor and will do in January with open arms and an open mind. But Alderney Representative Roberts is an archetypal Alderney man. He has battled life very well indeed, he is a quality person, not only quality to the Island of Alderney, he is a quality representative in this Assembly and has contributed much and I will miss him.

Several Members: Hear, hear! *(Applause)*

The Bailiff: As I do not see anyone else rising I will turn to the lead requérant, Deputy Helyar, to speak to Amendment 2, please.

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

As I have been throughout the debate so far, I shall be brief. Surely the biggest support we could possibly have for reducing numbers is the fact that we have now burnt nearly four and a half hours. We have only got through one amendment, which received three votes in favour of it – shocking, really – and we are just about to get to the end of the second one.

I had struggled. We heard quite a lot about Pareto principles, which is the principle that – I will give way to Deputy Brouard.

Deputy Brouard: If you had not brought it, we would not be here! *(Laughter)*

Deputy Helyar: It is a very valid point but if SACC had done its work, I would not have needed to. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) (**Several Members:** Ooh!) Now we have talked about Pareto principles, which is the economic principle that 80% of the work is done by 20% of the people and I certainly do know that is true of P&R from my time on there and I know that they are all working very hard and more strength to their elbow because they are all working for the benefit of the Island.

I did struggle a bit with some of Deputy Meerveld's comments, but that is not uncommon. Figures. There were some comments that people were miffed, or it was unusual, that minute takers in meetings were being paid more than the States' Members present. Now I am a lawyer so I tend to calculate things on an hourly rate (*Laughter*) and on the basis that SACC meets once a month for an hour, £5,000 an hour is a pretty good going rate for the President of SACC. So, I think, they are doing really quite well and not getting a great deal of value for money from that, I am afraid, and I am sure the public would agree with me.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller made an excellent speech, I thought. Now, one of the things about this Requête, which nobody has noticed perhaps, is that it had a 2024 in brackets and one of the reasons for dating things is because they may be followed by other requêtes with other dates on them.

So watch this space for 2025 because, I think, if this if this amendment does not go through and the Requête does not pass, other suggestions may be made to make changes prior to the election. We have plenty of time. Do not let anybody tell you we do not have sufficient time. The legislation has already been drafted by the Law Officers and, thanks to them, the legislation is already done, so it simply needs to be tabled before the Assembly for that to happen. There is plenty of time for that to be done.

So, I think the requérants would certainly support this amendment because it provides a halfway-house between the first one and the original requête and it goes a little bit further in suggesting modest changes, which are doable and, as we have heard from Members of P&R, can be accommodated. So, there is no reason why not. There is no reason why Members cannot support this other than simply being protectionist.

Now I get asked a lot, and I am sure I will be asked over the next six to nine months or so, who is dragging the anchor? Who is behind all of this stuff not getting changed? Why can we not get stuff done more quickly? We have a problem – I am not giving away – and we have a problem that we are simply not able to fix and because it is too big an elephant we waste far too much of our time, as we are doing now, trying to perfect something to get it absolutely golden perfect before we do it.

That is not the way life works and that is not the way the problems that we have to face and we have to solve need to be solved. You have to eat an elephant one mouthful at a time. This amendment is a slightly bigger mouthful than the main Requête, but I absolutely support it and if the first part does not succeed, I will certainly vote for it when we get to the end of the debate.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: And finally, I will turn to the proposer of Amendment 2, Deputy Inder, to reply to the debate, please.

Deputy Inder: Actually strangely enough, Members, and there is a lot of suspicion in the States and I can confirm, and I am sure, Deputy Helyar will nod in furious agreement, there has been, actually, no conversation between us two and Deputy Parkinson whether we were going to lay this this amendment at all. So we will shoot that fox almost immediately.

Deputy Aldwell, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, Deputy Dudley-Owen, Deputy Victoria Oliver, Deputy de Sausmarez and previously Deputy Bury are some of the hardest working Members of this cohort and that really does tell you something. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Two of those Members are on our substantial operating, what is basically, Executive Committees. Certainly one

of them has got political exposure and Deputy Dudley-Owen is right, this Assembly is made up of those who choose to engage and those who do not.

We are elected as equals but the work is not shared out fairly and equally and that is often by choice. Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is right, we are, or I am being, myself and Deputy Parkinson, are being, unfairly criticised. The failure of SACC to deliver on the Machinery of Government is clear, and I have to say.

Deputy Meerveld: Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Meerveld.

Deputy Meerveld: The Machinery of Government was never a SACC initiative it was a Policy & Resources initiative. So it is interesting when Deputy Helyar was accusing SACC of not delivering, but actually he was on P&R for three years and he should look to himself.

Deputy Inder: Unfortunately, well, maybe fortunately actually, Deputy Meerveld is wearing a face covering and I did not understand a word he said. (*Laughter*)

The Bailiff: Would you like Deputy Meerveld to raise his point of correction again?

Deputy Inder: I would like him to stop mumbling, yes, sir. (*Interjection*)

Deputy Meerveld: I will try not to infect the Assembly with the plague I am currently suffering from. I pointed out to Deputy Inder that the Machinery of Government was never a SACC initiative it was an initiative of Policy & Resources. It was Policy & Resources who published the green paper. It was for Policy & Resources to bring that initiative back to the States and where Deputy Helyar suggested it was a failing of SACC I think he should remember he was on the Policy & Resources Committee for three years and if he wants to look for cause of the failure of bringing that policy to the States, he should look to thyne self.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: Interesting. We regularly sit in Presidents' meetings and in one of those conversations we were asked about the Machinery of Government and there was a suggestion that, and it was levelled directly at Deputy Meerveld, he was attempting to run the clock down. So there you go.

What I did not mention before, what I notice is that I mentioned some of the hardest working people in the States are actually the women, including Deputy Soulsby; and I think Deputy Lindsay de Sausmarez is right, I rarely agree with her, but I cannot criticise, any way, her work ethic and the fact that she has reminded me, actually, that she has rarely missed a vote. She might be five minutes late every now and then (*Laughter*) but in the main she has rarely missed a vote. So that does, actually, speak volumes.

Deputy Taylor, thank you, he is correct this is not my Requête. This is an amendment by myself and Deputy Parkinson in response to a requête. In moving away from the hard workers I am going to respond to Deputy Le Tissier. (*Interjection*) (*Laughter*) The answer to Deputy Le Tissier is quite simple, the emphasis on one electoral district, not the quantum of Deputies, that was the point. The debate in January was on the back of an amendment that, from memory, was to consider an alternative to the single district.

A number of Deputies talk about how they want to wait for some work group or commission to sit and conjure up an alternative, as if anyone has got any confidence in that whatsoever. I am not giving away. Clearly a false narrative as any piece of output will have to come back to the States as a policy letter and, of course, can be amended into oblivion or indeed rejected.

So this narrative that we have all got to go away and get a couple of sensible people to consider this correctly and it will just come magically and be delivered to us whole, is just utter nonsense. Deputy Burford made mention of the Pay Review Board as though it had some judgement from above. Well, it is not and clearly has not been.

2540 The last pay review came to the Assembly and was actually rejected by this Assembly. So, this is how this system of government works. People go away, they put together work, policy letters, it comes back to this Assembly and we have got an ability to amend it, vote for it, reject it and change it and this is what I am trying, or myself and Deputy Parkinson, are trying to do today.

2545 So it is an utter fallacy that we need to go away and give these greater consideration and they will be delivered to us perfectly formed and we will accept them; it is simply not the case. If Deputy Murray does not think this goes far enough, that is actually a good thing. He can vote for the insertion, because this is about insertion, and choose the bits he thinks moves the conversation forward.

2550 An opportunity to move that conversation forward that supports his general move to move that conversation on, but by not accepting this to insert into debate we will never get to this point and I confirm with him that if this is inserted by voting for the whole amendment, thereafter, if it becomes part of the Propositions, he can pick and choose those things which he likes or dislikes basically voting on each of the Propositions discreetly.

2555 I have to say, I am quite surprised that both Deputy Burford and Deputy Gabriel take such a *laissez faire* attitude to cost savings. I am really surprised, particularly Deputy Gabriel £250,000 per annum may not be a lot to them. That is the annual savings, that is a quarter of million pounds a year. But it is not to the –

2560 **Deputy Burford:** Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Burford.

Deputy Inder: This will be interesting. (*Laughter*)

2565 **Deputy Burford:** I do not take a *laissez faire* attitude to cost savings. I would like Deputy Inder to withdraw that. It is my contention that cutting the number of Deputies will not necessarily lead to cost savings due to the fact that with fewer people the quality of decisions may be reduced.

Thank you.

2570 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: Well, £250,000 per year, which appears to be –

2575 **Deputy Gabriel:** Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Gabriel.

2580 **Deputy Gabriel:** In my speech I mentioned £200,000 and as a comparison to the £600 million budget figure, I suggested that in comparison it was inconsequential and that I do consider it a large amount of money.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

2585 **Deputy Inder:** Every penny counts; so the saying goes. Quarter of million pounds is a lot of money for the people of Guernsey; £1 million saved over the life of the next parliament, so that is 31 taxpayers a year will not be supporting the salaries of this Assembly annually. I think

sometimes there is almost a cognitive dissonance between what actually happens out there and what we actually see. I think £250,000 a year, a message that we are making the effort to cut costs is a great message for Guernsey.

In a perverse response Deputy Meerveld, who was supposed to be one of the leads on the Machinery of Government, has failed to deliver that Machinery of Government and is now telling the States that we need to deliver the Machinery of Government.

Deputy Meerveld: Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Meerveld.

Deputy Meerveld: I will reiterate again, the Machinery of Government was a project initiated by Policy & Resources and Policy & Resources were the ones responsible for delivering it. When the report was finalised by that working group it was handed to Policy & Resources at their discretion to do with it as they wished and they have recently printed it as a paper.

I would take this opportunity to respond to another comment that Deputy Inder made about being told it was SACC or me dragging our feet in that meeting. I never agreed with the idea of reducing the number of Deputies for multiple reasons and that is why the findings of that report on that particular issue were not unanimous by that group, so it has never come back as a fully worked plan for the States to consider but it is not SACC's or my fault for not doing it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder, just a minute please. So, appended to the Policy & Resources letter of comment is a report that says 'report of the Policy & Resources Reshaping Government Sub-Committee. So I think Deputy Meerveld is right when he says it was a Policy & Resources Sub-Committee, it was not a States' Assembly & Constitution Committee initiative.

Deputy Inder: Yes, sir, okay I will agree with that but I will not withdraw it, but what I will say is Deputy Meerveld had his legs up to mud in it and is just one of the people that did not deliver it, but yet he stands in the States telling us that we need to go through exactly the same process, through another Special Investigation Committee, or whatever it is, to deliver something he could never deliver in the first place. It does not get more politically schizophrenic than that.

Deputy Meerveld: Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction Deputy Meerveld.

A Member: Oh gosh.

Deputy Meerveld: Sir, I have not proposed any other Special Committee, etc. to do this, I have just said that this is not the way to do it on this floor. I said I might favour other amendments that do that, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) but I will not be the person proposing it.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: So in another moment of inconsistency, the same President of SACC is a signatory to the housing requête. This is the same President who tells us we cannot make the rules, we cannot make the changes, it is too difficult, yet sometime, or maybe later today if not tomorrow, the same President is a signatory on the housing requête and I wonder what he is going to say there. There really does have to be some form of consistency from Members of this Assembly, or maybe there does not need to be.

2640 **Deputy Meerveld:** Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Meerveld.

2645 **Deputy Meerveld.** The Requête is to reduce the number of Deputies, which would then, potentially, affect the structuring of all Committees. That is not the same as saying you need a special body within the States to explore a different matter. This is looking at fundamentally changing the number of Members of this Assembly. So, I do not see any contradiction between those two positions.

Thank you, sir.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

2655 **Deputy Inder:** Well, sadly I do see a contradiction and this is for the *Hansard* record, it seems that the President of SACC seems to support things he wants and does not support things he does not want to. Then Deputy Meerveld has to mention how much he got paid in the 1990s. I am not giving way. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) How utterly embarrassing.

2660 Then he talks about how brilliant he was, not for the first time, he stated how hard he worked, how commercial he was and how lucky we are to have him. If we do not need to reduce five people with the reduction in the States, if that is not an argument alone to reduce the number of people we have got, I do not know what is. It is embarrassing.

2665 He then went on to argue Deputy Gollop's amendment was better than this one (**A Member:** It was.) and he may well be right, said three people! (*Laughter*) Yet Deputy Meerveld, again, did not vote for it. The same person who said that he liked the previous requête better than this one did not even vote for it either. It just gets slightly, I do not know, I better not use an unparliamentary phrase, but consistency, logic and sense would be would be useful.

Deputy Parkinson, again –

Deputy Meerveld: Point of correction, sir.

2670 **The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Meerveld

2675 **Deputy Meerveld:** I stated during my speech that whilst there was a strong argument for Deputy Gollop's amendment, I would not vote for it because I did not believe this Assembly should be reducing and increasing the numbers of Deputies on the floor of this Assembly. Therefore, there is no inconsistency in those positions.

Thank you, sir.

Deputy Inder: Preferred an increase and did not vote for it. (*Interjection*)

2680 Deputy Parkinson, again, spoke about the gradual approach and he is entirely right and better than me, he has explained the States will function perfectly well and no material effect on the democracy and, I think, that was backed up, somewhat, by Deputy Le Tocq.

2685 I am afraid Deputy Roffey is kidding himself if he thinks that a full review cannot be amended or guaranteed that a review will be adopted. In fact, I do not think he is trying to kid himself, I think he is trying to get us as Members of the States. He then spent the next 10 minutes, largely, agreeing with the Propositions, but there is nothing to fear here, Deputy Roffey, vote for the amendment as it stands, get it inserted and just have the debate.

2690 The sense of this has been supported by, in part, the fallout, I suppose, of the Machinery of Government and the Savings Committee as spelled out by Deputy Kazantseva-Miller. So I am really unsure why the panic by some Members with some acknowledging, I think it was Deputy Burford acknowledging in a give-way to Deputy Taylor, there are elements of the proposals that she supports, possibly in part.

Deputy Murray, I am hoping he will reconsider his debating position based on the information I gave out before and the ability to vote for the Propositions discreetly. Now, Deputy Blin concentrates on his role in the amendment and goes on to suggest that there is some risk to the work as commission or awards and there is none as Deputy Le Tocq as the Lead for External Relations agrees with me and, indeed, made a similar suggestion elsewhere. Deputy Trott did agree that the position could be subsumed into External Relations.

This amendment simply removes the President of Overseas Aid & Development Committee only. No impact on the Commissioners, who do exceptional work, and a nominated Member of P&R would act in an *ex-officio* capacity. No change whatsoever and potentially an improvement on the position of the main Requête.

Just so we are clear, Deputy Blin is concerned about the mechanics of the Commission; there is nothing to worry about. Deputy Le Tocq, senior and experienced External Relations Lead, is not worried, in fact, he welcomes it. Deputy Gollop focuses on the Alderney representation. Proposition 4 simply directs the P&R to enter negotiations with Alderney to consider that reduction and to revert to the States by 14th March.

Now, you will note there is no policy letter, there is no real direction, it is just to start opening the negotiations and revert and give an update. So, again, there is nothing to fear, Deputy Gollop, just starting that conversation and I would ask him to allow that debate, allow that insertion to be had by simply voting for that insertion. There is nothing wrong with debate, there is nothing wrong with a vote, there is nothing wrong with winning or losing a vote but there is something wrong with not allowing the insertion and allowing that conversation to happen.

Now this amendment provides an insert into the main Requête, it is not to delete, it is purely an alternative in quantum, with an option to vote to Scrutiny on how Members may feel how that reduction in States' Members may be may be divvied out and by insertion there is no guarantee that on the final vote we will reduce the States by five.

By allowing this to be inserted, we may get to the position where we do not reduce the States by five but it does allow Members to pick and choose 4 or 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9 and I suppose 10, as well, by a discrete vote. So, Members, thank you for debate, there is nothing to fear here, this is just simply an insertion.

I will give way, I think. (*Laughter*)

Deputy St Pier: I am genuinely grateful to Deputy Inder for giving way because I did not want to interrupt his flow, but I think it is probably a question for His Majesty's Comptroller. Deputy Inder may know the answer but it was an issue which Deputy Helyar raised in his closing comments.

He said that the legislation had been drafted and, Deputy Inder is nodding his head to suggest he does not know the answer to that. So, I would be grateful if, perhaps, His Majesty's Comptroller could elucidate further on what legislation is being referred to and whether, indeed, it has been drafted.

The Bailiff: Mr Comptroller, are you able to? If it is easier for you can stay seated.

The Comptroller: Thank you, sir.

I presume this is legislation to give effect to a reduction in the number of States' Members?

The Bailiff: It is whatever Deputy Helyar said earlier. (*Laughter*)

Deputy Inder: Sir, with the greatest respect, I am responding to my amendment but I can confirm to Deputy St Pier there are no ... People are talking in the corner so I know Deputy St Pier cannot hear me.

The Bailiff: There was a comment, as I recall it, from Deputy Helyar, to say that the legislation has already been drafted.

2745

Deputy Inder: Not for my amendment.

The Bailiff: Whether that is the legislation on the Requête or whether that is the legislation ... I think, it might be in relation to the Requête. That is what Deputy Helyar is nodding his head at. So, are you aware that whatever resulting legislation, if we were only left with the Propositions from the original Requête, has that been drafted?

2750

The Comptroller: Sir, I do not know, is the answer.

2755

The Bailiff: But that was the clarification. So, Deputy St Pier, it is not on this amendment. *(Interjection)*

Deputy Inder: Well, I was practically finished, so it just leaves me to thank Deputy Parkinson for the support for the amendment. I hope that satisfies Deputy St Pier and I would ask people to support the insertion into the main body of the Requête.

2760

Thank you very much, Members.

The Bailiff: Members of the States, we now come to the vote – There is no ability for you to speak, Deputy Le Tissier.

2765

Deputy Le Tissier: I am not going to speak, sir.

I am going to ask the Comptroller whether he can answer my earlier question about the electoral roll?

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The Bailiff: Well, it might not be relevant, *(Interjection)* so that will be kept back for response during general debate, depending on what the Propositions are by the time we get to general debate. So that is the simple answer to that issue. So do not worry about that, Mr Comptroller.

Members of the States, it is time to vote on Amendment 2, proposed by Deputy Inder, seconded by Deputy Parkinson.

2775

At this stage, there is a single vote as to whether or not you are minded to insert all of these Propositions. If you are, then they will be dealt with in due course. If you are not, then we do not have to worry about it anymore. So I am going to ask the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 2, proposed by Deputy Inder, seconded by Deputy Parkinson.

2780

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 18, Contre 21, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Aldwell, Sue	Blin, Chris	None	None	Haskins, Sam
Dudley-Owen, Andrea	Brouard, Al			
Fairclough, Simon	Burford, Yvonne			
Ferbrache, Peter	Bury, Tina			
Helyar, Mark	Cameron, Andy			
Inder, Neil	De Lisle, David			
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha	De Sausmarez, Lindsay			
Le Tocq, Jonathan	Dyke, John			
Mahoney, David	Falla, Steve			
McKenna, Liam	Gabriel, Adrian			
Moakes, Nick	Gollop, John			
Murray, Bob	Le Tissier, Chris			

Oliver, Victoria
Parkinson, Charles
Prow, Robert
Soulsby, Heidi
Trott, Lyndon
Vermeulen, Simon

Leadbeater, Marc
Matthews, Aidan
Meerveld, Carl
Queripel, Lester
Roberts, Steve
Roffey, Peter
Snowdon, Alexander
St Pier, Gavin
Taylor, Andrew

The Bailiff: So in respect of Amendment 2, proposed by Deputy Inder and seconded by Deputy Parkinson there voted in favour 18 Members; there voted against 21 Members; *(Interjections)* no Member abstained; 1 Member did not participate in the vote and, therefore, I will declare Amendment 2 lost.

Without further ado we will move to Amendment 3 and I will invite Deputy Le Tocq to open on Amendment 3, please.

[Amendment 3](#)

To insert additional Proposition as follows –

1. *To establish, with effect from the beginning of the next political terms, a States' Investigating & Advisory Committee called the 'Government Reform Advisory Committee', with a mandate, constitution and responsibilities to bring proposals to improve the effectiveness of the States of Deliberation in discharging their functions of government as set out in Appendix 1.*
2. *To direct the Government Reform Advisory Committee to bring a Policy Letter setting out its findings following an examination of the Machinery of Government, including a review of the number of States' Members and Alderney representation in the States of Deliberation, for the consideration of the States' Assembly by the end of December 2026.*

Deputy Le Tocq: Thank you. Sir.

I think I can be fairly brief because I have touched on the reasoning for this already and others similarly have referred to it. Basically, sir, if we are going to do the sorts of things that the Prayer of the Requête and, indeed, other amendments seek to do, the best way to do so is in the formation of a discreet and focused Committee – a task and finish Committee of the type that is referred to in this amendment, a States' Investigation & Advisory Committee that has the ability, one to report directly to this Assembly and, secondly to hit the ground running at the beginning of the next term, because that is really important.

One of the difficulties, apart from all the other difficulties we have referred to with the Sub-Committee of P&R, is that it did not really start work until the beginning of 2022 and then had multiple changes because of its constitution. So, what this amendment seeks to do, sir, is to set up such a Committee and in Appendix 1 it suggests the constitution and terms of reference for the Committee, which could build on all the work that has been done in this term plus, obviously, the issues that can be referred to in previous reforms over the last 20 years or so.

So, sir, I think this is, hopefully, something that everybody could give their mind to because otherwise what we are doing on the floor of the Assembly is seeking to do something without the proper information and I do think this needs to take place and it was, in fact, one of the recommendations that, I think, we all agreed on in the Sub-Committee of Reshaping Government that P&R set up.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Soulsby, do you formally second Amendment 3?

Deputy Soulsby: I do, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much. Deputy Helyar.

Deputy Helyar: Sir, could I ask for a ruling, please, under Rule 24(6) in relation to this amendment?

The Bailiff: I take the view that any amendment that proposes to insert additional Propositions goes further than the original Propositions. Are you, therefore, asking for a motion to be put to Members as to whether they wish to debate it?

Deputy Helyar: Yes please, sir, and could we have a recorded vote?

The Bailiff: Okay. This is a motion pursuant to Rule 24(6) that there be no debate on this amendment and no votes taken thereon, which requires a majority to support it before that happens. We have now got a motion up and, therefore, I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on that motion, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 12, Contre 24, Ne vote pas 3, Did not vote 0, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
De Lisle, David	Aldwell, Sue	Blin, Chris	None	Haskins, Sam
Dyke, John	Brouard, Al	Burford, Yvonne		
Ferbrache, Peter	Bury, Tina	St Pier, Gavin		
Helyar, Mark	Cameron, Andy			
Leadbeater, Marc	De Sausmarez, Lindsay			
Mahoney, David	Dudley-Owen, Andrea			
McKenna, Liam	Fairclough, Simon			
Parkinson, Charles	Falla, Steve			
Prow, Robert	Gabriel, Adrian			
Roberts, Steve	Gollop, John			
Snowdon, Alexander	Inder, Neil			
Vermeulen, Simon	Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha			
	Le Tissier, Chris			
	Le Tocq, Jonathan			
	Matthews, Aidan			
	Meerveld, Carl			
	Moakes, Nick			
	Murray, Bob			
	Oliver, Victoria			
	Queripel, Lester			
	Roffey, Peter			
	Soulsby, Heidi			
	Taylor, Andrew			
	Trott, Lyndon			

The Bailiff: And will you now please close the voting, Greffier. So on the motion pursuant to Rule 24(6) proposed by Deputy Helyar that there be no debate on this amendment, there voted in favour 12 Members, 24 Members voted against, 3 Members abstained, 1 Member is absent and, therefore, I will declare that lost. But as nobody wants to speak –

Deputy Roffey.

Deputy Roffey: Sir, I called a number of times during the course of the day for proper processing and proper investigation into this so, I think, I probably will be supporting this amendment. But two things slightly confused me. Why we need a special Committee when we, I think, have a States' Committee whose mandate squarely engages this? (*Interjection*)

In the past, there would be the Rules of Procedure, the House Committee. Whenever this sort of work was being done the Standing Committee with responsibility for constitutional and States, not constitutional relationships but you know our constitution, has always been done and we have got one in the form of SACC.

Some people do not think they are up to the job. But who knows what the next acquisition.

Deputy Soulsby: Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction.

Deputy Soulsby: There was a Special States' Review Committee set up in 2012 to 2016 and created three policy letters the result of which is what we have got now.

Deputy Roffey: Yes, okay, no I do accept that but I think (*Laughter*) Deputy Soulsby just answered her own question, although I would not be quite so rude about what we have got now but I am not going to make a – We are going to have another one of these special Committees proposed in January, which I am not quite sure why we are having because I think we have got a Committee whose mandate that fairly squarely falls in front when we get to school governance, but that is for next year.

The other technical question, maybe, if I can just have it explained. The proposed Constitution amongst the States' Members, I presume they can be residents of either Guernsey or Alderney, as long as they are a Member of the States of Deliberation. But when it comes to the non-States' Members they specifically have to be somebody, two people, from Guernsey even though it is going to impact on the Alderney representation in this States?

I mean it is the States of Guernsey but, nevertheless, I think it is not something to die in a ditch on, but I just wondered why it was contained only to this 24.5 square miles and not anybody in Alderney that might have the right skills to actually sit on this. But, having said all of that, I do not start from the point that we do necessarily need any particular changes. As I said earlier, I think sometimes we tend to blame our tools rather than ourselves for shortcomings and I do not think there is anything inherently wrong with the system of government we have now or the number of Members.

I do have ideas on that, which I guess when we get to the general debate, if this has been passed, I will ventilate (*Laughter*) so that if a new Committee, when I am long gone from public life, will take into account the wise words that I will leave in their ears. But I think, on balance, even though I would have preferred with my own amendment for SACC, that is being too picky and I think this, basically, does the job and, therefore, I would vote for it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Thank you, sir.

Without going back over the points made in previous debates, I do want to draw attention to the comments made by Deputy Aldwell about Deputies who have not attended briefings and if there are meetings where all the information can be put to us we can actually do the full research and challenge our officers on some of the recommendations or the points that they are putting across.

I think she is absolutely right in saying that and I can put my hands up and say, I have not attended a single briefing put on by the requérants where they set out their information detail and allowed us to challenge it ahead of this day. So, I am not close-minded to making changes,

but I would like the benefit of those briefing sessions that we get on many other topics which are probably more insignificant compared to a change in Government.

So, I would be supportive of this amendment because I think this would bring us to the correct way that we should be addressing an issue like this and it would hopefully, although it is only directing to bring a policy letter back after consideration, somewhere along the lines in their briefing with States' Members where we could have a chance to discuss prior to the debate which would help inform any amendments that might come through later on and I think that would be a great thing. So I will be supporting this amendment, and I would urge others to do so too.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Thank you, sir.

It looks like setting SIAC Committees is the popular thing to do of the day. I think there are a number of interesting concerns and considerations this raises. First of all, as we discussed previously, we have had a Sub-Committee looking into this, obviously set up this political term and I think the fact that the Sub-Committee could not reach any conclusions they were ready to publish also speaks to the challenges we have got under our system of government of Sub-Committees actually having, potentially, the teeth and the decision making power to do anything.

So, I think there is a real concern that within our political structure, unless it is a proper Committee, whether it is a Principal Committee or a SIAC Committee, again, a proper Committee which can bring policy letters to the States, otherwise Sub-Committees within the States fail. So, I think it does raise a concern, effectively, we cannot trust our existing system of government to deliver on major pieces of work.

The concern I have got today with establishing something so specific, such as a States' Investigation & Advisory Committee and the reason for that is because it also has to be established with a very specific mandate and constitution. So, in this case the constitution is extremely specific, it is talking about a Member of Policy & Resources, a Member of States' Assembly and one more Member of States' of Deliberation who has served a political term.

So this is intentionally excluding anyone else to be able to join it, so no fresh ideas are welcome. It is only the expertise of existing old Deputies valued. I think that is being quite prescriptive. We have got a further amendment which, actually, addresses some of that, which is probably better, but I think the point I am trying to make is that I think special investigation.

Deputy Taylor: Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Sir, it might be that I misunderstood what Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is saying, but I think she was saying that there would only be old Members or Members in their second term. But, theoretically, a Member of Policy & Resources Committee and a Member of the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee could be first time Members, providing they had membership of that Committee. It is only the third States' Member, if you will, that has to have served at least one term. So I think she was incorrect, if I understood what she was saying.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: That is fine, I do accept that correction but I think, usually, you would expect Policy & Resources to be populated by Members with experience. I think the point I am trying to make here is that this is being extremely prescriptive and trying to bind a future States to do something extremely specific and actually, my point is that we should not be binding a future States to determine what they want to do and how they want to do it.

I think this is an important piece of work but we should let the future States come up with a very specific proposal of how they want to address it, not how we want to address it and have failed to address it, because I am afraid that board has failed, but not binding the future States with Resolutions of how we think they should undertake the delivery of Government.

So, while I think it should be done, because of the very prescriptive nature of how it is recommended to be done, I think that may restrict a future States to determine how they may want to do it. So, while I think it should be in place I would leave it to the next States to determine what priorities, what actions and the timing for delivery of those actions, it would be up to the next political Assembly to do that. So I am minded not support this amendment, likewise with Deputy Burford's amendment in the future for these reasons.

The Bailiff: Deputy Brouard.

Deputy Brouard: Thank you, sir.

I am going to, obviously, stick with this amendment but it also touches on Amendment 3 and Amendment 4 and it is really clarification that I am seeking. If this amendment from Deputy Le Tocq and Deputy Soulsby comes into play, my question to you, sir, is where will you place it in the Requête?

Because this is to insert an additional Proposition as follows, which is 1, to establish a Committee to look at the Government reform and then 2, goes on to say that it will look at the number of States' Members. But if it stays in that format in the Requête, the Requête is already dictating that the numbers are going to be reduced by 10.

So, which order are you going to play them when it comes out and which one trumps which one, sir? Is the latest amendment, from Deputy Le Tocq and Deputy Soulsby, trumping the Requête? (**The Bailiff:** No, no.) Because it says insert, it does not say replace, whereas later we will have a replaced one.

The Bailiff: Well, the simple answer is that this is to insert additional Propositions, so they would go after Propositions 1 and 2 from the Prayer of the Requête.

Deputy Brouard: Thank you, sir.

I will give way to Deputy Le Tocq.

Deputy Le Tocq: Just to clarify that, what that would mean is that Members are then free to vote on the current Proposition 1, whether they want to reduce the number in the Assembly by 10 or not, and free to then vote on these Propositions, if they are passed, and that would mean that there could be recommendations in the next term for an increase or a further decrease, depending on how the Special Investigation Committee looked at the issues and how best to reorganise things. So I think it gives a greater flexibility.

Deputy Brouard: I appreciate it gives the greatest flexibility but it will be a bit of a mess if we say on the first bit we want to reduce by 10 and, by the way, we are going to have a review to see how many we want. (*Interjection*) But we could quite easily vote for both. I think, maybe, the cleaner way is to hope for the Deputy Roffey (**A Member:** Yes.) and Deputy Cameron amendment which will come hopefully later, which will make it a little bit clearer because it is replaced with, we can then have the review which I think everybody by a majority would like to have and it would also give the opportunity to have it done by the Committee that we have set up to do these sort of reviews in the first place. So that is my comment.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

3000 I will support this amendment, but I do not think Members should really be under any illusion that a Committee can produce an answer that is just a universally correct answer that everyone will recognise as being the right thing to do and the correct way to do it. Because there may be more than one answer to the question about how the best way to organise the Assembly is.

3005 I would hope that a Committee, an investigatory Committee, would present options rather than trying to present a single correct answer, because depending on how you approach the issue, if you are looking at, for example, simply wanting to save and there was an interesting exchange between Deputy Burford and Deputy Inder about if you simply looked at it as a very simplistic way of saving costs then reducing Members reduces the cost of Members, but that can then impose a cost, as Deputy Burford pointed out in her reply. We end up wasting much more money in the States' Budget because you are not giving it the proper political oversight that it should have.

3010 So, I do not think we should be under any illusions that there is a correct or single answer but I will support it, purely on the basis that I did notice in the last debate the number of comments that were vociferously supporting amending the format of the Assembly had come from people who, in past debates, have always said that we should not be designing things on the floor of the Assembly and, in that particular debate, we were designing the floor of the Assembly on the floor (Laughter) of the Assembly which I think was a somewhat counter-productive way of doing things.

3015 If you are going to have a look at this, then at least set up a Committee and have some resource and some time and some space to think about it and to consult more widely than producing an amendment and asking people to vote for it in one go. So I will support it, but I am not under any illusions that this is a difficult question to find a simple answer to.

3020 Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Mahoney.

3025 **Deputy Mahoney:** Thank you, sir.

Just briefly, when I first saw this one the very first line of it always gives me the heebie-jeebies, when you see, 'to establish with effect from the beginning of the next political term.' Let us not do anything about it and as an Assembly we are getting really good at this. It is just, let the next guys sort something out for us because we are either not brave enough or not clever enough or whatever it is; I have no idea. So anything that starts, let the next guys do it always starts ringing a few bells.

3030 Just on 4.1(d), no additional costs. I am always sceptical when I see that as well, especially when you are forming something that a lot of people seem to be involved with. I, like Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, do not really like the prescriptive nature of who will be in it. Just one final thing, Deputy Meerveld, is he in the Assembly? (**A Member:** No.) No, he is not in the Assembly at the moment, was very vociferous and robust in his defences against the statements made by Deputy Inder about who was or was not responsible for the failures of coming up with nothing.

3035 Deputy Meerveld was quite right and he laid the blame firmly at the feet of the previous P&R as he was just a Member of the Sub-Committee. He is entirely right in that P&R were absolutely wrong in the membership that they set for that Committee. So, *mea culpa*, I got that wrong. We appointed him and others and that was the wrong decision.

3040 Thank you, sir. (Laughter)

Deputy Soulsby: Point of correction, sir.

3045

The Bailiff: Deputy Mahoney has sat down.

Deputy Soulsby: That is not fair, if he had not sat down just ... (Interjection)

The Bailiff: Deputy Dudley-Owen.

Deputy Dudley-Owen: Thank you, sir.

I, like others, am a little bit sceptical about this but I do welcome this being brought forward, even though I could not make up my mind as to how to vote on whether or not to allow it to be debated which, probably, is a sign of my exasperation and disappointment that the previous amendment failed, which I thought was eminently reasonable and logical.

To respond to Deputy Matthews because I am one of those people who often stands up and says how ridiculous it is that we think we know better than experts who actually live and breathe the work that we often ask them to advise us on. But we are the experts in the room in this instance.

It is us that live and breathe this every day (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and every month when we come into this Chamber and we see the apportionment of the work, we see that in the game of musical chairs that there are Members who are left without a chair when the music stopped and it is us whose opinion in this Chamber counts when looking at the best distribution and the best productivity of this body corporate.

So yes, I am really happy after eight years' worth – I am not going to give way – of experience and listening, really keenly, to the experience of others and looking at the data which, very sadly, is not produced any more about whether or not this particular composition, these numbers of Members is actually working or not.

So, absolutely, I think the proof is there and to stand up another Committee, I am undecided whether I am going to vote for it or not. It just feels like Groundhog Day, to be quite frank with you, though I do welcome trying to salvage something from the jaws of utter defeat and doing nothing, which I just cannot accept as an option in this instance.

We have wasted four years looking at this and, I have said this many times before, the biggest waste of public money comes from the lack of decision making in this Chamber. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) It really does. So, we need to get on and we need to make some hard decisions in this Chamber and whether it means bringing back not quite perfect reports, then that is what we must do. So, I will listen to the rest of the debate and hope, possibly, for Deputy Le Tocq to be able to persuade me.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

I am in the same position as Deputy Roffey really. I thought we had a Committee who would be doing exactly this type of thing and that they should be doing it. I am going to pick up on what Deputy Kazantseva-Miller said earlier about teeth. The SIAC or the Government Reform Advisory Committee, what teeth will they have?

Well, conversely it says in the Appendix that that Committee, if approved, shall be directly accountable and wholly visible to the States' of Deliberation. So that is us. So, collectively, what teeth do we have to make sure that they fulfil their mandate? Do we have to go through a vote of no confidence if they do not deliver? Or, what happens if we do not like their decision? (*Interjection*) Is it 21 of us, again, or a majority to vote on what they do or do not recommend?

Again – (*Laughter*)

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Apologies, sir. The reference I was making to the Sub-Committees is that they do not have teeth right now, rather than establishing a SIAC which would, in fact, have more teeth. But I was making reference to the Sub-Committees right now.

Deputy Gabriel: I thank Deputy Kazantseva-Miller for her interjection. What I was trying to ineloquently say was that, yes, I understand that they do not have many teeth but, conversely, what about us, as the States of Deliberation, being all accountable? So, is everyone accountable,

meaning that no one takes account? How effective will they be and how effective will another SIAC or Investigation Committee be when, historically, they have not been able to deliver or timelines have slipped or not in this term? So perhaps Deputy Le Tocq, when responding, can speak to some of that.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Queripel.

Deputy Queripel: Thank you, sir.

I am all in favour of the intention but I am concerned about what we are told in Rule 4(1)d, where we are told, 'the Committee will be serviced by existing resources at no additional cost'. But we are having to put all sorts of work on hold now because of lack of resources. So, which pieces of work will need to be put on hold whilst this work is prioritised?

Now, I realise Deputy Le Tocq cannot answer that question because that will be up to the next Assembly to decide. But that is the dilemma I am in at the moment. I am all in favour of the intention but I am not in favour of cutting services or putting other vital pieces of work on hold for this work to be undertaken. So, I am hoping Deputy Le Tocq can provide me with some words of comfort on that when he responds, sir.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Trott.

Deputy Trott: Thank you, sir.

I rise primarily to deal with the questions raised by Deputy Gabriel. During my first term in the States a group called the Harwood Panel reported and this was a special investigations Committee that was set up, I believe, by the States that ran between 1997 and the turn of the century.

It reported to two Committees, the House Committee of the day, the precursor to SACC and the Advisory & Finance Committee, if you like, the precursors to the Policy & Resources Committee; and some of those Members did not agree with the findings of the Harwood Report. It was an evidence-based report, it had arguments for and against, alternative proposals were brought to the Assembly and we ended up with a rather curious fudge, something called the Policy Council, where we decided to give ourselves titles of Ministers constituted this group of 10 or 11 and it was all a bit of a hotchpotch, to be honest.

But the point was that the Assembly of the day received a report that was evidence based from the Harwood Panel and it, the Assembly of the day, decided to reject it. So what is the purpose of a Special Investigations Committee of this type? Well, it is to ensure that an evidence based set of proposals are presented to the next Assembly who will make the determination probably ahead of the election at the start of the following term.

So, what you get, at the very least, is not a back of a fag packet discussion, you get a set of evidence to determine. But, of course, it is by no means certain that there will be any change because whilst this is reflective of good governance, the next Assembly will be sovereign in exactly the same way as the first one I was in, between 2000 and 2004 was, in rejecting the Harwood proposals then.

Looking back, I think, that was a mistake. I think there were only, at the time, eight or nine of us who thought that was the right way forward, but I have to say that I do not think two or three years into the start of my States' career, if that is the right word, I was in the right position to make those decisions.

I did not really understand enough about the States, at that time and that is why the Constitution is designed in this way, because I think an intervention from Deputy Taylor, when Deputy Kazantseva-Miller was speaking, has explained that (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) at least one

Member of that panel must have States' experience, although I concede it is likely that at least two will, possibly three.

3155 So I strongly support this type of approach but let us be under no illusions the evidence may or may not be supported ... well it will be supported or rejected, but it is by no means certain, however strong the arguments are, that the Assembly of 2025-29 will accept those recommendations.

3160 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop:

Deputy Gollop: I endorse everything Deputy Trott has said, as I do, and I would add to his reminiscence. I remember the Harwood Committee; in fact there were two versions because there was the second version which included great people like the late Brian Walden and Stuart Falla, 3165 who has already been mentioned, and many other people. It was for a reduction to 30 Members, including parish members, as I recall, and for a ministerial government, but the States placed around with it. In fact, it went over the election and beyond that.

What was interesting was the States handled it, remember we had 57 Members in those days not even 45, by, I believe, hiring Beau Séjour for three or four days, or at least we had a three-day 3170 debate as I recall, with all sorts of amendments and the Chief Minister's Department got taken out and so on.

Now moving further on, I would say two things are quite strange: Guernsey governs very well when it comes to the big issues and we have worked extremely hard in many areas, from External Relations to Moneyval. That area of our States works so well because it is semi-depoliticised and 3175 semi-executive.

But where we are not always good is being fleet of foot in other policy areas. As Deputy Kazantseva-Miller and others said, we are looking at a degree of failure, a degree of non-performance. Now I will choose an example from history, possibly not the best. When the Sir Tony Blair government was in office, he made some ministerial changes on the hoof.

3180 He suddenly switched, I believe, Guernsey from the Home Department that we had a good relationship with to the Ministry of Justice and took away the Lord Chancellor's long role, a bit like yourself, sir, as Presiding Officer, he was Presiding Officer, he was also Chief Citizen and the most senior judge, Presiding Officer of the House of Lords.

After a thousand years of history, or at least 500, he was replaced and deposed and there was 3185 confusion for a few days as to what went anywhere and eventually the post of Lord Chancellor was restored, minus the woolsack and the Speaker and the judge. It just became an honorary title for political minister.

It was not particularly well done but the one thing that did come out of it was the speed at which it was done, changing the doorposts, changing the brass plates. We do not seem to be able 3190 to do that. Now, I do support the amendment and the December 2026 but many people have said if we always do what we have done, do not expect any progress and I do support what Deputy Moakes, Deputy Helyar and others have said.

I do not understand why the last two times we had a fundamental reform of our system of government we started it afresh on the first day of a new States with a whole new set of Members, 3195 many of whom we did not know very well. People have said, some people have underperformed in Committees, others did not go for them. Well, actually, it is because we get stuck in for a whole four-year term sometimes and we are making all those decisions at the start with very little flexibility.

When we switched to Ministers in 2004, we left the old States and we created a new one and 3200 the new one had to implement it. I remember there were some areas of legislation we did not know where they fell into. We did the same thing in 2016. The old States died, 45 of us went home, some did not make it, 38 came back. Why do we do that?

It surely would be more intelligent to do what they would do in the UK and have the change after the report is done in 2026 or 2027, so that we would know who was in the Chamber and

3205 then consider changes with the people who are in the Chamber and how they would be best fitted. In fact, we would have better knowledge and they would all have had at least two years' experience. So I am not against change happening at all. I think the changes should happen sooner rather than later and there is no reason why some of the changes cannot happen as early as 2027 or even earlier still.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Aldwell.

Deputy Aldwell: Could I Rule 26(1) this please?

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The Bailiff: Can I invite those Members who wish to speak in the debate on Amendment 3 to stand in their places? Do you still wish me to put the motion?

Deputy Aldwell: Then someone else will stand up. No, sir.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Soulsby.

Deputy Soulsby: Thank you, sir.

I will not be very long. No, there is no guarantee a Special Advisory Investigation Committee will come up with anything more than the Sub-Committee, (*Interjection*) but I do think the make-up will be important and, I think, not that I disagreed with Deputy Mahoney and what he said, but he was incorrect in terms of how the membership of the Sub-Committee, this term, was put together.

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P&R agreed there would be two from P&R, two from SACC and a non-States' Member. It was SACC that actually chose its membership, not P&R. At least this way with the Special Investigation Committee Members will be appointed by the States and will be accountable to the States and, I think, that may concentrate minds to hopefully reach a consensus position. But if not, those in disagreement could create a minority report, as could have happened out of the back of the Sub-Committee.

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Also the terms of reference, the mandate, is agreed by the States, so no Member, I suppose as experienced by the Sub-Committee, can turn around a few months after the Committee starts saying that they want different terms of reference, which the Sub-Committee have to spend some time having to deal with.

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The reason the actual instigation of having the Sub-Committee in the first place was because the previous States' Review Committee had recommended that there should be a post-implementation review after the implementation in 2016 and they thought that it was worthwhile doing that this term. So, for people who say we do not need to do anything now that means that recommendation is still outstanding and is still something that needs doing. So, that is why I think the Special Investigation Committee is the best way of going about it.

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I have to say, my experience of the Sub-Committee was one of the most frustrating and, at times, most surreal experiences of my time in the States and I should say it is nothing to do with the input from Advocate Tom Carey – quite the opposite indeed. I really do appreciate his input, very thoughtful and really made a real positive contribution and it is sad that what was put forward did not eventually come to fruition. But I do thank him for his valuable contribution.

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I was on that Sub-Committee for the first half of its first iteration and, I have to say, coming back a year or more later, I was not surprised when the Sub-Committee finally reported it ended up where it did. As I say, I think, the Advisory Committee constituted by the States will be the way to go. It might well help prevent that happening in future and so I do ask Members to support this amendment.

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The Bailiff: As, no one else is standing I will invite the lead requérant, Deputy Helyar, to speak to Amendment 3.

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Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

As I brought a 24(6) motion, clearly, my view is that the matter goes beyond the original Proposition. So the requérants will make their own decision as to how they wish to vote in respect of it. I would say the reason I will vote against it, and I will, is because one of the things that I was fettered by when I first became the Treasury Minister were the terms of reference for the Tax Review and I was stuck with those right the way through.

I think if I had the experience of having done that role before, I would have torn it up and started with a different approach and we might have had a different outcome and we might have had GST in three weeks' time, which would be fantastic, but anyway. So, I looked at this when I was looking at the various amendments as they were coming through.

I took a mathematical approach because there is a law in maths that says it does not matter how many products you multiply together, if one of them is zero, the outcome is always zero. It does not matter how many numbers, it can be infinity: infinity times nothing is nothing. So we have just got variations on doing nothing. (*Laughter*)

We do nothing now; we have already done nothing so why should we do more nothing? Let us have a Committee to do nothing, (*Laughter*) let us have a Committee with people on it who might lose their jobs as a result of making a particular decision who will, therefore, do nothing. So, let us do nothing.

I would leave a free hand for those who wish to stand in the election (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) to campaign on the basis of electoral reform, if they wish to see it, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and give the new P&R the widest possible opportunity to set the terms of that. If I were setting those terms, and it will not be me setting them, then I would have this entirely independent.

I would not even have its secretary and its administration done by anybody at all connected with the service. I am increasingly concerned that our policy is being driven from within the service (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) rather than this place and that we have less and less control over it because of its complexity and the expense being caused by it is becoming a huge concern, particularly when you look at health costs.

So, I want to see something driven in terms of reform from the outside rather than just another version of what we have already done and I think, personally speaking, the people I speak to that may not be a representative part of the population. I think a lot of the population wants to see change, that change is not going to be driven by just re-hashing the Harwood Review. So, I will not vote for this, I would give everybody the widest possible mandate for the future, but Members have a free choice.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: I will turn to the proposer of Amendment 3, Deputy Le Tocq, to reply to the debate on this.

Deputy Le Tocq: Thank you, sir.

I think there were only really two questions that emerged out of that or lots of comments and I will try and address them. One was how effective a Special Investigation Advisory Committee could be compared to regular committees. I do not deny that a lot of what the Sub-Committee that was established by P&R looked at, and was looking at potentially changing, could be and could have been undertaken by SACC.

In fact, we agreed that there were some things that, right at the end, even if we did not agree on all of the issues, there were some things that we did agree on that SACC could take forward, and I do hope that they do so before the end of this term. It did not require the Committee to do that. But at the same time, there were other things that were outside of that mandate and, in fact, some fell within the mandate of P&R, but I think had P&R just done those things that the Assembly, as a whole, would have felt that it was unfair that we did not have an opportunity to input into those considerations.

3310 Thirdly, there were things that fell outside of that and that touches on some of the things that Deputy Helyar has just referred to and that is to have someone from the outside to speak into the situation and to say, why do you do things in this way and ask the questions that sometimes we do not ask ourselves.

I think that is important and I would contend with Deputy Helyar that this particular set-up does enable that to happen, probably even more so than an established Committee that is looking to the longer term. This would be a Committee that is, effectively, a task and finish
3315 Committee that would have a focus, would have its report to bring and after which it would cease to be; so it is very focused.

The second question, and it touches on an answer to the first question, is to do with resources. Now, this has been an issue in the sense that it was a Sub-Committee of P&R that was set up to do this. As a result, the Sub-Committee was not constituted in the same way that a Special
3320 Investigation & Advisory Committee would be set up and so, from my own perspective, I would say it did not meet regularly enough, it did not have the right resources as a result of that. In fact, some of the officials who helped us changed every so often to the degree where it was difficult, we felt like we were making two steps forward and one step back.

But also, of course, it was not preparing a policy letter. Had P&R, the current P&R, decided that
3325 it wanted to go ahead with the report, it was because the Sub-Committee was reporting to P&R, at that point then consideration would have had to have been given to a policy letter and putting it in a format that could be, effectively, brought to this Assembly and voted on in terms of Propositions.

So a SIAC has to be able, independently, to report to this Assembly and to bring Propositions
3330 in a form that can be enacted and voted on in this Assembly. So, that is why the resourcing is important and we do have resources for that within Policy & Resources and that would have been the case had Policy & Resources been responsible for resourcing other Committees and we do that sort of thing, so we would be responsible for doing that. So that was something that, I think, is quite separate and distinct for this sort of Committee.

Now, I do think that the outside world, outside of this Assembly outside of our Committees
3335 look at us and say we go round in circles, we talk and talk and talk about the same things, we were just having a whole day plus of navel gazing on things; it is the worst possible advertisement to encourage the right people, certainly, to want to be part of this Assembly. But you have to work within a system to change the system; you cannot just say, we will change it, whatever ... well you can it is called revolution (*Laughter*) and I do not advise that. We have got to try and take people
3340 with us.

So, what I and Deputy Soulsby are trying to do here is to try and bring a degree of consensus so that the next Assembly, people can deliberately think, I want to be on that Committee, because that would not be the case if it was a SACC, because SACC would have multiple other things to
3345 deal with as well and they might say, I am put off by that, I would like to do that but I do not want to be involved in that area there.

This would be distinct and discrete, that would attract people that come deliberately to do that and from that point of view, I think it could be quite attractive (*Interjection*) to people who put themselves forward as candidates saying, I am coming in to deliberately be involved in the reform
3350 and reshaping of our Government and that is an important part. I certainly believe we can do better than we are currently doing.

So, sir, I do encourage people to support this. As I said in response to Deputy Brouard, this is not, and I do not disagree with Deputy Helyar, this does go further than the initial Prayer of the Requête but it enhances it, I think, by allowing a degree of flexibility which is not currently there
3355 so that we could begin the next term in an efficient way looking at both the review of the current system and how it could be improved and changed for the future.

The Bailiff: Members of the States, we come to the vote on Amendment 3, proposed by Deputy Le Tocq, seconded by Deputy Soulsby and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 3, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 21, Contre 13, Ne vote pas 5, Did not vote 0, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Aldwell, Sue	De Lisle, David	Inder, Neil	None	Haskins, Sam
Blin, Chris	Dudley-Owen, Andrea	Murray, Bob		
Brouard, Al	Dyke, John	Queripel, Lester		
Burford, Yvonne	Ferbrache, Peter	Roberts, Steve		
Bury, Tina	Helyar, Mark	Snowdon, Alexander		
Cameron, Andy	Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha			
De Sausmarez, Lindsay	Mahoney, David			
Fairclough, Simon	McKenna, Liam			
Falla, Steve	Moakes, Nick			
Gabriel, Adrian	Parkinson, Charles			
Gollop, John	Prow, Robert			
Le Tissier, Chris	St Pier, Gavin			
Le Tocq, Jonathan	Vermeulen, Simon			
Leadbeater, Marc				
Matthews, Aidan				
Meerveld, Carl				
Oliver, Victoria				
Roffey, Peter				
Soulsby, Heidi				
Taylor, Andrew				
Trott, Lyndon				

The Bailiff: So in respect of Amendment 3 proposed by Deputy Le Tocq, seconded by Deputy Soulsby, there have voted in favour 21 Members, there voted against 13 Members, 5 Members abstained, 1 Member is absent and, therefore, I will declare Amendment 3 carried. Amendment 5 is the next one to take; if you wish to move Amendment 5, Deputy Burford.

[Amendment 5](#)

To insert an additional Proposition as follows –

3. To establish, with effect from the beginning of the next political terms, a States' Investigation & Advisory Committee called the 'States' Constitutional and Electoral Reform Advisory Committee', with a constitution and mandate as set out in Appendix 1, which shall review the interlinked issues of the system, of electing Deputies, the size of the States' Assembly and the structure and operation of the States' Committees, and to direct that Committee to submit by December 2026 any proposals it considers necessary to improve the effectiveness of the States' of Deliberation

Deputy Burford: Yes please, sir.

Firstly, I would like to correct the consultation part of Rule 4(1). I have had extensive consultation with P&R, both at political and officer level; and secondly, I want to thank P&R for their assistance and co-operation. I was working on an amendment to set up a Special Investigation & Advisory Committee at the same time as, unknown to me, P&R were doing a similar thing and for part of yesterday we were going to lay a blended amendment, but subsequent decisions evolved and we are giving Members the choice of both and I hope Members can equally support this amendment and when it comes to substantive debate at that point a choice can be made between the two Special Investigation Committees because, clearly, we only need one ultimately.

It is also worth, at this preliminary stage, addressing the issue of resources. As P&R have stated in their amendment, I too have taken the route that this SIAC will be staffed by existing resources, which should not be onerous. There is one potential difference between my amendment and P&R's and that relates to if the Committee should consider that a referendum were needed they would have to seek States' approval for that and resourcing at the time.

However, no assumption whatsoever is made that that is the route they would wish to pursue. In fact, at no point am I pre-empting any of the potential findings of the Investigation Committee. But on to the substance of the amendment, if one thing is clear from all the different strands of this debate it is that there is a strong desire in this Assembly to look again at both the number of Deputies and also how we operate as a Government.

However, when it comes to the number of Deputies we are kidding ourselves if we do not acknowledge a significant constraint which is that in good faith, in 2018, we went to the people of this Island, transferring the responsibility to them to vote on a system of election and they voted in a binding referendum to elect 38 Deputies on one day in one constituency and should we wish to move away from that then, at least, it should not be by an amendment but by a properly constituted Committee which will consult widely.

Therefore, my amendment speaks to all these concerns both inside and outside of this Assembly. It proposes the establishment of a dedicated Special Investigation & Advisory Committee, as provided for in Rule 53, to review both the 2025 Election and building on the data of the 2023 Scrutiny Review, to consider the effectiveness of our current system of election.

Simultaneously, it will undertake a review of our Committee system of government, including the number of Guernsey Deputies and Alderney Representatives. If this amendment is approved, this work will begin within a mere seven months; and to pick up on some of the points that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller made, I think that this is much better than a Sub-Committee because it provides a much greater visibility.

The Committee will be subject to Rule 11 and 14 questions and it will be able to be held to account by this Assembly during its life in a way that simply is not possible with a Sub-Committee of another Committee. Now the future States, absolutely, we cannot bind a future States but, of course, that does not mean that if the States coming in in June do not wish to proceed with this, they have every ability to rescind these Resolutions or to amend them.

I am only bringing this, really, in response to the Requête because I do have great concerns about arbitrarily chopping a number of Deputies, which, I hear maybe five again because I hear Deputy Inder is having another crack at his amendment by chipping away some of the Propositions in the hope that it will pass second time round. So, we may still be looking at five (*Interjection*) or 10.

Going back to the work streams that are proposed for this special Committee. They are not independent of each other. For example, if a view were to emerge that we should move to four equal electoral districts then it may make sense to have a number of Deputies divisible by four. Equally, sticking with Island-wide voting but moving to a rolling system to avoid people having to consider a hundred candidates at each election, could mean electing one third of Deputies at a time, which would benefit from a number divisible by three.

It is worth being clear here, this amendment is not an attempt to move away from Island-wide voting. Indeed, I personally think Island-wide voting has many merits with the single exception of the number of candidates a voter must review. This is not a move to have a holistic and overarching review with no pre-ordained outcomes whatsoever, but in a way that respects the position in which we have left ourselves, namely, currently banned by a referendum to have 38 Deputies elected on one day.

It may be that the Investigation Committee decides that a decision to amend the number of Members should be taken without a further referendum. But there is a huge, massive difference between a properly constituted, dedicated Committee consulting widely with the public in the course of this work and making evidenced recommendations to the Assembly on the number of

States' Members when compared with simply hanging a change on the back of an amendment in the dying days of this one.

More than anything, sir, my amendment is about governance, about engaging with the people we serve in a proper and considered way and about simply doing things properly rather than in a manner that suggests being slightly drunk on the Christmas sherry. *(Laughter)* I am skipping over a little of this, because a lot is a repeat of what was said on the previous amendment.

However, the principal difference as well with this particular Committee is I have specified seven Members, five elected Members and two non-States' Members, which mirrors our Principal Committees. Secondly, having had a lot of experience myself this term on setting up various task and finish panels and standing panels in Scrutiny, the ones that have worked best are where we have had six or seven Members and this is for two reasons, I think.

Firstly, it allows for absences which we know happen for all sorts of reasons. Secondly, it allows for people to fall away from the panel for whatever reason without diluting the knowledge base of the remaining panel significantly. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, it gives greater diversity of thought and that inevitably leads to better outcomes. Finally, as there will be two distinct but intersecting work streams, there will be a greater number of people to share that work amongst.

Sir, I hope and trust Members will see this amendment as one which meets the various desires of the greatest number of Members in terms of reviewing Government, reviewing the Committee structure, reviewing the numbers of Guernsey and Alderney Members without being prescriptive, adhering to the kind of electoral good practice that should be expected of a jurisdiction such as ours and acknowledging the decision of the people of this Island taken by them in 2018. So I ask Members to support this amendment.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Soulsby, do you formally second Amendment 5?

Deputy Soulsby: Yes, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you. Deputy Helyar.

Deputy Helyar: Sir, may I have another crack at Rule 24(6) please, a motion not to debate on the basis that this goes beyond the original Proposition?

The Bailiff: Yes, do you want me to put it *au voix* first?

Deputy Helyar: I would prefer recorded, sir; it will save some time.

The Bailiff: That is fine.

So, Members of the States, I am satisfied that for the same reason as I said in respect of the previous amendment, inserting additional Proposition, particularly to set up a Committee like this goes further than the original Proposition and, therefore, Deputy Helyar is inviting you to agree that the amendment be not debated and no vote is taken thereon. I am just waiting for ... I might be waiting a while. *(Interjection)* Have we? On that basis, we might have to go *appel nominal*. Back to the good old days. *(Laughter and cheering)*

Is there any possibility of restoring ...? *(Interjections and laughter)* Surely Deputy Matthews as a software engineer may be able to offer some view? Shall I start the voting because it is still up on my screen? Greffier, can I have a go at starting the voting, rather than directing you to as it says in the Rules? So we will go *appel nominal* because the system ...

[Technical interference]

Missing section 16:43:27 to 16:51:14

Deputy: *[Inaudible]* ... and have not been Members of the States appointed by the Committee, am I assuming correctly that these will be non-States' Members and, if so, how will they be remunerated because in Rule 4(1)(d) it states that they will be serviced by existing resources at no additional cost? So, if they are to be non-States' Members, I am assuming they are going to be selected on their ability but asked to work pro bono.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

I will also be brief. I will be supporting this amendment. I think it is a good idea to look at how the States is elected. Deputy Burford and I actually share a view that one potentially good way to do it would be to elect a third of the Chamber every two years, I think that is certainly worth looking into.

In the last debate on a similar amendment, there was support from Deputy Dudley-Owen who said that we are the experts when it comes to this. Well, I think that is the point where I would take issue and say, actually, although we obviously as Members and having served, I know there is a requirement for some of the membership for this Committee, as with the previous one, to have served a term, we obviously have a level of experience and we do our best as imperfectly as we can to represent what we think are the interests of the electorate, the people who have put us here.

But there are much broader considerations than that and to go through these questions methodically and clearly and with some sort of process around it has to be better than just drawing up an amendment or drawing up a requête and with somebody's idea about how it should be done and hoping that that is the best way to do it.

This is a little bit, perhaps, procedure heavy but at least it is a procedure and at least it goes through and gets to a result. I do hope there is proper consultation. I do note that with this one, as with the previous one, there is no specification on for the non-States' Members, what sort of level of expertise that they should have.

Now, I think, with this one it is left up to the Committee, the previous amendment did not have any specification. We know, obviously, Advocate Carey had been very helpful in the process to date. I just wondered what sort of outside membership was thought would be useful. I would like to see this Committee and the previous Investigatory & Advisory Committee consult very widely and take a broad view so that it is not just those of us who consider ourselves experts but it tries to be as representative as possible of the whole electorate, of the whole Island, because that is what we are here to do and I hope that can be achieved and I will support the amendment on that basis.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Sir, so we failed to make any decisions this political term. So we have just approved the creation of a SIAC that looks ... well we approved the amendment that inserts another Proposition to, potentially, create a SIAC from next term that was looking at the Machinery of Government.

This amendment, obviously, goes even further because it is looking at electoral reform and I think Deputy Inder was absolutely right that there is an attempt to review Island-wide voting and the problem is this is the first political term where we have gone through Island-wide voting. I think it has been generally accepted that we should need several political terms to go through electoral reform to understand whether we want to change it.

But no, let us insert that because, well, I think we know where Deputy Burford stands on Island-wide voting. So, these terms of reference are going much wider. The fact that we failed to actually

agree on any changes to Machinery of Government, we are potentially making it even more difficult because there is so much more complexity now because you are adding electoral reform into it, so potentially creating something which is, again, going to be undeliverable because there are now too many moving pieces.

But the one thing that I am quite concerned about because the terms of reference, I feel, actually embed our committee structure of government in the terms of reference versus actually keeping it quite open and, quite specifically, it is point A saying in the mandate how the States and its committee structure might evolve but, most importantly point C, how committee governments can best be structured.

So to me, this is actually looking to bake in the committee structure of government rather than allow an evolution which could be a ministerial more executive committee government and, again, I know where Deputy Burford's preference with that also lays. So, I feel this is a bit of a Trojan horse to, certainly, relook at our electoral Island-wide voting, which I think is way too premature and by inserting that it makes it a hugely complex piece of work further risking any outcome of decisions next political term and also that the terms of reference, because they are quite important to mandate, bake in the committee system of government rather than, actually, allow for a proper broad review which, I think, the previous SIAC proposition was better in securing.

The Bailiff: Deputy Dyke.

Deputy Dyke: Thank you, sir.

I have not said very much today and I do not propose to say very much now. I agree with Deputy Kazantseva-Miller. Deputy Helyar has brought his Requête to reduce the number of Deputies, which one may or may not agree with, but now this whole thing is beginning to expand into a total review of Government, elections and everything which I, personally, do not think is remotely called for now, we have just got this new system of Island-wide voting.

I would say that perhaps some adjustments to some of the Committee arrangements and allocations of responsibilities between Committees might be looked at, at some point, but I really do not think this is the time to bring forward a general review of everything. I really do think we should stick closer to Deputy Helyar's Requête, which I happen to disagree with, but I think we should be discussing that, not everything under the sun.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Well as nobody else is rising I will turn to Deputy Helyar, as the lead requérant, to speak to Amendment 5, please.

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

I have really nothing to add to debate. I will not be supporting this amendment for all the reasons I made in the previous amendment and the very useful and able speeches from Deputy Dyke and Deputy Kazantseva-Miller. This opens a whole Pandora's box of things that really were not contemplated in any degree. This was a very simple, straightforward Proposition, binary in nature and I think this goes way beyond what is necessary.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: So, I will turn to the proposer of Amendment 5, Deputy Burford, to reply to that debate.

Deputy Burford: Thank you, sir.

I will start with Deputy Brouard who, I am sure, is just rushing back to the Chamber as we speak. Historically, there used to be much more of a trend of voting for amendments, having a whole range of substantive Propositions and then sorting it out at that stage and there has been a

tendency, which has become more pronounced in this Assembly perhaps, to actually deal with everything a little bit more thoroughly at amendment stage.

I think, yes, I did consider starting with what probably is a favourite phrase of mine 'to delete all Propositions and substitute, therefore,' but I felt that in this case it was, perhaps, a better idea to just add an additional Proposition and let Members work their way through the substantive Propositions.

Of course, I will be voting against a reduction in the number of 10 Deputies and even five should it reappear because, I think, it would be a little bit mad to make substantive changes and then decide to review them. Although, that being said, one could argue that there is actually a case that if Deputies were reduced by 10 or five, that we really do need to set up this Committee to look into it and see if it was the right decision and there is possibly a potential of reversing it.

So Deputy Gabriel, I think you make a good point about the remuneration, although I would say that Scrutiny has not had any issues recruiting very good people this term on a pro-bono basis. Deputy Matthews talks about my potential views on rolling Island-wide voting, but my views do not matter here, this is not about my views. This is about a Committee setting up a proper investigation and seeing what it comes with; I am not fettering them in any way.

In terms of the non-States' Members, what their qualifications will be, well, that is a matter for the five elected Members on the Committee and I would like to think and feel pretty confident that they will, of course, choose people with the broadest range of skills that they need to enhance their Committee in the same way as our Principal Committees do with their non-States' Members already.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, I think that what I would say is, yes, it is a slightly broader mandate; there are two extra people on the Committee as a result when compared with Policy & Resources. But these two issues are, to a degree, inter-dependent and I really think, and certainly following on from the review that my Committee did this term, there are even moderate changes that could be made to improve the system without actually changing it. So, I think it is something where there is a good basis of work in the scrutiny review that this Committee would benefit from considering alongside. I do not think it is a major piece of work but I think it is inter-dependent and would benefit from being considered alongside.

I have sympathy for Deputy Dyke's comments that in some ways, I mean I would not be bringing this Special Investigation Committee as a stand-alone requête or anything. This is a response to the situation we have been thrown into today by this Requête to try and let us go forward with a much more workable ... and an outcome which is so much better, in terms of governance, than simply taking an axe to the Assembly in its last days and chopping a quarter of the Members out. So I think (*Interjection*) if people want to see changes then this is a coherent and considered and structured way of doing it.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Well, Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 5, proposed by Deputy Burford, seconded by Deputy Soulsby and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 5, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 17, Contre 18, Ne vote pas 3, Did not vote 1, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Brouard, Al	Aldwell, Sue	Queripel, Lester	Taylor, Andrew	Haskins, Sam
Burford, Yvonne	Blin, Chris	Roberts, Steve		
Bury, Tina	Dudley-Owen, Andrea	Snowdon, Alexander		
Cameron, Andy	Dyke, John			
De Lisle, David	Fairclough, Simon			
De Sausmarez, Lindsay	Ferbrache, Peter			

Falla, Steve	Helyar, Mark
Gabriel, Adrian	Inder, Neil
Gollop, John	Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha
Le Tissier, Chris	Mahoney, David
Le Tocq, Jonathan	McKenna, Liam
Leadbeater, Marc	Meerveld, Carl
Matthews, Aidan	Moakes, Nick
Roffey, Peter	Murray, Bob
Soulsby, Heidi	Oliver, Victoria
St Pier, Gavin	Parkinson, Charles
Trott, Lyndon	Prow, Robert
	Vermeulen, Simon

3635 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Amendment 5 proposed by Deputy Burford, seconded by Deputy Soulsby, there voted in favour 17 Members; there voted against 18 Members; 3 Members abstained; 2 Members did not participate in the vote and, therefore, I will declare it lost.

3640 Members of the States, those of you who are keeping an eye on your devices will know that another amendment has been submitted. We are just going to wait for the paper copies because this is Amendment 6 and I would rather take that before dealing with Amendment 4 on the basis that Amendment 4, if it were to be successful, would mean that Amendment 6 could not then be placed and because it has been submitted we will just deal with that one first.

3645 But hopefully somebody is rushing hot-foot to the Chamber now. I will not ask you to adjourn for a short time because then getting you back is going to be more complicated. *(Laughter)*

3645 **A Member:** You will not get us back.

3650 **The Bailiff:** But if anyone has got anything they want to say in the meantime, *(Laughter)* tell us their Christmas cracker jokes or something like that.

3650 **Deputy Queripel:** Sir, could you put it to the Assembly we sit for another hour tonight, please?

3655 **Deputy Inder:** Sir, if it helps and it may not help, the amendments made by myself and Deputy Parkinson's new amendment, all it is a variation on Amendment 2 and there is not much in the way of explanatory notes.

3660 **The Bailiff:** The paper copies are here now, so we will ask them to be distributed as soon as we have got somebody to distribute them.

3660 **Deputy Oliver:** Sir, could we also maybe potentially stay an additional hour tonight, because we have got so much more to do? *(Interjection)* Sorry.

3665 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, whilst you are receiving your paper copies of Amendment 6, which we will turn to in a moment, it has been suggested that I should test your appetite to stay here until 6.30 p.m., or thereabouts. So I am going to simply put the motion to you that we extend our sitting to 6.30 p.m. or before then if we get to a convenient time to stop.

3670 **Deputy ... [Inaudible]:** Can I make one other suggestion for half an hour? I know I have got a third of an hour, it would at least add a little bit more just in case, because I cannot do the hour due to a previous engagement.

3670 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, before I put the motion to you, who would be unable to stay until 6.30 p.m.? It looks like that one is going to be lost then. Who would be able to stay until 6 o'clock? *(Interjection)* Unable! *(Laughter)* This is all part and parcel of a subsequent amendment

3675 which is to have breaks (*Laughter*) because people need to exercise themselves by standing up and down a few times.

So I will put the hour first because that was what was suggested first, although I think it is inevitable it will lose. So those in favour of sitting until 6.30 p.m. Those in favour; those against.

Members voted Contre.

3680

The Bailiff: I will declare that lost. So the alternative is to go to 6 o'clock. Those in favour; those against.

Members voted Contre.

3685

The Bailiff: I will declare that lost as well.
Amendment 6. Deputy Inder.

[Amendment 6](#)

To insert the following at the end of Proposition 2 –

"OR SHOULD PROPOSITION 1 NOT CARRY:

3. To agree that:

- 1 (a) the number of People's Deputies specified for the purpose of the constitution of the States of Deliberation shall be reduced from thirty eight to thirty three, and*
- (b) the reduction to be implemented in time for the General Election to be held on 18th June 2025."*

Deputy Inder: Thank you, sir.

3690

Members, the vote last time was fairly close and I thank you for the 18, but also we have got to accept there were problems within it and two of those problems almost certainly were in the previous Proposition 4 that had a direct impact on the Alderney Reps and I understand they did not vote for it.

3695

I am going to suggest and to invoke the West Lothian question on this one because this does not include the Alderney representation. It is very similar to last time and it asks to not delete, to insert the following at the end ... It asks to insert the following at the end of Proposition 2 and I will read it.

1(a) the number of Peoples' Deputies specified for the purpose of the constitution of the States of Deliberation shall be reduced from thirty eight to thirty three, and

(b) the reduction to be implemented in time for the General Election to be held on 18th June 2025.

3700

Again, it is choice over the 10. If people want to move they can move to 10 and then move to five. The savings are somewhat different because the proposals will result in a reduction in cost to the States of five Members' salaries at £200,000. Where before had we included the reduction in the two Presidents it would have been an extra £27,000. We have been through the debate before, sir, Members, I hope it is fairly quick. This is purely for insertion to give choice.

Thank you.

3705

The Bailiff: Deputy Parkinson, do you formally Second Amendment 6?

Deputy Parkinson: Yes I do, sir.

3710

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.
Deputy Oliver.

Deputy Oliver: Please could I Rule 26(1) this? We have had the debate.

The Bailiff: I invite those Members who wish to speak in debate on Amendment 6 to stand in their places. Is it still your wish, Deputy Oliver, that I put a motion?

Deputy Oliver: Yes, please.

The Bailiff: The motion is that subject to hearing from Deputy Helyar and then anything Deputy Inder will say in response, there will be no debate on this amendment. Those in favour; those against.

Members voted Contre.

The Bailiff: I will declare that lost.

Deputy: Recorded vote please, sir.

The Bailiff: So, we will have a recorded vote. Members of the States, I am going to invite the Greffier to open the voting on the motion pursuant to Rule 26(1) proposed by Deputy Oliver.

There was a recorded vote.

Rule 26(1)

Not carried – Pour 16, Contre 20, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 2, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Aldwell, Sue	Brouard, Al	St Pier, Gavin	Roberts, Steve	Haskins, Sam
Blin, Chris	Burford, Yvonne		Taylor, Andrew	
De Lisle, David	Bury, Tina			
Ferbrache, Peter	Cameron, Andy			
Helyar, Mark	De Sausmarez, Lindsay			
Inder, Neil	Dudley-Owen, Andrea			
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha	Dyke, John			
Le Tocq, Jonathan	Fairclough, Simon			
Mahoney, David	Falla, Steve			
Moakes, Nick	Gabriel, Adrian			
Murray, Bob	Gollop, John			
Oliver, Victoria	Le Tissier, Chris			
Queripel, Lester	Leadbeater, Marc			
Soulsby, Heidi	Matthews, Aidan			
Trott, Lyndon	McKenna, Liam			
Vermeulen, Simon	Meerveld, Carl			
	Parkinson, Charles			
	Prow, Robert			
	Roffey, Peter			
	Snowdon, Alexander			

The Bailiff: So, in respect of the motion pursuant to Rule 26(1) proposed by Deputy Oliver, there voted in favour, 16 Members; there voted against, 20 Members; 1 Member abstained; 3 Members did not participate in the vote and that is why, although it was close, it was declared lost.

Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

Much to Deputy Oliver's delight, I will be very brief.

I note the extensive amendment in front of us that Deputy Inder and Deputy Parkinson have laid and I just wanted to quote on the Rule 4(1) information, item (d) again, and this time I am

3745 assuming that it is probably correct in that it will result in saving to the States rather than the 'Sates', I do not know who they are. Perhaps Deputy Inder, in his summing up, would care to elaborate on how those savings will be achieved seeing as we do not know what the outcome of the Pay Review Committee will be?

Thank you.

3750

The Bailiff: Deputy Le Tissier.

Deputy Le Tissier: Thank you, sir.

3755 I am not going to read out my speech again but I do ask Deputy Inder to properly explain his about-face because I do not think he answered that question (*Interjection*) from his change earlier this year. That was all I was going to say, except in the previous amendment debate he mentioned a saving of, is it £1 million a year? (**A Member:** Over four years)

3760 Right, but now it is £200,000 but it does not really matter what – (*Interjection*) No, I am not going to give way, he can answer the answer in the reply. But even if it is £200,000, £250,000, £400,000, whatever; as he does not know what the States' rate of pay is going to be for the next term (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) how can it be so precise?

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: As no one else is standing, I will turn to Deputy Meerveld.

3765

Deputy Meerveld: Thank you, sir.

3770 I am not going to vote for this amendment because, again, I do not want the numbers of this Assembly changed on the floor of his Assembly *ad hoc*. But I would also make one observation and check that I am correct. But if there is going to be a vote to reduce Members on the floor of the Assembly, I believe I am correct, it impacts on the Reform Law Section 1(C) 3.4 and, therefore, it requires a super-majority to pass. I will seek that clarification from the Procureur, if possible.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Blin.

3775

Deputy Blin: Thank you, sir.

3780 I find this frustrating. This had lost and what they have done is they have come back and moved everything else to bring this in just with this number. Now it strikes me that if this gets through, I can see the point of it because there is an option to have either five instead of 10. If it does not get through, I am just going to guess that those who would be supporting this when it fails will just jump onto the bandwagon of the 10. In other words, it is just going to be a number.

3785 I would be very interested to hear because I just feel this is just almost putting a little stepping stone in between. It is either, do we believe in reduction or don't we believe in reduction, bearing in mind we do not have all the statistics to help us and the information or, as Deputy Le Tissier mentioned, the information of the Pay Review to see what the savings are. So I find it very frustrating, it is just another number put in. I will not be supporting this.

The Bailiff: Deputy Ferbrache.

3790 **Deputy Ferbrache:** Well, sir, it is just really to deal with the Deputy – I will just wait till Deputy Dyke and Deputy Vermeulen finish their conversation – just to deal with the point raised by Deputy Le Tissier: I think it is pretty obvious, is it not? If you have 38 Members getting paid x, it is 38x, if you have 33 Members getting paid x, it is 33x. (*Interjection*) That is the answer. I do not think it is any more complicated than that. I am sorry to sound grumpy at Christmas, but I really thought that was a silly point.

3795

A Member: Hear, hear.

The Bailiff: Deputy Brouard.

3800 **Deputy Brouard:** I am going to vote against this amendment again, this is another desperation. My fear, as we go into this pantomime, is that (*Interjection*) if this fails we are going to then have an option for four people and when that fails we will go down to three and so on. (*Interjection*) Thank you. (*Laughter*) A whole load of knives! Probably from Deputy Inder! Bless him.

3805 So please, let us vote this out, go to the original Proposition of the Requête, vote out Proposition 1 of the Requête and go for a review of what we want to have in this Assembly and do it in a professional way rather than having these little vinaigrettes before Christmas. (*Laughter*)

The Bailiff: Deputy Matthews.

3810 **Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, sir.

I will be as brief as I possibly can. This does appear to me very much to be a repeat of the previous debate that we have just had. It is a duplicate of what we have just had, although a cut down light version, I guess. But it did seem especially ironic to me reading from Deputy Helyar's Requête where he bemoans in point three, 'the failure of the current government system to make binding decisions and move forward without being consistently challenged by a disaffected minority who lost a particular vote' (*Laughter*) and I wonder if, perhaps, that applies in some circumstances and not others. I shall be voting against this amendment, sir.

Thank you.

3820 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

Deputy Roffey: Just an observation, sir. We have heard a lot over the last day about turkeys voting for Christmas. Well, Deputy Inder introducing this has said it is pretty much the same but it gets rid of what would, probably, be a real big issue for Alderney by removing what was Proposition 4. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

3825 Well, what I would just point out is that reducing the number of States' Members in this Assembly by five or by 10 will be almost make it inevitable that the zeitgeist would be that there will have to be a reduction to one. So, if he is trying to buy, by changing the amendment, the two votes from Alderney and if they are gullible enough to go for that then, frankly, I would be surprised. They would be very foolish.

A Member: Hear, hear.

3835 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen.

Deputy Vermeulen: Sir, I think we need to get something out of today and the last time Deputy Inder brought this amendment, or (*Laughter*) a similar amendment, it only very narrowly failed. Quite sensibly, I see that himself and Deputy Parkinson have had a good look at this and decided to take the contentious bits out. Now, for many years I managed teams of people and this is doable; a reduction in five is doable and I think we should be doing it. So I will be supporting this and I urge other Deputies to support it as well.

Thank you, sir.

3845 **The Bailiff:** Madam Procureur, Deputy Meerveld raised a question about the effect of Article 3 of the Reform Law. If there were to be a change in the numbers, whether it is taking off 10 or whether it is taking off five, then they are engaged, aren't they? (*Interjection by the Procureur*) The answer was yes.

Deputy Helyar, as the lead requérant, to speak to Amendment 6.

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

I am not going to say very much more; all of the arguments have already been ventilated. The only comment I would make is in relation to Deputy Roffey's (*Interjection*) references to Alderney Representatives and I would just say that unless we get on and fix their runway, nobody is going to be able to get here anyway. (*Laughter*) So that really is the long and short of it. I fully support this. I do think we should be doing something and, I think, when it comes to the election, Members, people will be looking at how the vote on this goes. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

Thank you.

The Bailiff: And I will turn to Deputy Inder as the proposer of Amendment 6 to reply to the debate.

Deputy Inder: Sir, thank you for that.

I will just run through these quickly and thank you to Deputy Helyar and the requérants for supporting this. Deputy Vermeulen asked, we need to get something out of today. We will do, we will get £190,000 a year, not small beer; £200,000. It was a million, only what feels like 10 minutes ago, because it probably was 10 minutes ago (*Laughter*) which now we have managed to not save for an extra £200,000. So that is well done, States of Guernsey. Over the four-year period there will be a saving of £800,000, it is not small beer, it is considerable and it is worth it.

The only thing I have got is I just wrote down for Deputy Matthews, do keep up. I do not entirely know what that means; and Deputy Gabriel plus Deputy Le Tissier said that we do not really know what the Pay Review will divvy up. Actually, that is not really much of an argument because the Pay Review could end up paying us more money so there may be all benefits to everyone.

I can only deal with the information I have got in my hand. Deputy Le Tissier and Deputy Gabriel, that is information we have been dealt with and Deputy Blin said something about if Deputy Inder does not get his five, will he go for his 10 and so will everyone else. Well I am sorry; I am a psychic rather than a side kick.

Thank you very much.

The Bailiff: Well, Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 6, proposed by Deputy Inder, seconded by Deputy Parkinson and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 6, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Not carried – Pour 19, Contre 19, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 1, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Aldwell, Sue	Blin, Chris	None	Taylor, Andrew	Haskins, Sam
Dudley-Owen, Andrea	Brouard, Al			
Fairclough, Simon	Burford, Yvonne			
Falla, Steve	Bury, Tina			
Ferbrache, Peter	Cameron, Andy			
Helyar, Mark	De Lisle, David			
Inder, Neil	De Sausmarez, Lindsay			
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha	Dyke, John			
Le Tocq, Jonathan	Gabriel, Adrian			
Mahoney, David	Gollop, John			
McKenna, Liam	Le Tissier, Chris			
Moakes, Nick	Leadbeater, Marc			
Murray, Bob	Matthews, Aidan			
Oliver, Victoria	Meerveld, Carl			

Parkinson, Charles
Prow, Robert
Soulsby, Heidi
Trott, Lyndon
Vermeulen, Simon

Queripel, Lester
Roberts, Steve
Roffey, Peter
Snowdon, Alexander
St Pier, Gavin

3890 **The Bailiff:** So in respect of Amendment 6, proposed by Deputy Inder and seconded by Deputy Parkinson, there voted in favour 19 Members, there voted against 19 Members, no Member abstained, 2 Members did not participate in the vote and on that equality of votes I declare the amendment lost.

3895 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey, do you wish to move Amendment 4 now?

[Amendment 4](#)

To delete all and replace with:

11th December, 2024

1. To agree that proper consideration of the appropriate number of States Members can only be sensibly carried out alongside other related questions, such as the structure of government, the number of committees to be populated, and the numbers of members who should be sitting on each of those committees.

2. To instruct the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee ("the SACC") to carry out an in-depth review of the ideal number of States Members, taking into account; the desirability of government being as streamline as possible, the need to properly populate Guernsey's extant committee system of government, and adequate representation of the public.

3. To instruct the SACC, as part of their review, to specifically consider the proportion of States Members who are People's Deputies and Alderney Representatives, bearing in mind the principle of fair, proportionate representation.

4. To instruct the SACC to consult widely with States Members, Committees of the States, the States of Alderney, and other interested parties before finalising their proposals.

5. To instruct the SACC to report back to the States on these matters in good time to allow any possible alteration in the number of States Members to be implemented for the 2029-2033 States' term.

Deputy Roffey: I do, sir, I did not know that we were continuing beyond, I am not sure I can do it. I will give it a go, let us see.

3900 **The Bailiff:** Take as long as you need to.

Deputy Roffey: Thank you very much, sir.

3905 Right, I think really there are two differences between this amendment and the Proposition that has already been inserted through the Le Tocq/Soulsby amendment. One is that this will remove, tonight, the Proposition to reduce the number of States' Members by 10. That is a Proposition that has been brought and one person has spoken on it, so far, only one person has had the opportunity so far and that is Deputy Helyar in opening.

3910 So we can do this two ways, we can debate all day tomorrow whether or not reducing the number of States' Members by 10 is a good idea or, and of course if you want to do it, reduce them, then you will vote against his amendment, I absolutely accept that. If you want to decide tomorrow to reduce by 10, that is what you will do, but if there are Members here who are absolutely sure now that they do not want to reduce the number of States' Members by 10, then why not save yourself that pain and make the decision early on, rather than after a very long and tortuous general debate?

3915 The other difference is who will be doing the review, I guess and I have no great objection to the idea of a Special Investigation Committee, it just feels a bit odd. We have set up a Committee

of five people with a mandate specifically to do this sort of stuff and I am afraid I am picking up, and maybe I am wrong, that some people have not been impressed with the performance or the membership or something of SACC, and that is not my view I am picking it up from some other Members in this Assembly and, therefore, they are assuming that SACC will not be the right Committee to do it in the next Assembly.

Well, I think there is a role for Special Investigation Committees, but I do not think that role is when you have got a Committee with a very clear mandate to carry out exactly the function that you are asking an Investigation Committee to do. So, for those two reasons I would ask Members to vote for this amendment and I look forward to debate – probably tomorrow, but I look forward to debate.

The Bailiff: Deputy Cameron, do you formally Second Amendment 4?

Deputy Cameron: I do, sir, thanks

Deputy Inder: Rule 26(1), sir.

The Bailiff: Before we get to 26(1), just seeing if there are any procedural motions first. Will those Members who wish to speak in debate on Amendment 4 please stand in their places. Is it still your wish that I put a motion? Well, Members of the States the motion is that there be no debate other than the usual end speeches on Amendment 4, as proposed by Deputy Inder pursuant to Rule 26(1). Those in favour –

There is a request for a recorded vote, please. I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on the procedural motion, the guillotine Rule 26(1).

There was a recorded vote.

Rule 26(1)

Not carried – Pour 18, Contre 20, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 1, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Aldwell, Sue	Brouard, Al	None	Taylor, Andrew	Haskins, Sam
Blin, Chris	Burford, Yvonne			
Dudley-Owen, Andrea	Bury, Tina			
Dyke, John	Cameron, Andy			
Ferbrache, Peter	De Lisle, David			
Helyar, Mark	De Sausmarez, Lindsay			
Inder, Neil	Fairclough, Simon			
Le Tocq, Jonathan	Falla, Steve			
Mahoney, David	Gabriel, Adrian			
McKenna, Liam	Gollop, John			
Murray, Bob	Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha			
Oliver, Victoria	Le Tissier, Chris			
Parkinson, Charles	Leadbeater, Marc			
Prow, Robert	Matthews, Aidan			
Soulsby, Heidi	Meerveld, Carl			
St Pier, Gavin	Moakes, Nick			
Trott, Lyndon	Queripel, Lester			
Vermeulen, Simon	Roberts, Steve			
	Roffey, Peter			
	Snowdon, Alexander			

The Bailiff: So, on the motion pursuant to Rule 26(1) proposed by Deputy Inder, there voted in favour 18 Members; there voted against 20 Members; no Member abstained; 2 Members did

not participate and, therefore, I will declare it lost and at this point we will adjourn to 9.30 in the morning.

3950

The Assembly adjourned at 5.30 p.m.