



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

STATES OF DELIBERATION

OF THE

ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

HANSARD

Royal Court House, Guernsey, Friday, 13th 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	C. J. Le Tissier
C. P. A Blin	J. P. Le Tocq
A. H. Brouard	D. J. Mahoney
Y. Burford	A. D. S. Matthews
T. L. Bury	L. J. McKenna
A. Cameron	N. G. Moakes
D. de G. de Lisle	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	P. J. Roffey
P. T. R. Ferbrache	H. J. R. Soulsby
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
A. Kazantseva-Miller	

Representatives of the Island of Alderney

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

The Clerk to the States of Deliberation

E. Gallienne, Esq. (Deputy Greffier)

Absent at the Evocation

Deputy H. L. de Sausmarez (*relevé à 9h 34*); Deputy S. P. Haskins (*indisposé*);
Deputy M. P. Leadbeater (*relevé à 9h 34*); Deputy C. P. Meerveld (*relevé à 9h 47*);
Deputy L. C. Queripel (*relevé à 9h 34*);

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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

REQUÊTE

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

The States' Greffier: Article 8, Requête, The Government Reform Requête – continuation of the debate.

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The Bailiff: Well, just before we call any Member to speak, Deputy de Sausmarez and Deputy Leadbeater, you have both arrived. And if he moves quickly enough, I will say Deputy Queripel as well, since the roll call. Is it your wish, each of you to be relevéed?

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Deputy de Sausmarez/Leader/Queripel: Yes, please, sir.

The Bailiff: Alright, so we will mark the three of you as present.
Who wishes to speak on Amendment 4?
Deputy Cameron.

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Deputy Cameron: Thank you, sir.

I rise briefly to support this amendment which I have seconded and obviously will be voting for, not because I see anything fundamentally wrong with the current number of States' Members, but because if change is deemed necessary, this amendment offers a more effective approach than the alternative amendments to this Requête, as well as the Requête itself.

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The *status quo*, in my opinion, is functioning adequately. However, it is clear that some Members may feel that it no longer meets the needs of our Government or our Island. For those Members, I believe this amendment provides a pragmatic and efficient mechanism to explore possible reforms. Rather than rushing into poorly considered changes, this amendment ensures that any decision about the composition of our States is informed by a full review carried out by SACC. It mandates

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the necessary groundwork to consider the broader context, the structure of government, the committee system and the principles of fair representation.

If Members are dissatisfied with the current arrangements, I urge them to support this amendment as the most responsible way to explore and implement any potential changes.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Sir, I think this amendment is similar to the amendments to establish the States' Investigation & Advisory Committee (SIAC) that was previously approved, with the difference that this type of work, terms of reference are pretty much, I think, similar. Although there is no terms of reference. But in principle, it is similar work but to be undertaken by the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee.

In my view, having a SIAC is a better structure because it allows for that independent committee to be reporting directly to the States. We have had this work being undertaken by a committee, P&R in this case, in collaboration with SACC. We have seen the results, or rather lack of. I think that structure is better.

What I did want to seek clarity from the Bailiff or His Majesty's Procureur, perhaps, is the actual effect of these Propositions, because these Propositions are to delete all and replace with. My understanding is that that means the deletion of all Propositions that so far have been approved. So not only the Requête, but also the Proposition to establish the SIAC which means that if this is approved, we would no longer have the option to vote for the SIAC. I just wanted to have a clarification. Obviously, there was quite a lot of support for the SIAC. And if you are still intending to vote for that, that option will no longer be available.

I would urge Members, if that is the case – I did want to seek clarification that was the case – that would mean that is no longer available. I would not be supporting this amendment on those grounds specifically.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: I can clarify straight away that if this Amendment 4 were to be successful, then you would have the five Propositions in Amendment 4 as the five Propositions, because they replace all the five Propositions that are currently there.

Deputy Ferbrache.

Deputy Ferbrache: This is the main event of the morning, really, in relation to where we are, because as you and Deputy Kazantseva-Miller have confirmed, if this amendment is successful, it is really game over in relation to the Requête and all the other matters.

Of course, our morning is always brightened when we hear the deep baritone tones of Deputy Vermeulen saying, 'Present' (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) but I thought what we might have heard this morning is, or in any course, Deputy Helyar say either, 'Bingo' or 'Housey, housey'. Because he has kept his bingo column about reasons for not making a decision. And I would have thought he has completed about two or three times over by now in relation to where we are.

Goodness me. This is so difficult. It is difficult. Let's have a report, because the one that we got from the Machinery of Government Report was anodyne. It was insipid. It did not do the job that it was expected to do. Albeit, Deputy Le Tocq said yesterday, it did say that the States could cope with five less States' Members. That amendment that was proposed by Deputy Inder failed to get ... It would not have been passed anyway. In a sense, it could have just been formed part of the alternative Propositions in the casting vote in accordance with the procedure of the Presiding Officer. What we are going to be left with is a report.

As Deputy Dudley-Owen said, on matters such as this, we are the experts. We are the experts, and between us we have got a fair bit of judgement. Deputy Roffey joined the States in 1982. I joined it in 1994. Deputy Gollop in 1997. Deputy Trott in 2000. And lots of other people in the early

2000s. Deputy St Pier in 2012. Deputy Soulsby in 2012. There are hundreds of cumulative years of experience in this Assembly already.

80 I have been through four different, as Deputy Gollop has said in a previous debate, four different electoral regions. Deputy of the C  tel for three years. I was a Conseiller under the Alderney States of Guernsey system. I was so one of the last Conseillers. Came back, it was meant to be an interregnum when I left the States voluntarily in 2000 for four or eight years. It took about 16 years before I came back because I had to earn an honest living. And I came back in 2016 as a
85 Representative for St Peter Port South. And then, of course, an Island Deputy when we had the elections four and a bit, years ago.

Others have got more experience. Deputy Trott, 24-and-a-bityears. Deputy Gollop, 27 years. Lots of people have got 15-20 years of experience. I have got 14 years, seven months and 13 days. And at moments like this, if every second of that bears upon me, because we seem to be incapable of
90 doing anything that is difficult ... Let's have another report. That is more likely than not. And I have got to be realistic, because magic only happens at Christmas, but only for children and not for veterans like me. But this amendment is likely to be successful. I can feel the essence of it. It is going to be successful. I do not know why. I have been President for four States' Committees in my time and I have also been Members of various committees.

95 I remember I was on the Telecoms Board. I was not responsible, Deputy Brouard, by the way, for selling Telecoms; it came after my time. I was on Guernsey Post Office Board. I was also on Sea Fisheries, where I had the pleasure for the first time ever of coming across the company of then Sea Fisheries Officer, Mr Helyar, and then, President of the Guernsey Fisheries Association, Deputy Trott. Little did I know that those acorns would grow into great big oak trees 20-odd years later! (*Laughter*)

100 But in connection with all of that, this will be the only room of intelligent people that I am going to meet, and I have met and will meet in the foreseeable future, that think that we have got enough States' Members. Just about everybody else that I speak to, and I do not necessarily mix in the same sort of social circles as Deputy Helyar said he mixes. But the people I have spoken to, from all walks of life, say there are too many. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) 'Too many States' Members. We do not
105 need them.' And I have got to make a judgement, because that is what I am here for. And that is what I have been here for the last 14 years, seven months and 13 days: to make judgements. Sometimes I have made poor judgements. Occasionally I have made a reasonable judgement. I see Deputy Roffey making ... I am still waiting for him to make some more good judgements, but he has made many in his times and I have worked with him closely.

110 But in relation to all of that, this is a judgement that we have got to make. It is very easy. We have got all the material. If we do not know, four-and-a-half years or four-and-a-bit years, into this term, even if you are a first-time Deputy, how the Machinery of Government works, how the system works. Why on earth do we want to go off to a body which will include people who do not have any States experience to tell us how we should run the States?

115 I will give way to my good friend, and I wish him a Happy Christmas, Deputy Roffey.

Deputy Roffey: And a Cool Yule to Deputy Ferbrache.

He is saying, why give the decisions to SACC? And yet the Requette surely says, let's cut 10 States' Members, and then how that will work and how it will work in terms of the impact on our system of
120 government. Let's give it to SACC and let's expect them to report back by March. How is that consistent thinking?

Deputy Ferbrache: You could always find a reason to say no. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) You could always find a reason to say no. And this should be better and that should be better. It is pretty clear
125 what could and what should happen. And Deputy Helyar, for the second time in just a short period, is taking what I would regard as baby steps to change things. He tried that. He tried that just a States' Meeting or two ago in relation to implementation, automatic implementation of increments for States' workers. And the cavalry came over. They came all the way from Cobo and St Sampson's

and Vale to change that, because it was going to cost, with no evidence at all to support it, £9 million.

These are steps that if we cannot make this judgment, it is a reflection on us because the public out there overwhelmingly thinks we should. Not for another two years, for another period of self-indulgence and looking at our navels and scratching our heads etc.

And I say again – I know I am almost a heretic, but I have been a States' Member, as I say, for 14 years, seven months and 13 days – for most people, this should not be a full-time job. For some it is, but it should not be a full-time job. It was not a full-time job when I was in the States from 1994 to 2000. And I was a Member of Advisory & Finance for three of those years. It should not be – by and large, there are limited exceptions – a full-time job.

We are 65,000 people. As Deputy Dudley-Owen also said, there is a tendency for people to want to become a States' Member to be involved in operational matters. That is not our job. We are not there to be involved in operational matters. We should be making decisions which the civil servants and public servants should then implement. But instead, some people want to get their hands dirty in relation to matters that are none of their business.

Well, I know which way the wind is blowing. I think it is very sad. I think it is very sad that we are going to go off for another report, another lot of bits of paper, come back in two years' time. And then it will be, my goodness me.

I commend, with great clarity, what Deputy Trott said yesterday. Look, he said, I was a brand-new Member in 2000-01. We had the Harwood Report which had been commissioned during my time. That was an excellent report. And if I understood Deputy Trott correctly, he said, 'Look, I was a new boy then. I had only been in the States five minutes.' And he was one of eight or nine people, I think he said, if I remember his speech yesterday. And he said, 'We did not follow that.' And he outlined very briefly and succinctly and accurately what the proposals were. And he said, I may have got this phrase wrong, 'We came up with a hotchpotch. We came up with something that was unsatisfactory and we had to poddle along with that for a number of years.' And we are still poddling along. We have had a few changes since then, but we are poddling along.

This Island deserves better Government than we are giving it, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) than it was given previously by the previous Assembly and by the previous Assembly. We cannot make any decisions at all. Our hands are tied in relation to the way that we govern this Island. In the past, when the good old boys and girls from St Saviour's and Torteval etc. came in and sat as Douzaine Representatives – and rarely spoke – Guernsey was managed to govern itself. It had 57 people. Deputy Gollop referred to that. If the Douzaine Representatives spoke, they spoke for about three minutes. We finished the States' business; we had shorter days and we finished it in two days. Very rarely did we would go into a third day. And if they did, people were getting twitchy.

We now sit for ... we are going to be here til, I do not know, whatever time we are going to be here til tonight. Hopefully not too late. We have certainly got no chance of finishing the States' business. We are unfit to govern. We should make urgent decisions.

I urge people. I know I will not be listened to. People out there will think I am speaking sense; people in here will not. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) I urge people to vote against this amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Meerveld, is it your wish to be relevéd?

Deputy Meerveld: Yes, please, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much. I hope you are feeling better today.
Deputy Dudley-Owen.

A Member: Hear, hear.

Deputy Dudley-Owen: Thank you, sir.

180 I am going to speak against this amendment, because I think it is a less better choice than what we have been given by Deputy Le Tocq and Deputy Soulsby before. The addition of Deputy Le Tocq and Deputy Soulsby's amendment to the existing Requête allows Members who wish still to vote for a lesser number of Deputies (**Deputy Inder:** Fewer.) to have that choice of *fewer* number of Deputies. Thank you, Deputy Inder, for correcting my grammar. I needed it then. A fewer number of Deputies. But still, if that is voted out, then Members still have the opportunity to continue with an investigation if they wish to understand that. And if they want to know the effects of having fewer Deputies in the Chamber.

185 But I think that the amendment put forward by Deputies Roffey and Cameron this morning gives us a sense of déjà vu. This is going back again to potentially stagnate with the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee which has been beset by resourcing problems this particular term. And I felt sorry for them insofar as not being able to get work across the line that they have intended to. And I think that if the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee next term is populated by individuals who are in their first term, for example.

190 Going back to what Deputy Trott had said yesterday, that at the time when the Harwood Report came in, he was a Member who was early in their States' career and who possibly did not have the judgement that he has now, given his knowledge. And it takes many, many years of understanding the machinations, the workings of the States, to truly understand them. And I would suggest that, certainly, at the end of my first term, I was a far less knowledgeable than I am now. And even as a second term, I have an awful lot to learn about the ways of this Assembly and this Chamber which is unique.

200 Therefore, I would not want to have a position where we have got five new term individuals onto the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee leading a review and expect them to be able to present it back to the States in good time and having fairly considered it. Especially, as part of that would be liaising with, specifically, considering the proportion of States' Members who are People's Deputy and Alderney Representatives, given that there are the Reform Law issues to consider. And some really, really serious issues relating to Alderney that have to be considered in the round. I would suggest that this would be a step too far for that particular committee without the guidance of Policy & Resources and support thereof.

205 The terms and conditions of the States' Investigation & Advisory Committee that Deputy Le Tocq has named the Government Reform Advisory Committee, which has been accepted now with one Member of Policy & Resources Committee as the Chair, who generally is a second term, and one Member of the States' Assembly Constitution Committee which points to that particular committee having an involvement which would be right.

210 But a Member of the States of Deliberation who has served at least one term, I think, is absolutely right and proper, with two non-States' Members from Guernsey, from Islanders who would like to get involved. I think that that is a much more robust mechanism and vehicle than what is proposed here by Deputies Roffey and Cameron. And I really dislike these requêtes, sorry, these amendments which – (**Several Members:** Yeah!) No, no, no. Slip of the tongue there. Slip of the tongue. I really dislike these amendments that delete all and replace with, because that really goes against the grain of what a lot of people wanted which was to debate exactly what was on the table here about a reduction of Deputies.

215 If there is the option at the end to vote that down, if you do not like it, but I would say that out of the two options on the table here, between Deputy Roffey's amendment and what has now already been voted in by the Chamber yesterday, by a majority, it is Deputy Le Tocq's and that should be the one that stays.

220 Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Meerveld.

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

I am driven to my feet by Deputy Ferbrache's comments. Although, I only arrived to hear the latter half.

He is right, that we are effectively the experts on this subject. He quotes public opinion, but the fact is, unless you served as a Deputy, you do not understand the complexities of being a Deputy and the demands on our time and how much work is involved behind the scenes, not in the public view in this room and the impact that a change in numbers might have.

I am sorry, I am still suffering from yesterday. (*Interjections*) It was stated, yesterday or the day before, by Deputy Le Tocq, that I kept changing my mind on the Machinery of Government working group. That could not be further from the truth. I never changed my mind. That was the problem! (*Laughter*) P&R, of which Deputy Helyar was the Vice-President at the time, their representation at the start of that Machinery of Government working group was to reduce the number of Deputies, have the Assembly appoint the Chief Minister, have the Chief Minister nominate their Cabinet and have the Assembly vote in that Cabinet. And then have the Chief Minister have the power to award portfolios. In other words, the presidency of committees, at their discretion, to Members of that –

Deputy Taylor: Point of order, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of order, Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Surprise, surprise, Rule 17(6).

I am not sure the exact relevance of Deputy Meerveld's comments to this particular amendment.

The Bailiff: I am also not sure, Deputy Meerveld, that this has relevance to this amendment. It might have relevance, subsequently, depending on what the Propositions are. But if you can concentrate on what is in front of Members on Amendment 4 which principally is to appoint SACC to do some work in the next term.

Deputy Meerveld: If you will let me continue a little bit, I will bring it back to its specific relevance.

So that the Chief Minister then would have the power to award portfolios to individuals and then be able to arbitrarily, at any time at their whim, be able to change that and reappoint and move those cabinets around the portfolio.

This was, effectively, an executive government and myself and the other SACC Member were opposed to that. And during the three years or so of work on that Machinery of Government, we could never actually come to an agreement on what was the correct number of Deputies. If you are going to reduce Deputies, why and what the number was? And we could never come to an agreement on how Government should be restructured, with the P&R having very much a strong bias towards some form of executive government. And that is, I think, one of the reasons why the Machinery of Government never concluded with a policy letter before the States.

Bringing that back to this specific amendment. We are the experts, but we do not agree all the time on all issues, not just the Machinery of Government, but generally. This is a consensus Government. We have to take the views of everybody in the room. I have seen no evidence at all that 10 is the correct number. And that is what brings us back to this amendment which I will be supporting. And I take on board Deputy Dudley-Owen's comments about the resource issues within SACC. But, of course, Members have to remember a large part of that was we only had one supporting officer, and that one supporting officer was often on long-term sick leave for a significant percentage of this term.

I also take on board the fact that there would be, potentially, new Members on that SACC Committee. But, of course, SACC is not the arbiter or keeper of the Rules and the structure of Government. If anything, it can only make proposals to this Assembly and it has to be considered by this Assembly in the round. Any restructuring of committees and the number of Deputies means there is likely to be significant changes to the Rules of Procedure.

SACC is the body, as Deputy Roffey has pointed out, that is given that mandate by this Assembly to go and do that. Therefore, I think this is the correct route. Let a committee that is focused on this ... And if they get split and torn on whether it should be executive government with a dramatically reduced number of Deputies or it should be some other combination of changes. That is for them as a committee to sort out and bring back to this Assembly. They will be under an instruction to come back to this Assembly with proposals. And this Assembly, the next Assembly will consider it.

I fully support this amendment. And I do not agree with Deputy Ferbrache's view that we should make an arbitrary decision on the floor of this Assembly that affects the rights of our electorate and their representation. This changes the Reform Law. And we had a Referendum that said that we would be voting through 38 Deputies Island-wide. Why are we, in the dying days of this Assembly, looking to change that number without any evidence? Why is 10 the right number? Why not eight? Why not seven?

I give way to Deputy Blin.

Deputy Blin: I thank Deputy Meerveld for giving way. And I am sorry that he is suffering with that cold. I will give him a few seconds' respite.

I would just like to ask Deputy Meerveld to consider. He has explained very well that he is supporting this amendment and explained the other reasons why the other comments from Deputy Ferbrache, for example, saying we should make the decision on the floor ... But surely, I have heard that there are more amendments coming through. Maybe it is going to be five, four, three or five etc. (*Interjections*) Can't we just decide to stop all of this and get on with the Housing Committee amendment, which are the key part? This is going to go on. I remember Deputy Inder mentioned, 'The Deputy Gollop one has gone on for one and a half hours. Well, the next one has gone on for two hours. The next one is going to go on for how long?' Or are we going to wake up and get back to the job we were meant to be doing?

I have heard from the people in the same way as others have mentioned who have listened to people on the Island. Stop navel-gazing, get on with doing the business and we have business to complete

Several Members: Hear, hear.

A Member: Make a decision.

Deputy Meerveld: Thank you. I thank Deputy Blin for his interjection. I think he is spot on. We have got much more important things to talk about. We have already wasted, effectively, two days on this issue. And on that basis, I will now sit down and try not to speak again.

The Bailiff: Deputy Vermeulen.

Deputy Vermeulen: Thank you, sir.

Last night, we left this Assembly after a long day of debate, it has to be said. And I returned to the west coast of Guernsey, where I live, and proceeded to unwind. Part of that process was taking a conference call from Deputy Inder on emergency issues that we had to discuss. And we touched on how close it was yesterday. Nineteen people supported that amendment to the Requête that Deputy Inder submitted the second time round. It is getting closer and closer. And it does not get any closer, does it, sir? Nineteen each way; 19 for, 19 against.

I think there is definitely some merit in considering those 19 people that voted for it. And it might be, what is the magic number? We have talked about it. I think Deputy Blin mentioned it. What is the magic number? It might be three is the magic number. I do not know. I think there is a song about it or something, but it might very well be that that is a doable. Ten, a reduction straight away to ten might be too much for a lot of people. I get that, but I am –

335 **Deputy St Pier:** Point of order, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of order, Deputy St Pier.

340 **Deputy St Pier:** Rule 17(6). This is pertinent, perhaps, to another amendment which may emerge. It is pertinent to general debate. It is not pertinent to this amendment.

The Bailiff: I wondered if it might be pertinent to this amendment to say, do not remove all the Propositions because it would be better not to approve Amendment 4. But if that is what Deputy Vermeulen wants to say, he can probably say it quite quickly, just as I have. *(Laughter)*

345 **Deputy Vermeulen:** Well, that is the point I was trying to get on to. *(Laughter)* And this does pretty much seem like a wrecking amendment and it has got extant Resolution written all over it.

But change, it is a slow progress in the States of Guernsey. And I think we have got to bear in mind what the public are expecting. And a Member, this morning, who I counselled, was attacked or approached in Morrisons, just by the fruit and veg stand. And, 'Too much chat, not enough getting done.' The public are expecting *more action*. And you get that in a slicker team. You get that in a slicker, more direct management. You do not field a football team with 40 players, do you? You field a football team with 11. I would be very cautious about this because it would throw out anything which comes after it, another amendment or whatever. And it takes away from the actual spirit of the Requête.

355 I have talked about what this motion alludes to with the public and they cannot see Members voting for a reduction in the number of Deputies. They just cannot see Deputies voting for that. But we should be able to make savings and efficiencies. The Institute of Directors sent a sentiment survey, a second one this year. And the comment from the finance industry was they found it *incredulous* that we were not able to make any savings. So go careful. I am not going to vote for this and I hope we see another amendment a bit later on.

Thank you, sir.

365 **Deputy Le Tissier:** Rule 26(1).

The Bailiff: Alright. Can I invite those Members who wish to speak in debate on Amendment 4 to stand in their places? Deputy Le Tissier, is it still your wish that –?

370 **Deputy Le Tissier:** Yes, it is, sir.

The Bailiff: I will put a motion pursuant to Rule 26(1) to guillotine general debate on this amendment, subject to hearing from the lead requérant and Deputy Roffey as the proposer of it. In reply. Those in favour; those against.

375 *Members voted Contre.*

The Bailiff: I will declare that lost.
Deputy Soulsby.

380 **Deputy Soulsby:** Sir.

Yes, I just wanted to make two points. The first one is agreeing with Deputy Ferbrache: I do not like the fact that the amendment effectively says 'delete all and replace'. It is almost like a sursis and it was something Deputy Le Tocq, when P&R considered when putting together its amendment, thought it would be the wrong thing to do, to delete and replace. For that reason, I do not like the amendment.

The second reason is just to go back and I did respond to Deputy Roffey on this point yesterday in regard to saying that SACC was the right body and that is what it was constituted to do. And I said, well, in the 2012-16 States and previously, and Deputy Le Tocq mentioned the Harwood Report, but in the 2012-16 States we had the States' Review Committee which was a Special Investigation Committee, separate from whatever ... well, it was not called SACC at the time but whatever it used to be called which put ... *[Inaudible]* under the changes by the States' Review Committee.

But also, I thought I would mention that another committee which was set up in that term with, also linked to in the same area, was the States' Constitution & Investigation Committee. And it was one of my favourite committees that I have sat on it in the States. Fascinating, looking at our relationship in terms of how our policy letters, once approved, and how legislation is dealt with; which has led to a number of changes, including how now the Lieutenant Governor can sign off on our projets de loi which will help us and add to that whole concept of displaying our independence. And that was a completely separate committee. Some really excellent people on that one, both States' Members and non-States' Members. And that worked really well.

I do not think we should be saying, 'Well, this is SACC. It is only SACC that can do it.' I think, and the more I think of it, I do actually think a Special Investigation Committee is the way to go.

A Member: Hear, hear.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: Only briefly, sir.

I think Deputy Soulsby is correct. This amendment feels like a sursis motive and should have been headlined as such. Of the two amendments, the Le Tocq/Soulsby amendment is by far the better option of the two so I will not be supporting this.

And I think it was Deputy Blin that mentioned there are two other amendments coming in. They are. One is a cascading five and three, and if the five and three fails, then I will immediately submit with Deputy Fairclough a three.

But I have got to make mention of the Reform Law, as it was mentioned by the current President of the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee. And it has been used as a foil to stop any progress or any decisions at all. And I will read it to Members now, with your ... *[Inaudible]* Article 3 of the Reform Law provides that, and I will read this:

Any Resolution of the States of Deliberation, directing the preparation of legislation to repeal or vary any of the provisions of the Law, which is carried by a majority of less than two thirds of the Members present and voting shall not be deemed to have been carried before.

Deputy Taylor: Point of order, sir.

Deputy Inder: I have not finished.

The Bailiff: Point of order. Deputy Inder.
Point of order, Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Rule 17(6). I do not see how the Reform Law that Deputy Inder is quoting has any relevance to this particular amendment. It would come in at a later stage, maybe in general debate.

The Bailiff: Okay, I am going to disagree with that on the basis that because Amendment 4 proposes to delete the existing Propositions and replace them with a fresh set of Propositions, anything that is relevant to the existing Propositions as they stand, which is what Deputy Inder is explaining to Members, is relevant to this debate.

Deputy Inder to continue, please.

Deputy Inder: Thank you very much, sir.

440 Having sat on SACC for two years and fallen foul of the Reform Law, I thought it was important, as we are a legislative body, to explain the Laws to those who are actually ...

That was going to be quite a short speech, but that intervention has put me out of place so I am going to read it again. Just so we are clear how the Reform Law works, Article 3 of the Reform Law provides that – for the benefit of Deputy Taylor, because I did not finish my sentence:

Any Resolution of the States of Deliberation directing the preparation of legislation to repeal or vary any of the provisions of this Law, which is carried by a majority of less than two thirds of Members present and voting shall not be deemed to have been carried ...

445 – and this is important –

... before the expiration of seven days from the date of the Resolution.

That is all the Reform Law says. Whatever decision we make today to make any variance, if it is not carried by two thirds of the Assembly, just wait seven days and it is then carried. That is the Reform Law.

450 Thank you, sir. (*Interjection*)

A Member: Yes, very selective.

The Bailiff: Deputy Bury.

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Deputy Bury: Sir, would it be possible for His Majesty's Procureur – sorry – to clarify if Deputy Inder's interpretation that he has just shared with the Assembly is as she understands it as well?

The Bailiff: Madam Procureur, are you able to assist?

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The Procureur: Sir, I am.

465 The section of Article 3 that Deputy Inder has read out is absolutely correct. There is one proviso, though, that may be of assistance for Members which I have added on a follow up email. Apologies, Deputy Inder. And that is in relation to that seven days. If before the expiration of that seven days, seven Members of this Assembly make an application to the Presiding Officer – I am not reading it verbatim, I am just reading it for ease – then that Resolution would be brought back to the States of Deliberation within three months. And if not, then affirmed by a simple majority, it would be lost.

Deputy Inder is absolutely correct, but there is a proviso after that, as I have indicated.

Thank you, sir.

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The Bailiff: Yes.

Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Thank you, sir.

475 I am very grateful to the extra couple of lines from Madam Procureur, because I think they were quite important. Because I think they highlight, I would have to disagree with Madam Procureur and say that I think Deputy Inder was wrong in the way he portrayed things.

480 But anyway, more relevant to this amendment which I ... I do not really like the tone that we get in some debates, that we are afraid to make a decision. It really gets my goat, sir. It really does. We need to make a decision.

And Deputy Ferbrache told us that we are the experts. And it seems we are the experts until we do something that he does not agree with and then, (*Laughter*) then we do not know what we are

doing. He referred to the people, it is not a quote verbatim, but people out there want this. But he failed to specify which people, because he normally tells us if they are the good, decent people of Guernsey. I am going to assume that the people he is referring to are the ones that he says eat Cheeselets in their vests in their bedrooms. Because I have not had any emails coming to me saying, 'You have to reduce the numbers.' It is not like this massive wave of people urging us to reduce these numbers. Maybe other Members have, maybe they have. But it is easy to send an email to all Deputies and my inbox has not been swamped with demands for this.

But this particular amendment will get my support. I was happy to support the previous amendment from Deputies Le Tocq and Soulsby. To pick up on Deputy Kazantseva-Miller's point of why I will now vote against that, I supported that amendment initially because it was on the table. I wanted it as a safety net because I think this should be looked at, but I think this is a better way of doing it.

In terms of resources, there is already a committee made. We do not really have to do anything; we do not have to have extra elections; we do not have to have this discussion about appointments; SACC is there. And in particular, one of the points I made in that debate on Amendment 3 was about the communication and discussion with us so we can have briefings. What would become Proposition 4, 'To instruct SACC to consult widely with States' Members, Committees of the States, the States of Alderney.' I think that is a really big bonus. That is something that is of *great* use in coming to a conclusion. And I want to highlight that is something that the requérants did not do.

Under the original Propositions, we have got three Deputies – we have heard a lot about Deputies who have nothing to do – who lost their main positions a year ago today, did they have these big consultations all this time that we apparently have on our hands, if we are not on a committee? No consultation, no big meetings with Members.

Amendment 4 is the way that we should approach these things. It is the sensible way. It is not can-kicking. It is doing our research and doing our homework properly and coming to an informed decision which we are meant to be doing, not just coming to these decisions on the hoof.

Sir, I hope Members will get behind this. I hope that will then be the end of the debate, because this is, essentially, general debate, if this is adopted. And then I hope we can move on to more important things.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

I very much agree with Deputy Taylor's view. And the other thing that I would just like to push back on is the suggestion that this amendment is somehow a proxy for a sursis. A sursis is to delay a decision and this is absolutely a recommendation; it is a decision in its own right. As Deputy Taylor says, it might not be a decision that Deputy Ferbrache likes, but it is still a decision. I really do not think that this narrative that we are incapable of making a decision has any substance whatsoever. It is just that people kick back against it if they happen not to like the decision that is made.

This is in no way deferring a decision. This would be as legitimate a decision as a decision that Deputy Ferbrache would prefer us to make. It is absolutely as pertinent. And so it is a very legitimate way forward. I think it is a much more sensible way to approach it than the proposals in the original Requête. And actually I think, on balance, although I did support the Special Investigation Advisory Committee (SIAC) approach, I think that this amendment will get my support as well, because I think this is probably an even more efficient way of addressing it.

But I do think this is a very valid, very active decision. And if we make this decision, if we support this amendment, then no one can turn around and say that we have not made a decision. We absolutely have! *(Interjection and laughter)*

The Bailiff: Deputy Queripel.

535 **Deputy Queripel:** Thank you, sir.

In support of the amendment, I am going to have to speak against the Requête so this will be my general debate speech (**A Member:** Excellent.)

There was a time when I was thinking of supporting the Requête and there was a time when I was considering laying two amendments; one to reduce by seven Members and one to reduce by three. My rationale behind that, sir, was I just wanted to give the Assembly options.

After thinking it through, I came to the conclusion we would be doing enough navel-gazing as it is, so I did not pursue those amendments. But seeing as we are still navel-gazing after all these hours, I want to bust a myth, and correct something that colleagues have said or questioned whether a Deputy earns their salary or not, if they do not serve on a committee. Just because a Deputy does not serve on a committee does not mean they do not earn their salary.

When I was first elected back in 2012, I stood in *seven* different internal elections. *Seven*. And the Assembly did not support any of those nominations, so I was not given a role by the States. I decided to throw myself into one-to-one cases, because that is how you learn how things are done. Any Member of this Assembly who has not taken on a one-to-one case really does not know how the system works, because the only way you learn how the system works is if you work on a one-to-one case – at least one with every department. That is how you learn how things are done and that is how you learn about the trauma that people are going through out in the community.

Sir, I could easily have worked for 40 hours a week on those one-to-one cases, but I had to limit my involvement because I wanted to do a lot of other States work as well. I limited my involvement on one-to-one cases to 30 hours because I wanted energy as well to do other things. I wanted to do things like work on seeking to change some existing policies and introduce new policies via amendments and requêtes. I worked either in isolation, doing my own research, or with colleagues.

Like every other Deputy, I still had to get my head around every single item on the Order Paper for States' debates which meant attending several meetings and presentations with colleagues and some with members of the public as well. Because I needed to learn and I wanted to learn quickly.

Some of my colleagues were saying, I am going to take the first year to get my feet under the table. Really? It is a quarter of your term gone. Anyone who spends a year getting their feet under the table has wasted a year of a four-year term. Disgraceful approach. I ended up, even though I was not on a committee, working between 60 and 70 hours a week. That was my choice to do that. That was my choice.

But on the issue of choice, when she spoke yesterday, Deputy Dudley-Owen said in a speech, she is in awe of Deputy de Sausmarez and Deputy Roffey because of the work they take on. I, too, am in awe, because I have now been a Member of ESS for a few months. I have seen the work they have put in on ESS, but I do not see what Deputy Roffey does on STSB and I do not see what our Deputy de Sausmarez does on E&I. But I should imagine they too are working at least 60-70 hours a week, perhaps more. But it is their choice. That is what I am saying here. It is your choice.

They choose to do that and they thrive on it. And thank goodness they do. Thank goodness they decided to do all the work they do. But there is no rule to comply with regarding how much work you take on as a Deputy. I could, of course, have decided not to do anything except just attend the States debates and read Billets. But that is not the reason I wanted to be a Deputy. I wanted to be a Deputy because I wanted to see if I could have a beneficial change on behalf of the community. I figure I earn my salary even though I was not on the committee.

On the other side of the issue, it also proves that to say a smaller group of politicians will require all Members to be a part of committee government and therefore work more frequently and closely with colleagues and be more aware of issues across Government, as it says in the Requête, is extremely misleading. Because the reality is any Deputy can do exactly what they like when they are first elected. They can decide not to be part of any committee and go it alone and do very little, due to the fact that there is nothing in the Rules to prevent them from doing that.

And on that point, there is not even a Rule that says a Member must attend States' debates. I have been told there is, but I cannot find one. There is an expectation, but as far as I am aware, there is no Rule in place that says a Deputy must attend States' debates. And also to say that a

smaller group of politicians will reduce debate time and that Deputies will be better informed through being actively involved in Government work is also completely misleading for the reasons I have just highlighted previously.

590 Why would a smaller group of Deputies reduce debate time? There is no evidence that that would happen. Quite the opposite, in fact, in my view, because we do not know who the Members of the next Assembly are going to be. They may be a whole host of first-time Deputies who speak on absolutely everything, because, like us, they are able to speak for as long as they like, unless a time limit, of course, is placed on speeches. But the requérants would not have known there was
595 going to be an amendment submitted that actually sought to do that when they compiled their Requête which is why I say it is completely misleading to say some of the things they say in the Requête.

And also to say that a smaller number of Deputies will make them and their actions or inaction more visible and thereby more accountable to the public is, again, completely misleading. I say that
600 because I cannot remember a time when Deputies have been *more visible* to the public than we all are right now. We are visible and we are accessible. Reducing the number of Deputies will not make the slightest bit of difference in that respect. Also, of course, there no power of recall. My brother, former Vale Deputy Laurie Queripel tried to introduce a power of recall, but that was not supported many years ago. So how can Deputies be made more accountable?

605 And to say that individuals can more easily make a difference in a small group is also extremely misleading because we only have to look at our experiences on committees, in committee meetings, where there are small groups. And there is no evidence of that claim that individuals can make a difference in a small group. I am an individual. I am not afraid to express my views in committee meetings. I have been driven to resign from not one but two committees in my time as a Deputy
610 because my views as an individual were not being taken on board by my fellow committee members so surely that blows that argument completely out of the water.

And saying there is no evidence that reducing Deputies will not work does not cut it either, because the problem is there has always been, and it is worldwide in every government in the world, personalities. Personality clashes. That is what hinders progress in government. It hinders progress
615 in this States.

When you have people who cannot even say hello to each other and then expect them to work together, well, you are in your own world. You are just completely unrealistic. Saying that reducing Deputies will result in less personality clashes simply does not make sense because rampant self-inflated egos will always prevail, sadly. They do in life and they do in politics and they do in this
620 Assembly from time to time.

I will work with anyone. But it has been proven to me over the 12-plus years I have been a Deputy, there are some Deputies who do not want to work with me. Only they know why. And I have seen that happen to others as well. It is not just me. I am not just talking about me here. I am talking about the reason why we will *never ever* have joined up Government – ever have joined up
625 Government. It does not matter if you have got five Deputies, you are still going to have personality clashes because you have got egos to deal with.

Deputy Falla: Point of order, sir.

630 **The Bailiff:** Point of order, Deputy Falla.

Deputy Falla: I think it is Rule 26(4), sir. I am failing to see what Deputy Queripel's interesting speech has to do with this amendment.

635 **The Bailiff:** Well, what Deputy Queripel said at the outset was that he would forgo his right to speak in general debate. He is addressing, also, the Proposition from the Prayer of the Requête, about reducing States' Members so I will give him some latitude.

Deputy Queripel.

Deputy Queripel: Thank you, sir.

640 What I was saying here is the very same thing I said in opposition to the Deputies Gollop and Matthews amendment, when I said it is all opinion. There is no real evidence that reducing or increasing the number of Deputies is going to improve any States procedures or processes. If there was evidence then I would willingly support the Requête.

645 And I am going to close by apologising to Deputy Helyar (*Interjection*) because I misled him. In the November debate, we stood out in the hallway and I actually told him I was going to support the Requête. But that was before I went away and thought it through. And I am really glad I did go away and think it through because it is just far too easy to get caught up in the tide of your emotions and it is far too easy to conflate issues. You need time to think them through. And I went away and thought them through.

650 And I hope he understands, sir, why I have changed my mind. If he does not understand, then I am afraid there is nothing more I can do than to say I am sorry for misleading him.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Le Tissier.

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Deputy Le Tissier: Thank you, sir.

I was in two minds as to whether I should forgo my right to speak in general debate. But on balance, I have decided to just speak on this amendment because I have got plenty to say in general debate.

660 I would like to thank Deputies Roffey and Cameron for bringing this most sensible amendment. I have gone on record to say that I am not necessarily opposed to a change in the number of Deputies. What I am opposed to is a proposal to make major changes to the States just before the next election.

665 And I have to disagree with Deputy Helyar, who stated on TV that there was plenty of time. Yes, of course, there is, if you want to trash good governance procedures. I will not do that. And the other point is that major changes should, in my opinion, be subject to proper research, consultation with Members and, if necessary, the public and a policy letter presented to this Assembly. The underlying Requête has seen no proper consultation and no proper research. What limited survey, the requérants say they have carried out is not presented in detail, just a footnote. I do not know if
670 a footnote is part of a Requête. However, this is why this amendment should be supported because it allows proper research and consideration and not just the back of a fag packet proposal.

I agree with Deputy Taylor. I am not afraid to make a decision. (*Interjection*) No. When the people who say that we are afraid to make a decision say that what they really mean is that you must agree with me. (**Two Members:** Hear, hear.) If you do not agree with me, you are afraid. (**A Member:**
675 Hear, hear.) Now I take great exception to that. The fact I do not agree with you is a valid option in any democracy. But this, unfortunately, is a growing trend we see in politics across the world, in other countries. Agree with me or you are the devil and subject to disdain. No, we must do this properly.

680 Please support this. I will be supporting this amendment. And I will just take a risk at not having my say on the basic Requête.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Mahoney.

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

I will be brief. I do not know if others feel the same, but we seem to be spiralling towards absurdity at some levels here. I am not going to go into lots of them. We have Deputy de Sausmarez as one of the most recent speakers telling us that by supporting this amendment, that is not delaying a decision; to push the decision into next term, is a decision. And therefore, job done and

690 we should all go home all happy that we have made decisions. Decisions to make decisions to let someone else make the decision is a decision. It is just disappearing up itself, isn't it?

I think *Dante's Inferno* had, I think, nine levels of hell. I am not entirely convinced that we are not trying to manufacture a 10th level here. This is just spiralling towards absurdity.

695 **The Bailiff:** Deputy de Lisle.

Deputy de Lisle: Sir, this amendment actually shows the amount of research and analysis that is required in order to make any decision with regard to the rationalisation or the extension of the number of Deputies or, in fact, whether we have got the numbers at a satisfactory level at the current time. Because it is going to mean quite a lot of investigation.

700 I heard Deputy Taylor talking about the fact that it will require consultation with each Member, each States' Member, their committees, as well, together with the States of Alderney. And other interested parties before finalising their proposals. But there is a lot more to it than that because it mentions in Article 3, to specifically consider the proportion of States' Members who are People's Deputies and Alderney Representatives, bearing in mind the principle of fair and proportionate representation. That is very significant. Fair and proportionate representation. Because one can go too low with the numbers of Deputies and therefore, you do not have proportionate representation in this place. And it is very important that not just a few people make the policy determination of the States of Guernsey but it must be broadly vested in the population as a whole through the Members in this Assembly.

710 But when I look at the first part of this amendment as well, that says an awful lot because it says there are related questions, such as the structure of government. That has to be looked at: the structure of government that we want. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Do we want to continue with consensus government or do we want to do as Jersey has done with executive government which many of them are not satisfied with anyway? (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) So that is something that has to be considered. But also, the number of committees to be populated has to be considered. And the number of Members that should be sitting on each of these committees. It is going to look also at our committee structure. And Members have mentioned the fact that there is some overlap in committees as well that can come out of this review.

720 It is an in-depth review, in other words. And it is very broad and it is something that we should be doing before taking any decisions with regard to the rationalisation or extension of the number of States' Members representing the people of Guernsey.

I fully support this. I think this amendment has provided a huge body of direction to the SACC Committee. It has to concentrate on all of these various points that are currently stated here. And I think this has done a very important service to the States, but to the Island of Guernsey as well in exploring this particular issue that we are confronted with at this sitting.

725 Thank you, sir.

A Member: Hear, hear.

730

The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater.

Deputy Leadbeater: ... [*Inaudible*] Sir, I am sorry.

This will be my only speech, sir. I will forgo my right to speak again in general debate.

735 I will be supporting this amendment. I do not like the fact that we are debating any of this in the first place. It is never a good look and it is never a good feel when we are talking about ourselves all the time. I can remember, last term, I think, on two occasions, we debated when to debate and it just got ridiculous. It was like when I saw this coming out and I thought of the same feeling from back then.

740 Anyway, the Requête is not very long. There is not much to it. Number 1 says that:

The Policy & Resources created a Governance sub-committee shortly after the 2020 election. In or about early September 2024, to the great disappointment of many States Members and members of the community, it was shelved, having reached no conclusions ...

But I think Deputy Lester Queripel pointed out before, I have not heard anybody coming to me and complaining about this committee being shelved. I do not think I have heard many Members, let alone any members of the community. And I reckon that I could walk up and down the High Street now and ask random members of the public if they were one of the members of the community that were greatly disappointed at the end of this committee. And they would wonder what on earth I was talking about. They would not have a clue. I really do not think this has been a real crunchy topic amongst members of the community. Certainly, no one that has come to speak spoken to me about it.

Number 2 says:

Guernsey's governance and constitution has long been recognised by many of its senior members and by external organisations as failing on unable to deliver effective policy and decision-making. Whilst a consensus system enables change to be conservative and gradual, our times require clearer and crucially faster decision making which can only be delivered by an executive based system.

Okay, Jersey, have an executive-based system. And let's look at the speed of decision-making in the ferry contract: us with our gradual consensus system reached a decision, them with their superfast executive decision did not. Let's also look at the Hospital. Okay, given, we have had some issues identifying the exact cost of our Hospital, but they have spent more than £130 million and they have not even decided where to put it. They could not even decide where to put their hospital, so they decided to put it over three separate sites. I do not think this is effective decision-making. I really do not, so be careful what you wish for (**Two Member:** Hear, hear.)

Number 3 tells us:

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 ...

Now, four of the seven requérants were part of the P&R Committee that brought tax reforms to the States three separate times last term and were defeated each time.

I will give way to Deputy Mahoney.

Deputy Mahoney: I thank Deputy Leadbeater for giving way.

Really, it was just a query about something you just said. Sorry it took 30 seconds to stand up. He talks about the decision-making process, etc. and then the difference between exec and non-exec government, but would he share the same view that really, that happened because that decision was made in a committee to do that? It was not brought back to this place so that 40 of us could give 40 different opinions on it. And the reason it worked is because five people decided, in a room, that this is what we should do (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) rather than bringing it back to 40 people that could probably then have argued about it for, I suspect, quite a long time?

A Member: Hear, hear.

Deputy Leadbeater: Yes, well, Deputy Mahoney has his opinion. Anyway, where was I?

Deputy Mahoney was one of the requérants that was part of that P&R Committee that brought the proposals back three times – the part that tells us that it is an issue to be constantly challenged by a disaffected minority that lost a particular vote, that is exactly what happened with P&R.

Number 4 says, 'All too often, years of work are being undermined by ill-considered sectarian amendments which are brought without consultation or proper financial consideration'. Now, this is in a requête not an amendment, but the same principles apply because we have had a Referendum. The public clearly told us that they wish to be governed by an Assembly of 38 in a

single Island-wide district, whether we like that or not. And I do not believe there has been any consultation with the voting public, or anyone for that matter, in the drafting of this Requête.

785 Five talks of previous reviews and the need for effective decision-making and focuses on the fact that Deputies are paid, unlike the days of yore, when they did the job for no remuneration at all. And tells us that, now, Deputies receive a relatively substantial salary which discourages collective responsibility and accountability. The lead requérant and another secretary are practising advocates. Clearly advocates get paid footballer's salaries relative to Deputies. All advocates must be
790 completely devoid of collective responsibility and accountability by this logic, particularly because they get paid a lot of money. I do not really get how your responsibility and accountability is affected by the amount of remuneration you receive. I do not really understand it.

Number 6 tells us, 'It is a view of the requérants that there are too many representatives per capita and that somehow alludes to many destructive behaviours' and it lists a few of those
795 destructive behaviours and one of those destructive behaviours on that list is time-wasting debates! *(Laughter)* And I think I will leave that there.

Number 7 says we have a committee of 38 that is supposed to make all of the decisions, but some Deputies consider themselves outside of Government which is self-evident from their speeches. And I am unsure how reducing the number of Members would change how Members will
800 perceive themselves and change how they speak. I do not really understand the rationale and there is no explanation in the body of the Requête.

Number 8, I have some sympathy for, when it talks of time and energy taken to prepare policies etc. by committees. And then, after being debated, looks completely different. And what was agreed one term can be overturned the next. But that is a part of democracy, I suppose. And it is up to
805 committee members to convince their peers to support them in the Assembly. It is part of their job. And also, one Assembly cannot bind the next, as we will probably find out on Tax Reform next term. **(A Member:** Hear, hear.)

Number 9, 'It is patently beyond argument that Guernsey's Government system is unfit for purpose in the 21st century. It is a rudderless, leaderless system at the mercy of political ideologues and egotists'. Four of the requérants were at the helm of this apparently rudderless vessel for the
810 lion's share of this term. They may speak from experience that I do not have, sir, but I do not think it is fair to accuse other Members of being ideologues or egotists unless they may speak of themselves, sir.

Number 10 gives us, they say, 'several strong arguments in support of reducing the number of Deputies'. And there are some strong arguments in reducing the number of Deputies. 'Smaller
815 groups are easier to manage in terms of meetings and communication. It is, therefore, easier to build consensus with a smaller group than a larger one'.

Okay, imagine a committee with Deputy Meerveld and Deputy Inder and one other person. Are you going to get consensus on that committee? *(Laughter)* I do not think just because it is a smaller
820 committee that you are going to get consensus. It is the personalities involved in that committee **(A Member:** Hear, hear.) that are going to determine if you get consensus or not. Some people just grate and they will never give an inch. Some people are so stubborn. I have been like that in my career myself. I think everybody with experience, as you go through a job, you learn that you have to give and take and you learn to pick your battles and you learn to make compromises for the
825 greater good. But that is something that some people have naturally, some people learn it. But there are some people that grate with others and that is never going to change. It does not matter how small the group is. It is the composition of that group, rather than the numbers in that group.

'Smaller groups are proven by management as social science to be less likely to factionalise for the same reasons. They have to work together to secure outcomes.' And I will refer my answer to
830 the first one there, sir. '(c) Small teams perform better ... They also tend to outperform larger teams.' Well, let's look at the Premier League. Let's look at North London. There are two teams in North London; there is the bigger team which is Arsenal and there is a smaller team which is Tottenham Hotspur. And in my memory, I cannot remember Tottenham Hotspur ever outperforming Arsenal. I cannot. By that logic –

835 **Deputy Ferbrache:** Point of correction! (*Laughter*)

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Ferbrache.

840 **Deputy Ferbrache:** Can I just tell Deputy Leadbeater. I am sure he remembers, that the first team to do the double in the 20th century was Tottenham Hotspur!

A Member: Hear, hear.

845 **Deputy Leadbeater:** I thank Deputy Ferbrache for his intervention, but I did mention Premier League. I do not want to go back to those times. He may have a point before the Premier League, but in the Premier League era. In fact, I put that Premier League bit in there because I was anticipating (*Laughter*) the Deputy Ferbrache intervention.

850 'Smaller groups of politicians will require all Members to be part of a committee government and, therefore, work more frequently and closely with colleagues and be more aware of issues across government.' It will mean more Members will have to work on multiple committees, but I am unsure of just how beneficial that would actually turn out to be. 'Smaller groups of Deputies will reduce cash costs and salaries paid.' You cannot argue with that.

855 '(f) A smaller group of politicians will reduce pure debate time but also be better informed through being actively involved in Government work.' I do not believe this happens in the executive style system like Jersey, I think it is completely the opposite. I may be wrong. I am no expert.

'(g) Individuals can more easily make a difference in smaller groups and this is likely to encourage more well-qualified and experienced candidates to stand.' Individuals who are by nature destructive – this is my bit – will have far more profound negative impacts on smaller groups than in larger ones, in my opinion.

860 '(h) A smaller number of places at election would increase the competition for places, likely to reduce the number of respective candidates and reduce the amount of time the electorate must spend reviewing manifestos and selecting their choices.' Yes, it must take a long time, but I do not really know what a speculative candidate is supposed to be because I thought, in a democracy, anybody can put themselves forward for election and it is up to the voting public whether they accept their nomination and they decide to vote for them or not.

865 '(i) A smaller number of Deputies will make them and their actions or inaction more visible and, therefore, more accountable to the public.' I do not believe it will because we all know who gets the flak. It is the Committee President. It is Deputy Prow, Deputy Inder, Deputy Dudley-Owen, Deputy Brouard, Deputy de Sausmarez. If you look in the media when they are ... Sorry. Deputy Trott. (*Laughter*) Sorry, Deputy Trott. When you look in the media and you read about something that is going on, whether it be with Education, with the Hospital, with the Police or whatever it may be, it is the Committee President that is in the firing line every single time. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

875 A lot of people do not even know who populate the committees, they just know the President. There are lots of people that I have heard moaning to me about Deputy Brouard and haven't a clue that I sit on Health & Social Care! (*Laughter*)

'(j) Smaller groups encourage rationalisation of tasks and better delegation. There are several examples of committees that could be recommended for merger by SACC and proposals to encourage better performance if these proposals were accepted.' And it gives us five examples.

880 Well, sir, when Social Security and Housing were merged way back in 2016, there has been a lot of criticism of ESS since its inception, because the States have dropped the ball on Housing. And the next item of business we are going to consider at this meeting is the proposal to create a new Committee for Housing. We have a few of the signatories to this Requête and to the next one so it is this Requête, we want a smaller government, but the next requête, we want a bigger government. You cannot have the penny in the bun, as Deputy Gollop often tells us.

885 The conclusion, 11 and 12, tells us that everything is failing, the wheels have come off and we are all doomed if we do not support the Requête. We are not even allowed to refer to our Chief Minister as Chief Minister, when I think we all know he prefers to be called Your Highness! (*Laughter*)

Sir, that is my bit to add to this entire debate. I do not like the fact that we are plucking a number out of the air here and building an argument around it. I do not think it is good governance. And I will be supporting the Roffey/Cameron amendment.

890 Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Well, as I do not see any other Member rising, I will turn to Deputy Helyar as the lead requérant to speak to Amendment 4, please.

895 **Deputy Helyar:** Sir, I think the arguments have been well ventilated, so I move that we move straight to the vote.

Thank you.

900 **The Bailiff:** Thank you very much.

And finally, I will turn to the proposer of Amendment 4, Deputy Roffey, to reply to the debate, please.

Deputy Roffey: Thank you, sir.

905 A number of people have pointed out that one of the big features of this amendment is that it deletes the original proposals. And that was a quite deliberate way of drafting it, because I wanted this to be an absolutely honest amendment. If you really believe that we should reduce our membership by 10 at the next election and expect SACC to report back with the required changes of the way our Government works in order to facilitate that smaller number of Deputies by March, then do not vote for this amendment, because you will then be depriving yourself of the right to vote for it at the end of this debate. And if incidentally, depriving yourself of the right to spend the rest of today and maybe some of January debating on whether it is a good idea or not when we get on to the substantive debate on this issue. And I think lots of us will have lots to say on whether it is a wise move at that stage.

915 Absolutely, this amendment seeks to take us down a different path. Instead of actually just deciding on the back of a requête with little evidence that we should have 10 fewer Deputies, it is saying if ... and like Deputy Cameron, I am open minded about this, I am not convinced that we need much of a reduction, if any but I do pick up the zeitgeist from Members that quite a few do – then let's look at it properly and do it properly. And not just on the eve of an election which we are now really. And which all international commentators and best practice would say is absolutely the wrong time to make such major changes.

920 Deputy Ferbrache said, 'Oh, this is all too difficult, so let's have a report'. I am not sure it is difficult, but it is really important. I do think it is important. But the point is that this Requête does not really make the full decision, does it. Because do Members really believe that the issues of how many Members we need and what system of government it is supporting, whether it is more committees, fewer committees, moving away from committees to another system, whether it is five on a committee or a different number on a committee, that they are not interrelated. And yet we are being asked to pluck out one little bit of it and make quite a radical reduction in the size of our Assembly and park all of the consequential decisions that will need to be made. That is *obviously* illogical. They need to be taken together. This amendment will allow that to happen. The Requête does not.

930 And I found it slightly odd, Deputy Ferbrache saying one of his strong motivations was that he does not think the position of Deputy should be a full-time job. Well, it seems to me highly more likely that the pressure will be on Members of this Assembly to be pretty much full-time if there is 28 of us, rather than 38 of us.

I think on the basis of not wanting people to be a full-time job, I think it will put off, if we go down too small, people with real talent, but who do not want their whole life to be politics, who may have something else in their life who are willing to contribute. And we do not want career politicians. And now we are going to make it really difficult for part-timers with other things in their life. What do we want? I think anything other than what is on the table, probably, sometimes seems to be the case.

Slightly aside, but he said that it was a real hotchpotch after the Harwood Report. I am presuming he means the first Harwood Report, because Deputy Harwood was also involved of course in the review that Deputy Soulsby referred to that came later on. But yes, he is right, unfortunately, the States at the time voted for the Bisson/froque Amendment and set up a policy council which really was a dysfunctional way of going about things. I opposed that up at Beau Séjour, but I lost out on that occasion. I hope I will not lose out today.

Deputy Dudley-Owen is feeling a feeling of déjà vu. I do not think it is déjà vu as far as what happens. In fact, I think that the SIAC would be more of a déjà vu than asking SACC to do this, because we have had, I know it is not exactly the same thing, but a policy council subcommittee looking at the system of government during this Assembly and not actually managing to fully gestate by the end of the term. The SIAC actually insists that the special committee would have to have a Member of P&R as its chair. It does not make it appear in our subcommittee, but it makes it far closer to what has happened or not happened, really, this term than telling the committee that is properly mandated to do the job to do it.

Now she is worried there might be five new Members of SACC. Well, I am not sure that that is logical. There were three first termers that have served on P&R in this term. Giving it to P&R to chair might well be a first termer the next time around. By contrast, my experience of the SACC Committee is that it does tend to attract old heads. I did a term on the SACC Committee and the membership was Mark Dorey, Michelle Le Clerc, Lindsay de Sausmarez and Matt Fallaize and myself. I think we would have been capable of doing that. Later on in that term, there was another SACC Committee and it had Deputy Ferbrache and Deputy Le Tocq on it. And the current SACC Committee has got a former President of P&R, a former President of Environment and a very long-term political reporter for the BBC. I think it tends to attract people who are interested in constitutional affairs.

But more importantly, if this amendment is passed today, then when the elections take place at the beginning of the next term, everybody, all those candidates will know that this is a big task that has been given to SACC to look at and it would even more attract people with interest in those sort of constitutional and governmental affairs.

She said, 'Well, what about the Alderney review? That would be a big bit of work.' Quite right. But that is the 1948 Agreement and that does come under P&R. So if P&R are busy working on that, then I think it is better to give the specialist committee the work to do on how this Assembly functions which is an entirely different subject.

Deputy Vermeulen, I did not quite understand what he said. He was musing. He said, 'Maybe three is the right number'. I was not clear whether he meant three Deputies remaining or whether he meant a reduction of three. *(Interjection by Deputy Vermeulen)* Three fewer, three fewer. Okay. Well, he may be right.

Look, let me fess up. I actually have a personal predilection for there being 36 Deputies; a reduction of two. My reason is because I think there will be some reform to the electoral system at some stage and 36 works under just about any electoral system. If you go for rolling Island-wide voting which I do not support; I think it would be a wretched system. Then if it was half every two years, 36 divided into 18. If it is a third every two years, then it divides nicely into 12. If you go for super constituencies, likewise. Three constituencies, four constituencies. It works out perfectly. For me, 36 is a magic number.

But my point is, it is being predicated on other things I want to see happen. That is the point. These things all need to be looked at in the round. Not just pick a number out of the air and decide upon things like systems of government later on.

Sir, I think Deputy de Lisle is right. I think that this amendment does stress the fact that these are interrelated issues. And he does stress the fact that there ought to be, really, a lot of consultation with the relevant people. Some people think that the make up of this Assembly is just unimportant: we should just be able to do it; nobody should need to be consulted; a group of seven people have decided what is the right idea and that is where we are going to go. And fine, if people really believe that, then they will not vote for this amendment.

I have to say, I probably would not have been particularly motivated to bring forward the idea of a SACC review in the next Assembly had this Requête not been brought, because it is not totally top of my list. And I was not that devastated when the subcommittee did not report back. I do not think it is the most important thing that this Assembly has to face: how many of us there should be and exactly how many committees there should be and how many people should be on it.

But the Requête was brought and all this is saying is, if we are going to do these things and if we are going to make these changes, let's do it in a considered and sensible way. And let's ask the committee that we have set up, charged with exactly the mandate to do this, to get on with it. And I hope Members will vote for it. And as I say, if it fails, I suspect we will be here for the rest of the day debating the Requête.

The Bailiff: Well, Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 4, proposed by Deputy Roffey, seconded by Deputy Cameron. And I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment four, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Amendment 4.

Carried – Pour 20, Contre 19, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 1

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

The Bailiff: In respect of Amendment 4, proposed by Deputy Roffey, seconded by Deputy Cameron, there voted in favour 20 Members; there voted against 19 Members; no Member abstained; one Member is not participating in the vote. Therefore, I will declare Amendment 4 carried which means that we have five Propositions derived from Amendment 4.

Now, Members of the States, two further amendments have been submitted but neither of them work (*Interjections*) now that Amendment 4 has been carried. It is possible that there could be a further amendment at some stage if general debate is still going on. But we will now resume general debate.

Deputy Murray.

Deputy Murray: Thank you, sir.

1025 We have spent over a day discussing a variety of permutations and considerations, some with merit, some with less so. But it certainly stimulated a focus on the Machinery of Government or several parts of it at least. But of course, by and large, the decisions are rooted in the status quo. It seems as if few people either consider or conceive of a different way of doing things or a need for substantial change. This is my opinion, sir. Perhaps, not surprising, change is unsettling. Better the devil you know. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

1030 Well, sir, I would contend that this is broke. We avoid or cannot agree and stick with decisions. We are running an increasing structural deficit. We have neglected our infrastructure. We lack resources. We have been unable to build virtually any houses, even though it is our top priority. I could go on, but I will not.

1035 It seems to me that we, as an Assembly, are charged with three tasks: we are a legislature; we are responsible for policy development; and we are also responsible to ensure there is continuity of the delivery of government services. There is a fourth, however: to ensure Islanders have a voice in this room. And I suspect many Islanders would say we are not listening. I would also suggest that there is insufficient mechanism for their voices to be heard.

1040 But what we increasingly risk as a consequence is a government by Facebook. Now that starts to impinge on Machinery of Government which it appears is a step too far on the back of this Requête. But if anybody doubts the need and the appetite for change outside of this room, I would suggest they are mistaken. This Requête has, I hope, started a journey which is long overdue, but which must be completed during the next Assembly, because, sir, in my opinion, we are already on borrowed time.

1045 Given the changes in the world outside these shores, the huge financial and resource implications on our health services, our burgeoning deficit and unsustainable cost of living in the Island demands this. Whether the Requête survives in any form or not, I suspect the public are now alerted to the individual views of Deputies on the need for change. And I would judge that at least is of considerable value.

1050 Thank you, sir.

Deputy ???: Sir, can I ask for clarification from you? As Amendment 4 deletes the entirety of the Requête, do we still or can we still speak on the Requête as it is no longer there?

1055 **The Bailiff:** You can speak on the Propositions that are derived from Amendment 4.

Deputy ???: That is all that is left.

1060 **Deputy ???:** Right.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: I will try and make this relevant, sir, and relevant to what Amendment 4 speaks to. But mainly I will be speaking about how a reduction is imprudent in my view.

1065 Back in 1996, in Tasmania, a Bill was laid on what we are debating today, to reduce their elected Members from 35 to 25. The Bill stemmed from a combination of historical context and contemporary political dynamics, amid concerns Tasmania was over-governed and prone to hung parliaments. And it was also seen as an attempt to reduce the influence of the Green Party after they won the balance of power in 1996.

1070 The push for reducing the size of the Tasmanian Parliament originated from a perceived need for efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Much as what we have heard from Deputy Helyar and the

requérants in their many speeches over the last few days. In 1998, that Bill came into force and their executive assembly reduced by 10, from 35 to 25.

1075 To set the scene. Tasmania is a bicameral assembly, with 35 Members in the lower house, four different parties and 15 members of the Legislative Council who follow the Westminster system. Not such a surprising move, one might think, for back then. But in a surprise move, in 2022, by the new Liberal Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, they agreed that from the date of the 2024 general election, a decision to reverse its smaller government Bill and increase back to 35 members. So why, might you ask, did they do that? Because it became increasingly clear to the people and assembly of Tasmania
1080 that the 1998 reduction by 10 was deemed imprudent and ineffective.

And they did go out by committee and special investigation committee that was set up in 2010, with lots of evidence. And I am going to read out some of that evidence.

There was long standing agreement among political leaders across all parties that the reduction was detrimental to the functioning of their government. In 2010, they acknowledged the need to restore parliamentary balance, indicating a recognition that smaller numbers had weakened legislative effectiveness and representation. The critics of the reduction argued that the smaller parliament had led to a shallow gene pool for ministerial talent, resulting in difficulties in forming effective governments and oppositions.

Although, we do not have that problem here.

There was a growing public discontent with the parliamentary structure as citizens felt that a reduced number of representatives limited their voice in governance, scrutiny and representation. Empirical evidence. Their studies showed that smaller legislative bodies often struggle with the decision-making and accountability, leading to inefficiencies. The reversal reflected an understanding that effective government requires adequate representation and a diverse pool of elected officials, capable of fulfilling those duties. The committee specifically noted senior political figures and former members of parliament from across the whole political spectrum agreed it was a mistake to reduce the numbers in the house of assembly.

1085 And I will wind up, sir, because we have heard quite a lot already. But that committee found many reasons about why the reduction was not compatible with decent governance and making parliamentary decisions. They found that restoring the house to 35 members would provide better governance by ensuring there were more members to scrutinise the activities of their executive, including the work of Government, their agencies and ministerial advisers.
1090

And they relied on a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association recommended benchmark which was created in 2018. And that benchmark was an order 'to ensure that a parliament's oversight function is not restricted by the size of its cabinet, a particular concern in small legislatures. A small cabinet ensures a larger parliamentary component for the oversight committees and relieves
1095 pressure on backbenchers.' However, they found that the size of their ministry needed to be weighed against the capacity of the house of assembly, to be an effective forum for scrutiny.

In summary, sir, Tasmania's reversal of its smaller government Bill was driven by historical lessons, public sentiment *and* empirical evidence, highlighting the importance of sufficient parliamentary representation for effective governance and decision-making. There we have it, a
1100 mainly independent island that fell into the trap of reducing its size of government and took 26 years to reverse, having enacted that bill of Rockliff in 2022, at the 2024 general election, where they now are back to 35 members and are looking forwards and not backwards. We should learn from the lessons of the past and reject this Requête.

Thank you, sir.

1105 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Prow.

Deputy Prow: I rise simply to respond to Deputy Gabriel.

1110 I, in my earlier speech, and which was confirmed by Deputy Gollop. There is a very interesting run through of what has happened in Tasmania. Can I just take you back to the Crown Dependencies. And we are a Crown Dependency and the Isle of Man is a Crown Dependency. They have 12 districts where they elect two members. The House of Keys is made up of 24 members. I

would submit, others may disagree, it is a very successful parliamentary system, a very successful government system.

1115 And of course, in this Assembly, we make very good use of non-voting, non-States' Members. And they are a real asset (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) to Government. The Home Affairs Committee has an absolutely excellent non-States' member. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) I have worked with Economic Development quite a lot. They have two absolutely excellent non-States' members. I know other committees also use non-States' members. Their experience of Island life and business and
1120 so on and so forth is integrated into our system.

I am not particularly swayed by what has happened over 26 years in Tasmania. I look across the Irish Sea to the Isle of Man, a population of 85,000 people. A bigger Island that manages with a system that works for them. And that is much more convincing to me than whatever happened or did not happen in Tasmania.

1125 Thank you, sir

A Member: Hear, hear.

The Bailiff: Deputy Trott.

1130 **Deputy Trott:** Thank you, sir.

I want to make three points on the amended Requête. The first is that under Proposition 1, we are inviting SACC in the next Assembly to review matters such as the structure of government. That clearly allows them to consider whether an executive form of government is more appropriate now than it was. And reference to the two other CDs by the previous speaker, Deputy Prow, enables me
1135 to remind us all that both Jersey and the Isle of Man have executive forms of governments. Admittedly, the Isle of Man form is a particularly unusual, effectively, being a tricameral system.

But I would be grateful if ... Who does sum up, actually? (*Interjection*) Well, I would be ... Yes. (*Laughter*) No, indeed. It is a good point, isn't it? Yes.

1140 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Helyar will get the final word. We will be going in reverse order, but Deputy Le Tocq is speaking on behalf of the Policy & Resources Committee.

1145 **Deputy Trott:** Good. Well, I would be delighted if both of those Members could confirm that their understanding is the same as mine and that analysis of the appropriateness of an executive form of government is covered by this amendment.

The other issue I wanted to talk about is Proposition 5 which is somewhat open ended, 'To instruct the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee to report back to the States on these matters in good time'. Well, let me give you my idea of what I think a good time is. The answer is a minimum – *a minimum* – of 18 months before the next election. (**A Member:** Yes.) But preferably
1150 two-and-a-half years before the next election which would mean that this report would need to be ready and presented to this Assembly 18 months on from the 1st July 2025.

There is one matter that Deputy Helyar made earlier in debate. I was going to jump to my feet then but I thought, no, I would wait. And it was his mention of the fact that ... what did he say? 'Decisions made 20 years ago', he said, 'have created our penury environment with lack of
1155 resources'. I would like to remind him that it was decisions taken 20 years ago and more that created the contingency reserve and the Capital Reserve that we are still spending today. Far from them creating a penury environment, our predecessors created an environment that is of increasing use – primarily because of this Assembly's refusal to properly fund the 2025 Budget.

1160 And with that, sir, I wish him and Deputy Le Tocq and everyone else a very Happy Christmas!

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: ... *[Inaudible]* Government to extend this debate in the House this year. Assembly is just. At the moment a red line is about carelessly reducing the number of Members which might explain my voting pattern. But I actually thoroughly support what Deputy Trott has said, that a review *should* look at executive government. I salute what Deputy Prow has said as well. I have been to the Isle of Man three times for the CPA – I have not been many other places – and I have always admired their system of government. But at the risk of going irrelevant, I would have to say, they have 20% VAT *and* increased their Income Tax by 2%, so maybe they are not doing as well as Guernsey. Jersey has been mentioned and Jersey, of course, has reduced their size of their States but they were always smaller than us. They went down from 53 to 49. Very interesting speech from Deputy Gabriel, by the way, about Tasmania. I could give a talk about Anglesey that has increased its numbers as well, but I will not go there.

But the point is, Jersey have a reasonably sized States and they have executive government. And I also believe that Scrutiny would be more effective with an audit, public audit but also with respect to permanent standing animals that specialise in the policy areas, but are always only being accused on Facebook and elsewhere of having cost the Government. I want to go on that one.

I do think, although, we voted for this act, I think partly to wind up this debate as we move forward. I think SACC should carefully consider having a wide-ranging review, not just including the executive government. It seems to me, because even some of the Members who spoke to the media in the last few days have focused on the number of Members being the *panacea*.

I spoke to a school old Elizabethan contemporary last night. He is not a politician, but a very wise man. And he thought that the numbers were almost, as Deputy Roffey implied and Mr Matt Fallaize in a recent very interesting talk, is a classic example of the government system being the Aunt Sally.

But the real reason comes back to the wisdom of Deputy Murray. It is the competence of Members and the quality of Members. And the reduction is somehow magically seen to improve that. How it would do that, we are not entirely sure, but it seems to be there. And I must admit, the only good reason I could think of for voting for 28 rather than 38, or perhaps there are two reasons, is the 28 who have made it would have, in a sense, a stronger mandate. Because when I was younger, in the States of the 57, I topped the poll or did quite well and I would not get any good committees because there was such a choice of people who did not necessarily –

Deputy Taylor: Point of order.

The Bailiff: Point of order, Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Rule 17(6). It is interesting to hear about how and when Deputy Gollop did or did not get positions on committees and his ideal numbers, but I do not think that is really what we need to be going over again.

Deputy Gollop: No. Point taken.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop, just wait, please.

I agree with that. We are left now with five Propositions which is that there will, if they are supported, be a review undertaken by the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee. It is discussing the relevance of those Propositions now that is relevant, please, Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Yes, I will not further that. Although, I would add that 28 Members, had it been adopted, and we cannot vote for that now, would have facilitated, I think, a quicker route to executive government which I would like, but not at the expense of undermining our parliament and Assembly role. Because I think it is important to make the point that we are not just a board of directors. But I will not go into that because the Requête has now disappeared.

1215 And although some of the Propositions of this successful amendment, I would like to be more
nuanced, I think SACC would benefit on this workstream, whoever is on the next committee, of
having Members from other committees, senior Members, Members, perhaps, from other Crown
Dependencies, business and other representatives. And therefore, expand the working party, with
SACC still leading it, I think it can be amended. I will support the amended Propositions.

1220 **The Bailiff:** I will call Deputy Dyke on the basis that when we come to the reverse, Deputy Le
Tocq, you will get the opportunity to speak after Deputy Meerveld.
Deputy Dyke.

1225 **Deputy Dyke:** Thank you, sir.

I think I am quite pleased that we have come to this conclusion by supporting the proposals for
the SACC review. I was going to vote against the original Requête. That the overwhelming reason
for me would have been that if you reduce an Assembly by 10 people, inevitably, you reduce the
talent pool by a certain amount. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) It is difficult to know how things fall out,
1230 where people vote, who comes in the last 10. But it can only have reduced the talents available to
govern the country by an amount, either a small amount, no amount or a large amount. To my
mind, I could not possibly have voted for that Requête.

We are now here with a completely different one which I think is a good idea. My concern, over
the last couple of years, and I have worked out how things have been working and not been working
1235 so well, is in terms of not the concept of the committee system which I think is broadly reasonable,
but the allocation of certain items from one committee to another. I am particularly concerned in
the interrelationship between Economic Development and STSB. I think that has been disastrous
this term. We have huge travel issues, the lack of a decent runway and the competition on routes, I
think, has been a huge problem which could be helped, I think, by combining those committees or
1240 combining STSB into ED which is something that can be looked at under these proposals.

I think housing has been an issue and still is and we are going to be discussing that. Whether
some rearrangements between the committees on that would have helped is open to debate. But I
think a restructuring of the committees which these proposals permit is very worth considering. I
will vote for these proposals.

1245 The one thing that is concerning me at the moment is I would not wish to see a reduction in the
representation of our Alderney Representatives. I think having two of them gives them some
standing here and I would not like to see that changing.

Resolution 4, I am not quite sure that I will vote for that, but I will listen to the debate and what
other people have got to say.

1250 Thank you.

Deputy Bury: Can I try 26(1), please, sir?

1255 **The Bailiff:** Yes, can I invite those Members other than Deputies Meerveld, Le Tocq and Helyar
who wish to speak in debate to stand in their places, please?

Deputy Bury, is it still your wish that I put a motion? Well, the motion is that there be no further
debate other than the winding up process which I have just mentioned. Those in favour; those
against.

1260 *Members voted Pour.*

The Bailiff: I will declare that carried.

Deputy Inder: Recorded vote, please, sir.

1265

The Bailiff: There has been a request for a recorded vote. I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on the procedural motion proposed by Deputy Bury.

There was a recorded vote.

1270

Rule 26(1).

Carried – Pour 21, Contre 15, 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	Mahoney, David	Haskins, Sam
Blin, Chris	Cameron, Andy		Queripel, Lester	
Burford, Yvonne	De Sausmarez, Lindsay			
Bury, Tina	Dyke, John			
De Lisle, David	Fairclough, Simon			
Dudley-Owen, Andrea	Falla, Steve			
Ferbrache, Peter	Gabriel, Adrian			
Gollop, John	Inder, Neil			
Helyar, Mark	Leadbeater, Marc			
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha	McKenna, Liam			
Le Tissier, Chris	Moakes, Nick			
Le Tocq, Jonathan	Prow, Robert			
Matthews, Aidan	Roffey, Peter			
Meerveld, Carl	Taylor, Andrew			
Murray, Bob	Vermeulen, Simon			
Oliver, Victoria				
Parkinson, Charles				
Roberts, Steve				
Snowdon, Alexander				
Soulsby, Heidi				
Trott, Lyndon				

1275

The Bailiff: On the motion pursuant to Rule 26(1), proposed by Deputy Bury, there voted in favour 21 Members; 15 Members voted against; 1 Member abstained; 3 Members did not participate in the vote. And therefore, that is why it was declared carried.

And I will invite Deputy Meerveld, as the President of the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee, to say anything he wishes to say in reply.

1280

Deputy Meerveld: Thank you, sir.

I am not going to prolong this torturous debate any longer. I support these revised Propositions. Thank you, sir.

1285

The Bailiff: Deputy Le Tocq.

Deputy Le Tocq: Thank you, sir.

I never know, in these sorts of circumstances, whether I am speaking on behalf of the committee or not, as we have a whole different set of proposals now. However, and particularly after Deputy Gollop has spoken, one never knows really whether I am representing him or not. But that is by the by.

1290

Sir, from my own perspective, this is not the end of the world. I think what it does, effectively, is turn the SACC into a Special Investigation Committee next term, in that if it does not do this, then it will not be fulfilling its main task. Because this basically gives SACC a *major* task (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) to do. And that means that most of the other things that SACC is tasked to do will have to take a secondary role, I think, otherwise it will not be taking this seriously enough.

1295

And from my point of view, I can support it on that basis. And I encourage other Members to do the same.

1300 **The Bailiff:** And Deputy Helyar as the lead requérant to reply to the debate on a different set of Propositions.

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir. And certainly, very briefly.

1305 If I was going to do a report as an appraisal, I would have to say that the debate has exceeded expectations in terms of what I expected from the outset. I always think about *Blackadder* in these situations and *Private Blackadder*, 'Do you understand the meaning of the word irony?' And of course, the response was, 'Yes, sir, it is like brassy, except it is made of iron'. (*Laughter*)

1310 Somebody I was chatting to yesterday who does not normally listen to the States debates and I said, 'Well, what did he think? Are you impressed?' He said, 'Well, it is a bit like *Beethoven*, but with no talent!' (*Laughter*) And of course, *Beethoven*, as we know, was tone deaf which is where we have ended up.

1315 Sir, the turkeys and Xmas example has been given several times. I am not going to refer to States' Members as turkeys because that would be extremely unfair. But at least this has smoked out people's positions. I think that is a reasonable exercise. It could have, obviously, been a much shorter exercise, but, that goes back to exceeding my expectations again.

In terms of the executive government point which the Chief Minister raised and I noted the hint of needing to use the core investment reserve which we may see in the New Year, and he is right about that, but of course, had we been running it properly, it would have had £500 million in it instead of £150 million.

1320 Yes, I do think there is a very wide remit in terms of these Propositions. I do not think it is the right approach. I have already said that in terms of a previous amendment, I think if we ask ourselves and look internally as to how this can be changed, it is not going to. I would like to see an independent commission formed and staffed and run completely independently with people externally. And the word 'referendum' has been mentioned a few times and it is starting to occur to me that actually we could probably do with another requête looking at a referendum about whether we have executive government or not, because clearly this place is not going to make that decision whilst it is made up of people who are voting on the basis of their self-interest. And that is clearly what is going on here. And I think the public will see right through that.

1330 I am not going to vote for these Propositions for that reason but I do thank the requérants for their support and I look forward to moving on to –

I will give way. Deputy St Pier wishes ...

Deputy St Pier: I am grateful for Deputy Helyar giving way, because I sensed he was drawing to a close.

1335 I was hoping if he could, in the spirit of Christmas, give us a little entertainment in the panto that we have had and just run through his bingo card (*Laughter*) and let us know how full his card is. And in particular, the numbers that were not reached that he has described as being somewhat difficult. I would be interested to know.

1340 **Deputy Helyar:** Right, well, you asked for it! (*Laughter*)

I am not going to go through the whole list because there are two pages and several ... and one of them has been used eight times, another one five times which is the usual, 'I need more information'.

1345 The ones that did not make it: 'Gesture Politics'. And that was on the front page of the *Press*. I expected Deputy Roffey to use that one (*Laughter*) because he was quoted as having said it. Now, it is Christmas, so I will leave it to Members to imagine what gesture the requérants would choose (*Laughter*) in respect of the outcome. I had down here, 'Guernsey for the locals,' because that seems to be a recurring theme with one of our *Guernsey Press* columnists recently. And I thought that might find its way into the debate, but it has not.

1350 And the last one, it almost made it, but not quite. 'I wish I had thought of this Requête and brought it myself'. We can guess who that might have been accredited to, but unfortunately, that did not make it, but everything else did; some several times.

There was one I missed off which Deputy St Pier, himself, noted which was that, 'I was not going to speak'. That one did come up. *(Laughter)* And there was another one which did not make it which I was very surprised about because Deputy Queripel did speak and the proposals were at no time likened to an obscure prog rock single from the 1970s! *(Laughter)* So, that one did not make it here which is a regret, because I thought that was a dead cert, *(Laughter)* to be honest with you.

Thank you, Members, for the spirit. I think we were getting a little bit grumpy towards the end, but, hopefully, we can move on to something more refreshing. Thank you for your entertaining speeches and your commitment to change.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Well, Members of the States, there are five Propositions. Is there a request to take any of them separately?

Deputy Burford: Yes, please sir, Proposition 1.
Thank you.

The Bailiff: Are there any other requests? Do you want to take Proposition 3 or 4 separately, Deputy Dyke?

Deputy Dyke: Number 3 please, sir.

The Bailiff: Okay. Well, it looks like we are going to do 1, then 2, then 3 and then we might get away with 4 and 5 together, if you are prepared to vote on both of those at the same time.

We will just have Proposition 1, for the time being, please, Greffier. And I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 1 as derived from Amendment 4.

There was a recorded vote.

Proposition 1.

Carried – Pour 29, Contre 7, Ne vote pas 3, Did not vote 0, Absent 1

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

Queripel, Lester
 Roberts, Steve
 Roffey, Peter
 Snowdon, Alexander
 Soulsby, Heidi
 St Pier, Gavin
 Trott, Lyndon

1385 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Proposition 1, there voted in favour 29 Members; 7 Members voted against; 3 Members abstained; there is 1 Member who is absent. And therefore, I will declare Proposition 1 carried. And we will move on to a vote on Proposition 2 on its own next, please. Once again, I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 2, please.

There was a recorded vote.

1390

Proposition 2.

Carried – Pour 25, Contre 12, Ne vote pas 2, Did not vote 0, Absent 1

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

1395 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Proposition 2, there have voted in favour 25 Members; 12 Members voted against; 2 Members abstained; the same Member is absent. And therefore, I will declare Proposition 2 also carried.

We will move next to Proposition 3 on its own, please. And I will invite the Greffier to open voting on Proposition 3.

1400 *There was a recorded vote.*

Proposition 3.

Carried – Pour 25, Contre 11, Ne vote pas 3, Did not vote 0, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Aldwell, Sue	Dudley-Owen, Andrea	None	Haskins, Sam
Brouard, Al	Dyke, John	Leadbeater, Marc		
Burford, Yvonne	Ferbrache, Peter	Murray, Bob		

Bury, Tina	Helyar, Mark
Cameron, Andy	Inder, Neil
De Lisle, David	Mahoney, David
De Sausmarez, Lindsay	Moakes, Nick
Fairclough, Simon	Prow, Robert
Falla, Steve	Roberts, Steve
Gabriel, Adrian	Snowdon, Alexander
Gollop, John	Vermeulen, Simon
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha	
Le Tissier, Chris	
Le Tocq, Jonathan	
Matthews, Aidan	
McKenna, Liam	
Meerveld, Carl	
Oliver, Victoria	
Parkinson, Charles	
Queripel, Lester	
Roffey, Peter	
Soulsby, Heidi	
St Pier, Gavin	
Taylor, Andrew	
Trott, Lyndon	

1405 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Proposition 3, there voted in favour 25 Members; 11 Members voted against; 3 Members abstained; the same Member absent. And therefore, I will declare Proposition 3 also duly carried. We will take Propositions 4 and 5 together. And once again, I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Propositions 4 and 5.

1410 *There was a recorded vote.*

Propositions 4-5.

Carried – Pour 29, Contre 8, Ne vote pas 2, Did not vote 0, Absent 1

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

1415 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Propositions 4 and 5, there voted in favour 29 Members; 8 Members voted against; 2 Members abstained; the same Member is absent. I will declare Propositions 4 and 5 carried which means that all five Propositions from the successful Amendment 4 have been carried.

REQUÊTE

9. Requête – Establishment of the Committee for Housing – Debate commenced

Article 9.

The States are asked to decide:-

Whether, after consideration of the Requête entitled "Establishment of the Committee for Housing" dated 1st July, 2024 they are of the opinion:

- 1. To agree to establish a new principal committee called the Committee for Housing, the constitution, mandate and operational functions of which shall be as set out in Appendix 1 to the Requête, and to modify the mandates of the Committee for the Environment & Infrastructure, the Committee for Employment & Social Security and the Policy & Resources Committee accordingly.*
- 2. To agree that £155,000 is allocated in the 2025 budget to establish the Committee for Housing, to accelerate housing delivery through additional resources and to transfer, for the use of the new Committee, the relevant portions of the 2025 budgets of the Committee for the Environment & Infrastructure, the Committee for Employment & Social Security and the Policy & Resources Committee that are allocated for housing functions for which the new Committee is to be responsible.*
- 3. To agree that these changes will come into effect on July 1st 2025.*
- 4. To agree that a review of the Committee for Housing should be undertaken before the end of September 2032, the terms of which will include: a) its mandate, constitution and operational functions b) budget and resources and c) the need for its continuation or dissolution.*
- 5. To direct the preparation of such legislation as may be necessary to give effect to the above decisions.*

The States' Greffier: Article 9, Requête – Establishment of the Committee for Housing.

1420 **The Bailiff:** And I will invite the lead requérant, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, to open the debate, please.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Thank you, sir.

1425 I think this Requête is like a lady in waiting. She has been waiting quite a long time! (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) And this is the second time I am making a speech. I do really sincerely hope we can finish the debate today (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) so we do not have to make further speeches next time.

1430 In my first opening speech, I went into the detail about the really chronic under-delivery of housing we have had over many, many years and that the housing situation we are finding ourselves in is not new. In fact, the indicators for housing have been around the 300 units of accommodation per year and we have woefully, *woefully*, under-delivered over many, many years, if not decades. Not only that, but we managed to put constraints through a mechanism such as GP 11 which meant that the last time the IDP was reviewed, no land was allocated specifically for affordable housing
1435 and that the whole provision of affordable housing was left to the private market through this mechanism.

The economic impact over these many years and decades actually has not been calculated but would be astronomical: the loss from the inability to fill the jobs, the emigration of young people and families, the increasing cost of living and the cost of doing business in our community.

1440 And this term, we have reached a true crisis point. This largely started due to our successful management of COVID, following the first lockdown, we started having quite a significant increase in population which started putting more pressure on what was already a significantly constrained housing market with huge affordability problems. And the situation worsened over the political term, especially through the Liz Truss mini Budget which led to a significant increase in interest rates.

1445 And I have been recently watching a number of series on TV. One of them was *The Diplomats*, another one I am going through is *The Dedicated Survivor*. And it is about the political management of crisis situations in the UK and in the US. And I kept thinking how would they respond if a crisis or war or whatever situation came about. They would go to their war room, their commander room.

1450 They would gather all the skills, all the intelligence they would have in one place. They would have all the screens, all the information available. They would be able to make those decisions.

And what happened in our case, when we started talking about the housing crisis situation which was from the beginning of this political term? And what did we do? Did we have a commander room we could go to? Did we have the skills and expertise to tap into in one place? Did we have the authority to go and make decisions? No, we did not. Because of the political vacuum created on housing through the dissolution of the previous Housing Department, we were caught with our pants down. And we have been like a frog in boiling water for years, not dealing with the housing situation we have had.

1455

Obviously, one could say that with hindsight, it is easy to look back and clearly see the issues we had, but the point of this Requête is that we need to learn from this hindsight so we do not repeat the same mistakes again and we do not find ourselves again with the situation of pants down. While we continue to declare housing being a crisis, I feel we did not act in a crisis-like manner and we did not put the right structures of decision-making in place to be able to act and respond to a crisis situation.

1460

And this is not just a frustration shared with our many other Deputies and the public; this is frustration shared wider. In fact, the idea for this Requête came from the Guernsey Community Foundation Report that was published on homelessness last year. And I quote a few passages from that Report:

1465

Until the sudden elevation to number one priority in the Government Work Plan, housing appears to have dropped off the political radar. In 2016, after more than a century, it was decided that a single committee was no longer necessary, despite the need for a home being perpetually central to the lives of every single person. Once the Housing Department ceased to exist and its responsibility shared among multiple committees, it diluted any notion of political responsibility in place of a single committee that could focus solely on housing and that could be held to account by the public, by Deputies alike. We have multiple political bodies. Housing policy was neglected and this points to the need for a single political body and the important role it could have played in preventing the urgent crisis situation we found ourselves in. The Guernsey Community Foundation is not the only stakeholder in the ecosystem that is hugely supportive of this idea. Most importantly, the industry, those who are responsible for actually delivering and building the homes we desperately need have been strongly supportive of the idea and most recently have written to Deputies.

1470

I would like to quote some of the passages from their letter from this week.

Dear Deputy, I am writing to you on behalf of the Guernsey Construction Forum, to advise that we fully support the requête to establish a Committee for Housing ...

(A Member: Hear, hear.)

... The reasons for this are the severe lack of progress made towards actually physically building houses that the Island desperately needs. And we believe that this is due to a continual misalignment in both the responsibility and accountability for the delivery of such housing and not due to a lack of resources which the P&R Letter of Comment says will be addressed through actions outside of the need for a new committee. We believe that by bringing the powers of the committees under one umbrella, that this will bring about the urgent action needed to even start to reverse the

critical position we find ourselves in. This serious lack of housing needs special attention and a razor-like focus. We need to put the delivery of the Strategic Housing Plan under one umbrella and the only way that will happen is if all accounts of the accountability, responsibility and most of the control for delivering this plan is co-ordinated and is centralised under one committee. The last two-and-a-half years' worth of house building stats tell us clearly that the current system is not working and it would be remiss of any government to let a crisis continue and deepen any further when it has the chance to address this.

1475 What are some of the problems that this Requête is trying to solve? And Deputy Queripel has been kindly reminding me, asking for the evidence. The simple answer and evidence is the inefficiency and time being wasted when a small team in the Civil Service or the stakeholders externally have to deal with four, five or plus committees at the same time.

1480 But more importantly, the political fragmentation and political misalignment that this also creates, because the different committees are pulling in different directions and even within committees you have got Deputies pulling in different directions. And in this case, we have got five key committees involved. We have got E&I, ESS, P&R, DPA and also Health, in relation to keyworker housing.

1485 And as we have seen from the previous debates on the reform requêtes and the report published by the subcommittee of P&R, one of the key issues we have got in this government is the lack of strategic alignment which is especially difficult in complex cross committee issues and housing is one prime example of that.

1490 And I would like to give you some direct experience and evidence of how this political misalignment and pulling in different directions happens in one of the cases I have been involved with, which is the IDP review. We received contradicting and, frankly, opposing views from the different committees we have got involved which was one of the reasons why we had to delay the IDP review which will push the final decision by at least a year. It means some of the land that we desperately need to be allocated, especially for affordable housing, will not now happen.

1495 And throughout the process, we were in desperate need of information on the deliverability of sites and an overall housing delivery plan that we could use to really help us with the IDP review. That information was not available and we are continuously told that it was not in our mandate to be looking into that. That it would be addressed by someone else, somewhere else in the system. Pieces of key information are currently dispersed through the political ecosystem, through the different stakeholders and they need to be brought together into a coherent delivery plan.

1500 What is actually being proposed? Proposition 1 of the Requête looks at putting the mandates in relation to housing, of the three committees involved, which are ESS, responsible for social housing and the Affordable Housing Development Programme, E&I, responsible for General Housing Policy Development and Open Markets. And you have also got P&R who are currently responsible, through the States' Property Unit, for the Keyworker Accommodation Unit oversight.

1505 It is important that the Requête does not specifically propose to change the mandates of the DPA, but I will address it further. It just makes it more specific that the evidence and policy development on housing, the committee will need to be very actively involved and this is in line with how other policies for the IDP are developed elsewhere.

1510 And also, importantly, Proposition 4 of the Requête, it says that this is effectively a temporary arrangement. Let's put this in place and see what happens. And before the end of its second political term, hence the date 2032 – so it is about a year before the end of the political term – a review will be completed to understand, did this help, did this work? And if not, let's do something different.

1515 Specifically, from an organisational perspective, you will have three main teams, Civil Service teams, that will, from July 2025, report to this new committee. It is the housing team and the Environment & Infrastructure, the keyworker accommodation team under P&R, but via SPU and the States' social housing team. What is important is that these teams, the Civil Service teams, will have to report to new political Members anyway because of the election. There will be minimal disruption because they will have a new political masters anyway.

So what are some of the key benefits that we are hoping to achieve with the Requête? We are looking for faster and better decision-making. We are looking for efficiency, saving time, less

1520 bureaucracy for officers and stakeholders. We are looking for political accountability under one roof. We are looking to actually align the system with the existing Civil Service structure, instead of what we have got now is a small team of two people with a senior responsible officer having to deal with four or five plus committees.

1525 We are looking to for better communication and engagement across with Deputies, but more importantly, with the community, with stakeholders and with industry. We are looking to bring more focused political and also external expertise to this committee. By having one specific committee, it will allow the Deputies who may have interest and experience with housing to go on that committee. But very importantly, we could invite non-States' Members to join that political committee as well and very much focused on housing issues rather than a wider mandate of a committee such as E&I.

1530 Crucially, we are looking to put that decision-making under one roof. It will be a fresh start from the next political term anyway, because we will start with a new political body. There is absolutely, if ever we had the time to do it, this is the best time to do it because there will be absolutely minimal disruption. We are looking to reduce the bottlenecks that currently exist of issues going across committees.

1535 And again, I want to point to one case when, with keyworker accommodation, we had the Health Committee come to the DPA earlier on this political term. We gave them some useful feedback about Oberlands car parks and other suggestions. But somehow, two years down the line, we had another meeting this year and resulted, apparently, that we blocked and we bottlenecked. When there are so many cooks involved in the housing kitchen, decisions get lost. Opportunity to act gets lost.

1540 The public and industry perspective is that we are failing to deliver on the promises we are making in elevating housing into the number one priority. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) There will be no additional disruption to the civil servants because they will just have to report to different political masters. And while I would like to see an evolution of the committee system of government, this is what we have got today. So let's make the committee system work for housing.

1545 As previously said by Deputy Mahoney, imagine if the ferry contract had to go to the States of Deliberation. It worked because we worked as a committee very well to make that decision. This is the type of decision-making and action we need under the one committee system.

1550 E&I has a huge mandate to deliver with, especially on the infrastructure side of things, with flood defences, energy transition, inert waste etc., they have got a lot to focus on outside of housing. And I truly feel that we have underestimated the challenge of what actually needs to happen and we really need to up our game.

1555 I do want to address some of the points that have been made through the Letter of Comments, but I will go into that in more detail in responses to the debate as well. I think it is important so that the lay of the land is clear from the beginning.

1560 Originally, we supported the sursis to delay the debate for this Requête because we wanted to support P&R's suggestion that we debated after the Budget, so that the implications of the Budget are known. Because of the Budget debates – and I will speak to that more through Amendment 2 – additional expenditure has been approved through the Budget debate in November which means we had to bring an amendment to the Requête. And through the amendment to the Requête, you will see that there will be no additional cost to establishing the Committee *for* Housing. And not only will there be no additional costs, there will be a saving against the current *status quo* and what we have approved in the Budget.

1565 There were concerns presented by the DPA. And obviously, myself and Deputy Oliver were recused from those deliberations, that there was a lack of clarity as to whether the mandate of the IDP review was moving. For exact clarity, and as I explained, the Propositions of the Requête and the mandate outlines, they do not have any direct impact on the mandate of the DPA, because there is no transfer of mandate or operational responsibilities. And to clarify with that, what I would like to happen is a much bigger involvement of the Committee *for* Housing in gathering the evidence and in setting the direction and what needs to happen through planning policy.

1570

DPA always say, we always say we are policy takers because we take the strategic direction, we take the evidence from other committees and translate them into planning policy. And this is what I believe we need a much stronger link if, with this Housing Committee, having a co-ordinated plan for delivery of homes, really recommending to the DPA of what needs to happen through any future IDP review.

Some of the concerns displayed by the Committee *for* Employment & Social Security was that the social –

Deputy Roffey: Point of correction.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Roffey.

Deputy Roffey: I am confused because I think I just heard Deputy Kazantseva-Miller say that this would not impact on the mandate of the DPA, because all the new Housing Committee would be doing would be making recommendations to them. But in Appendix 1, it is really clear. It says, 'Responsibilities. To advise the States and develop and implement policies on matters relating to its purpose, including', and number 12 is, 'planning policy affecting housing in relation to the Island Development Plan'. That will surely go across under this Requête, from the DPA to the new Housing Committee. I think what she said, with respect, I am sure it was not wilful, but I think it was completely incorrect.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: I think this is very much in relation to advising DPA in the evidence gathering that is required which is fundamental to the IDP review. And there is no transfer of the statutory IDP review process from the DPA.

In terms of some of the main concerns displayed by the Employment & Social Security, was that the concept that social good should remain under the remit of the committee. But what the key skills and issue that we are trying to deal with is –

Deputy Taylor: Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Well, sir, it is following on from Deputy Roffey's point of correction because Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has stood her ground on it. But it does clearly say in the responsibilities, 'to advise and develop and implement policies on matters relating to planning policy affecting housing'. If you are implementing those policies, the determination of applications or whatnot, seemingly falls in there.

The Bailiff: Yes, well, the appendix to the Requête sets out the mandate for the Committee *for* Housing. It is clear to me that, at the moment, it is to advise the States directly if this committee were to be set up, because that is what is in the appendix. Each of the points of correction have drawn attention to that appendix. Members will make of it what they will, if that remains the wording at the end of the debate.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Thank you, sir.

The argument is that the development of social housing should remain under the ESS because all the social goods and benefits should remain under one committee. My argument is that the key skills and the issue on the table is the supply of homes, is the home building, the delivery of homes that we desperately need. And I think those skills, there is little link with that, the skills and

experience to deliver that with the general administration of the benefits system. Yes, the committee will need to work on a number of elements, like rent-setting and making sure the appropriate rents are paid. But the core skills that we are looking to bring is that accelerating the delivery of homes. And I believe those skills are not necessarily available under the committee or their non-States' Members.

The Committee *for* Environment & Infrastructure, the committee that is likely to be mostly affected, is talking to the fact that there will be no more resources that the Requête will deliver, which is completely incorrect because the Requête seeks to secure resources. In fact, the resources have been secured and the demands for such resources have been brought, thanks to the requête that we started working and engaging on in May. So I am very pleased that there has been a provision already made in the Budget.

We have got the argument that it will be more expensive, like for like. But we are not comparing like for like, because removing the administrative burden currently engaged across the whole of the Civil Service where five different committees have to deal with housing issues, we are improving the quality of decision-making, we are bringing the right talent and skills under one committee and from next year, the budget for that will deliver a saving.

There is also concern that there will suddenly be a need for more Civil Service posts to cover infrastructure positioning, but we are not seeking to remove the infrastructure posts within the housing infrastructure team. And in fact, as we all well know, the Civil Service works across the organisation, they work together. So nothing will prevent this, the housing team, to continue working across the organisation, across with offices. And the CRO for this team will remain the same again. There will be continuity to how things are done under the Civil Service because that is how they are set up.

What is striking to me is that despite this being a crisis, the housing and infrastructure team was only set up this year under the Committee *for* Environment & Infrastructure and mainly through the transfer of two other officers that were under Employment & Social Security, previously working on the Affordable Housing Programme. Again, this points to me about the mismatch in how, while as a Government we call this a housing crisis, but we failed to provide the right structures, the right support and to create the right resources to drive this forward.

As I said previously, we have got a small team of three civil servants working with five-plus committees and many, many different stakeholders with lots of ... There are 23 individual political Deputies involved in this housing kitchen.

The other point is that we take active part in the British-Irish Council. And no other British-Irish Council administration goes without a dedicated committee. We have got, in Jersey, the Ministry of Housing. We have got in England, the Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government. Wales, you have got Housing Community Directive. Ireland, you have got Department of Housing & Local Government.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Point of correction.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has missed out the Isle of Man which is, of course, their Infrastructure.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: We are looking, there has been a lot of thought put into this Requête and one of the advantages of this Requête is that the Rules of Procedure allow us for the creation and the dissolution of committees. We can do that with the SIACs and that is becoming more popular as a method. And we can do the same through the Rules of Procedure which allow

us to create committees. We are not looking at complex Reform Law changes or complex legislative drafting that is required for this change to happen.

The time to do it is now because there will be limited disruption as the new political term starts next year. And there will be new political masters across the organisation, whether it is Employment & Social Security, E&I, different committees.

We have got a collective responsibility to act today because there is a significant cost of not making the decisions and not making them fast enough. In my view, by creating the Committee for Housing, we are creating almost a CCA-lite version. There were questions early in this political term whether the CCA could have been engaged in driving decisions on housing matters, but unfortunately, we are not in a crisis emergency situation enough which would drive CCA engagement.

There has been a lot of consultation with different Deputies, with stakeholders, with the community and those who are directly involved today with the delivery of homes. I could not name several of the stakeholders because they wanted to remain anonymous as they have got close relationships with the organisation.

And I wanted to specifically thank the requérants, but also Deputy Matthews, because he has been quite important in improving the Requête and ensuring that those boundaries of the mandates were drawn out wider. I do really thank him for that. And I do want to mention something he mentioned also in debate yesterday on the reform requête which is how the Government should learn about the different structure and the structuring of small agile teams to go and deliver on the challenges that are in front of us.

Will this be a *panacea* for our housing crisis? No, absolutely not, but it will go a long way to help us. Imagine starting the next political term. The housing will continue to remain on the agenda for whoever is standing, will remain a key part of the agenda. And this is the collective responsibility we have got today, to actually make a positive decision that could take place at the next political term to really move the dial for that. Let's not waste this opportunity and let's make this decision.

The Bailiff: Well, Members of the States, in accordance with Rule 28, there is an opportunity for the President of the Policy & Resources Committee (*Laughter*) to speak at this point. And with perfect timing, Deputy Trott, what would you like to say about this Requête?

Deputy Trott: At this stage, sir, nothing.

The Bailiff: Well, the Letter of Comment from the Policy & Resources Committee shows that three committees have been consulted. I am going to take them in the order in which they appear in the second paragraph of that Letter of Comment. And therefore, I am going to invite Deputy de Sausmarez, as the President of the Committee for the Environment & Infrastructure, to speak next.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

Mindful of time constraints, I will try and keep my comments, at this stage, fairly concise.

The Committee opposes this Requête for three main reasons. The proposals are significantly more expensive than the current structure and I do need to warn Members that the costs set out in the Requête are, we believe, very much an under-representation of those costs. It will not only increase the size of Government – again, something we believe that has been underrepresented – but it will also add complexity, bureaucracy and, ultimately, reduce the effectiveness of decision-making and delivery on the States' objectives on housing.

The Requête is borne out of, I am sure, genuine concern and a genuine desire to tackle the Island's myriad housing issues. But we believe it is based on a misdiagnosis of the source of the problems. Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has referred several times in her opening speech and, indeed, on the radio yesterday and at various times before that, to the problem really coming down to inefficient decision-making and a vacuum of political leadership and strategy since the former Housing Department was disbanded.

Now, I think she might have possibly misunderstood the role of the previous Housing Department, but I think Deputy Roffey is more likely to go into some of that when he speaks, but it certainly was not anything like the Committee that she is suggesting. But even if it were, what I would say is that actually if she were to look at the evidence base, which we now have, she would see that the problems have persisted since the days of that very department. And indeed, if we want to be terribly reductionist about it, I would not, obviously, imply causation. But it is an interesting correlation that the massive issues with affordability and availability etc., indeed, fermented in that period in a time when the Government structure, indeed, had a Housing Department.

So I would not like to put it in such reductionist terms, because of course it is not in any way accurate, but I certainly think it is also oversimplifying the problem. And certainly oversimplifying the proposed solution to say that actually by creating a single committee, we can somehow resolve all these issues which we know are absolutely systemic and, indeed, endemic.

It reminds me, I heard someone recount a conversation that they had had with former German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, when they asked her what the difference was between her career as a scientist and her career as a politician. And she said, 'Well, the main difference is this. As a scientist, I was constantly saying things that were new and different. And as a politician, all I did was say the same things over and over and over and over and over again'. And I have some sympathy with that.

Certainly, I feel as though I have done little else but talk about the problems that underpin the current housing situation in Angela Merkel broken record fashion. And yet, still, I am constantly surprised when even colleagues within this Assembly seem to be fairly oblivious to some of, for example, the macroeconomic factors. When she opened, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, quite rightly, pointed to the very significant increase in population. That followed a period of gentle decline in our population. Our population was falling from 2011 and it started picking up again from about 2017. Obviously, massive acceleration from the pandemic onwards.

And we have really felt the sharp end of that, because even had the construction sector been operating at full capacity, which it was not at that point, because it had been dealing with a declining population and taken its foot off the pedal, understandably, and scaled down, there is no way it would have been able to keep up with the very significantly increased demand.

But it was not just that. Of course, there was, at least, a triple whammy, if not quadruple whammy, of extra macroeconomic factors in the form of Brexit and COVID and the economic fallout from 2022. The invasion of Ukraine and the mini budget leading to a very significant change in economic factors.

And these have had a material impact on the Island's ability to deliver housing which Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is quite right to point out. Our market has not been delivering the houses that the Guernsey community need, the homes that the community needs for many, many years and decades, in fact.

But just at the point where we needed more, faster, the industry was very much hampered by those macroeconomic factors which had the effect of making materials much more expensive and at times much more difficult to get hold of. Labour, much more difficult to get hold of, and again, significantly more expensive than it had been. And of course, access to finance and the cost of that finance was also very significantly affected. It really has been the perfect storm when it comes to the problems facing the Island's housing situation.

I think Deputy Kazantseva-Miller was also quite right to point out that at the start of this political term, there were a lot of very well-meaning noises. And at this point, I will just briefly pause to give credit to Deputy Roffey who, from the very get go, from his nomination speech when he was putting himself forward as President of ESS, he put housing front and centre and he thumped the table repeatedly until everyone sat up and paid attention. And I think much credit does need to go to Deputy Roffey for being so vocal and so insistent and getting at least the attention of this Assembly onto the matter.

I also referenced housing when I stood for this position because, of course, I had been a Member of the previous E&I. And so, I too, had good insights into the situation that was unfolding and I could see the direction it was going in. We knew at that stage, incidentally, that there were not

going to be any quick fixes. There very rarely are when you are talking about bricks and mortar. Anything to do with infrastructure typically does take time to come into effect. There is always going to be a lack. But we were determined to tackle the issue head on. And I should also give credit, as I have done previously, to Deputy Ferbrache, who I think also took the issue very seriously.

I think Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, though, was right to say that at the beginning of this term, there was not very much focus. There was a lot of well-meaning effort. There were a lot of extant Resolutions actually. There were quite a disparate bunch of Resolutions. The Housing Action Group was formed and we would go through the various Resolutions and we would absolutely do our best. We would scour States' properties and look for any opportunities. And we made some tiny bits of progress here and there. But what was really clear, actually, was that there was no strategic plan at that stage. And that actually is what we then delivered.

Because all of those disparate Resolutions were pulling the resource to do the work left, right and centre, and because we had no clear idea of *how* that work should be prioritised and no evidence to support it, that is exactly what we set about doing. So we did the work that went on to underpin what became the Guernsey Housing Plan. And so I am really pleased to say that we now have an evidence-based plan that was developed in consultation with all the relevant players, both within the Assembly and, most importantly, without the Assembly; the people actually on the ground. Ninety percent of our homes are in the private market, let's not forget. And of course, our Affordable Housing partners in the form the GHA.

So we finally do have a plan which sets out a well evidenced, well thought through priority for how we are going to address the myriad issues. And these issues are complex and they are interrelated. And it is really important that we do not revert to a scattergun approach of whoever's Resolution is most recent or whoever is shouting loudest on the day. We have gone about this in a way that has shown proper strategic thinking and proper political leadership. And I would say, I think that housing is one of the areas where there has been really, really good co-ordination. Certainly, between the three lead committees.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller can speak of her own woes in terms of the DPA, but certainly, the three committees that are charged with delivering the vast majority of the Guernsey Housing Plan have been very co-ordinated when it comes to the approach to that. And I should also commend both Deputies Trott and Soulsby for taking a very active role in that through the Housing Priorities & Progress Group which meets, roughly, fortnightly.

I agree with Deputy Kazantseva-Miller that at the start of this term there was not that strategic focus, but I am pleased to say that there now is, and that is what makes the difference. There are not any quick wins on that but, certainly, that is what is going to deliver the effective solutions.

The proposals within the Requête, one of the principal aims, as Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has pointed out, is to make decision-making faster. Well, I really think this is going to have the opposite effect. I think this is going to add a layer of complexity, a layer of additional bureaucracy. Because if you think about it ... First of all, I will also say that I think there has been a misdiagnosis in the problem. Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has talked about ineffective decision-making and the speed, she has criticised the speed at which decisions are made.

Officers cannot identify a single occasion where a decision has been delayed getting to a committee, whichever relevant committee that was, or has not been made when they needed it to be made. They point to the bottleneck being ... Well, the DPA can speak for themselves. I think they are a special creature. I cannot speak for their functionality, but I can speak for the decisions that certainly come to E&I, ESS and P&R. The officers have said that there has not been a single example where a decision has been delayed or not made at the appropriate time. The bottleneck has been in the resource of those officers, in the number of officers that we have got, their capacity to do the work that matters. That is what leads to results.

Committees, politicians sitting around a table making a decision is not what makes ... that is only the tiny pinnacle of this pyramid. What makes the meaningful difference is the work that goes into informing that decision. And importantly, the work that happens afterwards to carry through that decision and to implement it. And that is where we have been so much lacking.

1830 Again, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is right to say that that resource has been agreed to be increased. And I am very grateful to P&R, first of all, for supporting our request to increase that resource; and secondly, to the Assembly for also supporting it through the Budget Report. And I am really pleased to say that recruitment is currently under way. We are looking to get additional people doing this very important work very soon. That is very much a live issue.

1835 But if we go back to how this potential new committee might apparently expediate decision-making and reduce complexity, we believe it risks doing the very opposite. We believe it actually risks adding complexity and bureaucracy. Because if you think about some of the levers we have got in relation to housing policy, many of those are fiscal levers. A Housing Committee is not going to be able to make decisions relating to those fiscal levers without the involvement of P&R and Treasury, and you cannot take Treasury out of P&R and put it in the Housing Committee so it is going to have to involve P&R. Those decisions will have to involve P&R.

1840 The same with States' property. You cannot have a Housing Committee saying, 'Oh, well we will take this patch of land and use it for affordable housing,' or whatever it is, without taking into account the wider considerations around other States' strategic priorities. And that, again, is a function of P&R; that is why they have that particular responsibility. I do not think you can make decisions relating to, for example, allocations of social housing; social rental housing, without taking into account the considerations that ESS have to think about every time we are talking about that wider welfare system.

1845 Again, ESS is inevitably going to have to be involved. E&I is going to have to be involved in anything that pertains to land use, to transport, to other forms of infrastructure, flood defences, energy, some of the energy efficiency performance measures. Those things will have to, in the interest of joined up government, be decided either by or in conjunction with those committees.

1850 Again, as per the discussion previously, I do not see how a new Housing Committee could make any decisions around housing planning policy without that having an impact on wider planning policy generally. There is no way we can get away from the involvement ... And HSC, sorry, is another one. How are we supposed to be making, how is the new committee supposed to be making decisions affecting keyworker houses for homes for Health if HSC is not involved.

1855 There is no way that we can ... I think it is a fallacy ... Certainly, yes, I think it is just not realistic to expect that just because we create a new committee with a nice shiny name over its door that that is going to be a one-stop shop. I do not think it can be a one stop shop. I do not think that you can divorce all the things that are still going to be in those other committees' mandates from housing. It is so integral. Housing is a form of infrastructure and it is enabled by lots of other forms of infrastructure. And that is why housing sits under the Infrastructure Department in the Isle of Man.

1860 And I would say, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller mentioned the British-Irish Council meetings; I have been lucky enough to be involved in more than one ministerial, and I have to say, the number of compliments that we have had for being wise enough to include housing in a mandate which sits alongside infrastructure, including transport, including energy, including climate change. That is what other jurisdictions aspire to. It is a main criticism levelled at the way other mandates are arranged that they work in silos. We, for once, have done something that other jurisdictions are really very complimentary about and here we are about to create more of a siloed approach than we currently have. I think that would be a retrograde step.

1865 Yes, I do not think it is going to make decision-making any easier or quicker. I do think it will add complexity. I do think it will add significant costs. There is another amendment that we anticipate will be laid shortly and I will go into much more detail about the additional costs. But I would say we believe that the cost has been significantly underrepresented in the Requête. Not intentionally, of course. But I will set out the cost implications in more detail at a later point in this debate.

1870 To summarise, we do think that what will make the most meaningful difference in the ground is the resource, the officer level resource that we have to actually do the work that we need to do. We do not think a new political structure in and of itself would make a material difference except,

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potentially, to make it more complex, more bureaucratic, and more cumbersome and less efficient in terms of time and speed of decision-making.

We do think it will be significantly more expensive. And it is possible that you could justify additional expense, even in a time of fiscal constraint which Deputy Trott did not elaborate on, but I am sure he will make that point at some point in the debate. I think you probably could make a case for additional expense if you thought that the outcome was going to be better delivery on your States' objectives. But I just cannot see ... We think it is actually going to reduce the effectiveness of delivery so I think that, particularly, it is not justifiable to spend more on creating more Civil Service roles and an additional set of structures to accommodate it.

And yes, and it will definitely involve growing government. I have been sort of pinching myself because I very much suspect that the focus of the last debate, one of the areas of focus was, effectively, the desire to shrink the size of Government; save money. I just think that we might find ourselves in a weird situation where some of the people that were making those arguments in the last debate are suddenly flying the flag for bigger government. 'More! We want more civil servants. Yay!' I think it is going to be, perhaps, a little bit of an odd juxtaposition and certainly more expense.

I think that probably sets the scene. And I am conscious of the time, that I have already eaten into the lunchbreak. I will just summarise again by saying that the committee does not support this Requête. Although, it appreciates the well-intention of those bringing it, because we do believe it will add size, complexity and cost to the current structures. And most importantly, reduce the efficiency of delivery of the bits that matter.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Well, Members of the States, we will now adjourn until 2.30.

Deputy Oliver: Sir, could we come back at two o'clock?

A Member: No. *(Interjections)*

The Bailiff: I have already announced the adjournment, so that is what it is going to be.

*The Assembly adjourned at 12.38 p.m.
and resumed its sitting at 2.30 p.m.*

Personal statement by Alderney Representative Roberts

The Bailiff: Members of the States, before I call the next of the Presidents, I have given permission to Alderney Representative Roberts to make a personal statement under Rule 10(1).

So, Alderney Representative Roberts, please.

Alderney Representative Roberts: Thank you, sir, for giving me this opportunity. It has been a long time; six and a quarter years with the rest of you. And it is quite a momentous day for me. I would just like to thank everybody for your friendship and friendship between Alderney and Guernsey. And I am really proud to have been part of you. I feel that it has been a real honour to stand in this Chamber and I am sure a lot of other of you must think that way: of the pride that you stand, that you have risen to where you are, that you can change people's lives or try to change people's lives for the good.

As you well know, today is my last day as a Representative of Alderney in this Chamber. It is a sad day to me because I feel that, working over the past six years, I have made many friends here. True friends, not only of Alderney, but for me personally. I have many happy memories, along with

some not so happy memories, of working with you all and I want to take the time to thank you for always being so welcoming and open to hearing my words.

1930 Before I go, I feel it is my duty to Alderney and to the past six years of my work to really beg you to continue with your support for our Island. I firmly believe that, despite recent challenges, we have never had better relations with our sister Island. But this is a critical time for Alderney, and I know you have heard me speak about this time and time again, but I must reiterate to you how dangerous it will be to hold back on the necessary investments into our Island's infrastructure.

1935 Two years ago, we secured a vote to extend our runway. We celebrated and truly felt that that vote was the light at the end of a very long and dim tunnel. But the repercussions of COVID and this Chamber's reluctance to agree on a tax plan held that back. And we now face increased charges that will have a knock-on effect, that the lights in the tunnel are getting even darker and further away.

1940 We absolutely must have the runway repaired immediately. It is not only a significant reductor to our economy, should it deteriorate further it is a threat to life. Please consider that – *please*. Because I am not entirely sure that this fact has sunk in over the years. Our runway has holes in it and it continues to deteriorate. And we rely on that service to save our people when they face life-threatening changes.

1945 We do not have facilities like you do here. We do not have bloods reserves. We do not have life-saving drugs. If a plane cannot land or take off from that runway a person may die. A person, just like you or I, like your family, your Members and your friends.

1950 I do not believe the argument, 'but you choose to live in Alderney', really matters here, because surely the same can be said to you all. When your airlinks were struggling earlier this year. I have spent the past decade of my life campaigning for better airlinks. And while it feels right now, we have got nowhere. I can see huge progress, though, on the horizon and I am proud of what we have achieved together.

1955 As of this week, I will no longer be here to make these decisions for Alderney. Some of you may be happy at that, I hope not! But regardless, I really hope that this Chamber continues to listen to the fight of what is fair for Alderney, our fiscal partner. No blockers, let's find solutions, rather than backtracking and debating for years on end, please, I beg you, just get something done. Decisions need to be made, it is time. Let's not waste any more. We need a tax plan desperately.

1960 I will say this, I debated earlier whether I should stand for re-election this term. It was not an easy choice for me. I spoke with my family in depth about the pros and the cons. And I have thoroughly enjoyed working with you all and fighting for the best for Alderney and the Bailiwick as a whole. But equally, I love my home and my family and being away every month was hard for me. And not only that, I have, at times, found it hard to work with the States divided, so embroiled in the game of politics that sometimes I have wondered are we really all fighting for what is good for Guernsey and Alderney?

1965 All I can hope is that our collective future, is that this Chamber pulls the past behind and finds a way to collaborate and work together to get us out of this difficult period. And that you see that all together we can achieve more, far more than we do together.

These Islands hold many wealthy people, many are less well off, some are poor. However, your real wealth lays with your family, your children and your grandchildren. *They* are your greatest wealth that you will ever have. Without any doubt they are the gold of your life.

1970 My vote on GST Guernsey collapsed my support at home. I was also blamed for the runway failure to be maintained, because I had been so vocal in both Islands and since I came to the States. I was never courting votes. A decent air service is something I passionately believe in that will save Alderney and the Bailiwick and, I think, Guernsey; Alderney and Jersey Air Service could benefit from a joint review. That review, to be a cheaper aircraft, holding lower running costs, more pan- and Island services and cheaper services. A back to the future think tank like we used to have, boosting tourism, an inter-Island taxi service revisited.

1975 I believe our Alderney to Guernsey deficit can be wiped out with local robust economy. Do not underwrite or underestimate the Alderney public. They are a tough and inventive lot. They worry

about GST because of our 27% higher cost of living. They have a real point but we need a connectivity sea change. If Alderney benefits, Guernsey benefits. We had a good period where it felt like we were finally in tandem, and it had been very difficult to see that fall apart.

So you see, when the vote was cast last weekend, it was somewhat bittersweet. But being here yesterday and today has really hit me that it is my last meeting here. I will miss a lot, except from being away from home.

I would like to thank you all for a fantastic experience and for becoming true friends of Alderney and *me* personally, especially those of you who have fought alongside me for the future. I would like to thank a few people for their support over the years: Deputy Ferbrache, Deputy Roffey, Deputy Helyar, Deputy Mahoney, Deputy Queripel and my best friend, Alex Snowdon. (**A Member:** Hear, Hear.) And look, I cannot mention you all because I regard you all the same. I regard you more than colleagues – much more.

I would like to thank my good friend, Deputy Ferbrache, for his kind words yesterday, actually. They were really kind and they will live with me forever. I would also like to thank the Bailiff for his judgement and support, and guidance at times. And, of course, the Lieutenant Governor. I thank the staff that work behind the scenes to support the committees. I am sure you would all join me in that appreciation.

I will not go into a lot of it, but when I was a young man, I was not always this fortunate. I had many struggles and never in a million years would I have believed that I could stand here for over six years as a politician, representing my own home. Never in a million years, if you knew my full story, would you believe it yourself. I am so proud to have worked alongside you. Thank you.

Nothing in life is impossible, nothing. Alderney Reps should not only be politicians, they should be ambassadors, they should be diplomats, formulating understanding and friendship between our Islands. So I am proud, today, to have achieved what I have and I am going home with my head held high, with great hopes for Alderney and Guernsey working together in the years to come. I also go home with the knowledge that, here, I have many friends, true friends. And I do hope that if you ever find yourself down in Alderney, call me up and you can buy me a drink! (*Laughter*)

To conclude, my message from Alderney is one of friendship, hope and understanding. Recognition of the Alderney situation and working together for the good of the Bailiwick as a whole to solve these issues together. We, the Bailiwick, have much to be proud of, so much. Look at what we have got. Look at what we have. Look at our potential. And like I said earlier, sir, nothing, *nothing*, is impossible.

Thank you, sir. (*Applause*)

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.

Requête – Establishment of the Committee for Housing – Debate continued

The Bailiff: Now, back to the Requête. And the next President is of the Committee for Employment & Social Security, Deputy Roffey, if he wishes to speak.

Deputy Roffey: Thank you, sir. I do.

Although, I have to say, that Deputy Ferbrache will be pleased I have not written a great long speech, but he would be less pleased that I do intend, probably, to make one. But I want it to be a reactive one to what is said in debate, rather than the one to open up at the front.

So my speech, now, will be relatively short and my major contribution will come, I was going to say later in the day, but the way it is looking, I have to say, it is probably going to be in many weeks' time. And it does worry me, I have to say. I feel sorry for Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, who has made an impassioned, maybe misguided, but impassioned opening speech which hardly any word of will

2025 be remembered when we resume on this in January, as I think is very likely to happen, with four amendments already submitted and I am told a fifth one on the way.

But I think this personally, there is a case for actually suspending this debate, getting on with some of the other smaller stuff in the in the Order Paper and then coming back to this and doing it properly in January. I do not know if I am able, while I am on my feet, to put that as a procedural motion. No, I am not allowed to. Okay. I will carry on then, sir. I will just plant it in people's heads in case somebody wants to.

The first thing to say, sir, when ESS discussed this Requête, we came from very much the same stance as Deputy Blin was saying, the Overseas Aid & Development Commission came when discussing earlier Propositions and he said it is the end recipient that really counts. It is not really the process for getting there. And, I think, we were very much the same. Absolutely, whatever was going to be best for trying to resolve the housing issues that Guernsey faces was going to be our guidance and we were not going to be dog in the manger at all. If we had come to the conclusion that this Requête would have helped in any way, we would, in a heartbeat, have been very happy to relinquish part of our mandate to allow that to happen. I want to make that clear at the beginning.

2040 Sir, I think, as Deputy de Sausmarez has hinted at, there is some false nostalgia going on here. I have heard it said a number of times, 'Well, we used to have a housing committee. We foolishly got rid of it, so let's go back to that because that time worked better.' But at no time has this Assembly ever had a housing committee remotely like the one that is being proposed now. And I should know, because I was the Vice-President of two of those housing committees, one under Deputy Lincoln and one under Deputy Ben Le Valle.

2045 And, basically, until the new Employment Permit Law, two thirds of the work of the old housing committee was actually revolving around population control and housing licences. That is what took up the majority of their time. The rest of their time was taken up with States' housing. The States, actually, rightly or wrongly, back in the day, never really got involved with the private housing market. They regarded that, and I think so did the developers, as something that they should, as far as possible, keep their nose out of.

Of course, the DPA and, before them, the ITC had a big impact on the private housing market. But the States, as a policy making body, did not. I do think that the constipation that we are now seeing in the – I will pause for a second while the Alderney Reps leave – I do think that the challenges that the private housing market faces now means that it probably does need to. Well, I am sure it does need more of States' assistance in order to give it a – not interference, because I think that that would probably be wrong – but a way of actually helping, because we know there are all sorts of sites, some of them have got planning permission, some of them would get planning permission at the drop of a hat, but they are just not going forward because of the economic realities of the world. Somebody needs to come up with policies to address that. I completely accept that. And I think we were, as an Assembly, too slow off the mark in properly resourcing E&I who are the committee with the mandate to do that, because ESS has no mandate for the private housing sector at all, and that has been a failing, I think, in this Assembly. But what worries me is that we now have put that resourcing in and things have got momentum and I do not want that momentum, in any way, to be upended.

2065 Deputy Kazantseva-Miller said it will not be because there are new politicians going to come in to populate the existing committees, so it is not going to make a jot of difference to the momentum. But we all know it does not work like that. civil servants work inside a structure and even if the politicians change, the fact that their lines of responsibility move, it is bound to be a reset and a hiatus of some degree.

2070 And the other false premise, I think, is that we are suddenly going to reduce from having a load of committees involved in housing issues to having only one. I think we will still have a load of committees involved in housing issues. I do not see how Policy & Resources and Treasury can possibly be taken out of the equation. If you want to do stuff, you need LUCA and they controlled it. The idea that suddenly they will be taken out of it is, not only do they control the money, but as far as States-owned land, they control the land.

We had an interesting exercise when the DPA called us all together to try and find a way through the affordable housing issues in the IDP, where they put up a whole list of sites that they thought were a way of providing social housing or affordable housing. And Deputy Murray, on behalf of P&R, had to go to each one, 'No, no, that one has got plans. No, we cannot do that. That one cannot be released yet.' And it was déjà vu. It was absolutely, well it was like being a Member of HAG again, or being a Member of ESS that had raised all of those sites. So the idea that, suddenly, there is going to be an open roadway in front of you and nobody else is going to be putting any blockers, I find very difficult to understand.

And I am also utterly confused about the idea what is happening about planning policy and the IDP in relation to residential development. Because the appendix in this Requête makes absolutely clear that in relation to the IDP, the developers of policy in relation to residential development will be the new housing committee. Well, how on earth can you divorce that from the other policies of the IDP that are going forward if you just look at a site specific structure, in the current review we have had a representation from P&R, the DPA have been saying, 'Let's have 60% residential on the old data park and 40% industrial'. Who is going to consider that? The residential park will go off to the new housing committee. The industrial park will, presumably, stay at the DPA. And they have just ... Planning has to be cohesive.

You cannot strip out a part of the planning policy. If they really want to proceed with this Requête, I would really urge them to take that bit out of the proposed mandate out. But then as soon as you do that, then you have got yet another committee still involved which is the DPA. You are not really getting to this golden uplands, sunlit uplands, where you have got one committee that is just responsible.

The other thing I would say about housing is we are all interested in shiny new developments. And, therefore, there has been, when we talk about housing, there tends to be a focus simply on creating additional housing stock. We all know that is really important in the private sector and in the affordable housing sector. But when you go back to the old housing committee, a big chunk of their work, other than the population control, was looking after their tenants; 1,600 now, it was up to 2,000 at one stage before the GHA took some over, their tenants. And that is still the case.

And I have to say, things have changed. When Housing were responsible for tenancy issues, they were also responsible for the Rent Rebate Scheme which was the principal – yes, there was Supplementary Benefit as well, but that was the principal – form of welfare that was received by people living in States' houses. It was looked at holistically by the Housing Committee who administered both the Rent Rebate Scheme and all the tenancy issues.

Now Rent Rebate has disappeared and has been taken over instead by Income Support and the Housing Benefit that comes under Income Support. And therefore, we still have the position where the tenancy matters for States' housing and the welfare matters, the wider welfare matters are sitting in one committee.

And Deputy Queripel was saying, yesterday, that you have politicians that serve on lots of committees and you have those that do constituency work. I can tell him that you have those that do both. In this term, I do not think I have ever been busier with constituency work in all of my political life. I take on huge amounts of it. And naturally, because of my position, quite a lot that comes my way relates either to people who are struggling to make ends meet or who are either in States' housing or applying to go in States' housing.

In answer to his –

Deputy Queripel: Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Queripel.

Deputy Queripel: Sir, Deputy Roffey said, I said yesterday in my speech, there are Deputies who do constituency work and Deputies who do policy work. I did not say that. I did not say that at all. I said, there are Deputies who do everything. And when I said I was doing a lot of one-to-one cases,

I still made it clear that I was also doing lots of other States' work as well. So it is not right. It is incorrect to say that I said, there are Deputies who do policy work and Deputies who do consistency work.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you. Deputy Roffey.

Deputy Roffey: Okay, I apologise for that and move on.

But my main point here is that a large part of the constituency work – I would not say a majority because I get tons of other stuff – but a large part relates to people who are struggling financially or have issues either because their existing States' tenants, or probably even more often, that they would like to get into States' housing or are on the waiting list.

I can probably help answer Deputy Queripel's Rule 14 questions by saying that I certainly do not tell them to go away because it is operational, but I do not deal with it myself, I pass those issues on to the operational staff to cope with. And I am amazed that it is, more often than not, a multiple response that is needed. I need to engage the staff on Income Support over the financial side of their challenges and the tenancy team over the housing side of their challenges.

And I think, if this had been a Requête about how is the best way to get new developments carried out and it limited itself to that, I think I might, I am not saying I would have gone with it, because I am still not sure for other reasons I have said it would have been the best approach, but it is not. It is all about moving across, separating for the first time in living memory because they were both together at housing, the welfare side of our 1,600 tenants from the housing side. And not just the tenants, but those looking to become tenants.

I do not really understand how some of the property issues are going to work as well. Some of the property issues are going to be taken out of the SBU and given to the new housing committee. And yet other property issues are going to remain in the SBU that are under P&R. And SBU are going to work, apparently, to multiple committees in order to satisfy that. And that is supposed to be simplifying things and making it less complicated and making it drive forward, because there is one set of masters. You will have SBU reporting to two entirely different committees.

The other more generic point I would make, sir, is that I have been around the block a bit, politically, and I lived through the era, all of my early years in the States. That era was, if you have got a problem developing, how do you tackle it? You set up a new committee to look at it. And the amount of committees multiplied and multiplied until we got to the ludicrous situation where there was almost as many committees as there were Members of the States.

And I listened carefully yesterday, the day before yesterday, to people saying, 'Well, what about an arts committee instead of this ...?' I have heard people say, 'Well, what about a transport committee?' And transport is almost on a level with housing as far as its importance for this Island. And I can just see us unravelling.

I was not without my reservations, but we took an approach that it was better to have a small number of more powerful mainstream committees that would deliver the work. But we went beyond that. We no longer have the civil servant structure just inside those committees. But all the senior civil servants now work to whichever committee. They do not belong to a committee anymore; they work across it. And I think this is the beginning of the unravelling of that situation and I worry that we are going to end up with 15/20 committees. But that is all right, because that is the number of Deputies we will have. We can all have one each and call ourselves Ministers, I suppose. *(Laughter)*

I think the final thing I would say at this stage, I would say my main speech will come later, is that I absolutely pledge to States' Members that as far as social housing is concerned and affordable housing, and that is what my committee is responsible for, there has been absolutely no lack of political focus on that during this political term. It has been the first thing we have thought of. The first thing I have thought of when I get up in the morning, the last thing I think of when I go to bed.

Have we fallen short? Maybe we have. I would like to tell you the headwinds that we have come up across and the appalling position we were starting from. I am not going to cry crocodile tears

over that. I probably ought to apologise to this Assembly that we have not made better progress. But I will tell you what, had there been a housing committee, it may well have been me, I probably would have stood for it rather than ESS because that is a lot of where my passion lives. And it would have been ... *no*, I do not see that it would have been one jot further forward. It has not been because of political focus.

Sir, I think that is all I need to say for the moment. As I say, I am interested to hear the debate and I think this is a hugely important subject. The only last point I would make is what did we do this morning? We asked SACC to look at the number of States' committees we needed and the number of Members and the system of government. But one point we said was the number of States' committees we needed, and as we will be having all sorts of arguments for this committee, that committee, may be two or three merge together, like Economic Development, STSB, Arts ... I think, again, rather than by Requête, this will be far better off done under that exercise which, by the way, can start tomorrow. There was nothing in those Propositions that said it had to wait til after the General Election in order ... Because I do think, with due respect, and I absolutely do not doubt the motivation of the requérants, that they have missed some of the nuances, have missed some of the unintended consequences that will come out if it is properly investigated.

And the very last thing I have to talk about is money because Deputy Inder reminded us when talking about the number of States' Members that a few hundred thousand a year here and a few thousand a year there is not small beer, it means something. Well, a separate committee which would definitely have to have a committee secretary, as recognised ... And I do not think any Principal Committee can operate with just one real officer other than the policy team. I think there is at least an executive officer on top of that. It is bound to be a more expensive option. And yes, you might get rid. You might say instead of having three policy officers, have two. Actually I think that will slow down the rate of progress that we make. But you could do that under any ... The fact that you are paying for a committee secretary and an executive officer is money that I do not think we have in the current climate.

I do believe this is well-meaning and I understand the frustration of this Assembly. And to some extent, I take some guilt on my back for it, even though I have absolutely sweated blood to try and get things moving forward. It has been frustrating, but I think this is just going down the wrong path. I really do.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Well, the third committee consulted is the Development & Planning Authority. And because the President is a requérant, I will invite the Vice-President, Deputy Taylor, if he wishes, to articulate anything on behalf of that committee.

Deputy Taylor: Yes, I do, thank you, sir. And, like Deputy Roffey, I will save my personal comments for later, once we have got the amendments out of the way.

Looking out of the Development & Planning Authority's window, I think the first thing that comes up is the creation or direction with regard to policy. And that is quite well-timed to be able to have this discussion now, because we have been going through the IDP Review. So it is all quite a fresh experience that we can refer to.

No, I am not giving away to – I have literally just stood up. I am not giving way to Deputy Vermeulen. I am normally quite good at it, but ...

We have had lots of interactions. And, obviously, you interact with various committees and you get various different views. There is more interaction, I think, than I am getting in the Assembly now. I think most people look like they are busy on their phones, but I will carry on talking. And I think it is inevitable that you get different viewpoints coming through from these different committees. They have different mandates. They are all linked, obviously, when it comes to housing or these policies, but you have different views.

What I think is good is, as we are all aware, and I think Deputy Roffey did touch on it, is the Civil Service are the thread that runs through everything. There are officers who work between the

different committees, so they are obviously across all of the mandates. But you get different political inputs. I think Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, I will trust her maths on it, she said there were 23 different
2235 Deputies who have been involved in the IDP process or consultation.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: My calculation, the main committees involved in housing matters right now have been E&I, ESS, DPA, Health and P&R. And that is 23 individual Deputies. It is not just IDP in general, but yes.

2240 Thank you.

Deputy Taylor: I am grateful for the clarification on that. But it probably goes to the same point I was going to make. As part of the IDP Review, these various committees have come in. It is not breaching any confidences to say that ESS have been in, E&I, P&R by minority, I should add and
2245 they have come in. So actually by the time you get these policies that the DPA put together coming to the States, there has already been a significant amount of input from a large proportion of the Assembly. And I think there is a lot of benefit in that. It is not five or six Deputies that can really agree on all the land planning policies or housing-related policies. By the time it –

2250 **Deputy Burford:** Point of order, sir.

I do not know if there is a specific Rule that applies to this, but could I kindly request that if Deputy Dudley-Owen and Deputy Trott prefer to have an extended conversation, perhaps, go outside the Assembly, because I am really having difficulty hearing Deputy Taylor.

2255 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Yes, I do not think there is a specific Rule, but it is a distraction if people are talking to one another where they are not just sat next to one another and can whisper in each other's ears. Please continue, Deputy Taylor.

2260 **Deputy Taylor:** Thank you, sir, and thank you to Deputy Burford for the interjection.

Where were we? Yes, I think, whilst you are going through the IDP Review process and discussing these policies, I think input from as many politicians at that stage, so they can see, in the correct forum, they have got the information, it is all confidential and you can have these exchanges and you can start to bring together the policies that you will eventually ... It is still up to the DPA to
2265 decide and it has to go through different processes. But hopefully, the DPA have got a good idea of the feeling amongst this Assembly, before they actually put something in front of us. I think in that respect, having multiple committees, I see that as a benefit. They are focused on their particular areas and they put forward their case that the DPA can then consider when developing policies.

But one thing that does not change. And I think again, Deputy Roffey did touch on this, is the input from Policy & Resources Committee, because they are the landowners or the majority landowners. Although the Requête might seek to change *housing* land or land that has houses on it would move around and mandated, all the other sites that are nothing to do with housing at the moment which might turn brownfield sites which could be right for development and could solve most of our housing land availability issues, would still sit outside of this housing committee.

2275 So I do not think we are really going to address, I think, one of the – I do not want to say too much but one of the – biggest problems we have had in allocating land was – I am not going to give way to Deputy Matthews at this moment. But one of the biggest issues in getting land was getting it from the landowners. And in this particular case, it was the Policy & Resources Committee. They are on a different page. They have said the land is not available, so in some degrees we have
2280 to work with that. And that does not change, that does not improve under the proposals we have in front of us.

One of the points that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller had made in her opening speech is about how the DPA is there as a policy taker. We take strategies and whatnot and turn them into policy. And I think it is worth highlighting, probably the most common comment that I see relating to planning

2285 or anything housing is, 'Why don't you convert those old redundant hotels?' Just to make it
absolutely clear, that it is very difficult to change those redundant hotels because planning policies
are very restrictive. But the planning policy is based on a strategy from Economic Development. So
again, there is a lot of support from the population to develop these redundant hotels. But because
we are policy takers, we need a new tourism strategy to be able to change that, to say that these
2290 hotels could be released and then we could –

Deputy Oliver: Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Oliver.

2295

Deputy Oliver: The abandoned hotels that we currently have are exempt and can be changed
to dwellings under the current system.

The Bailiff: Deputy Taylor.

2300

Deputy Taylor: There are a handful of redundant hotels that have an exemption that applies to
them, but for any active hotel that had a boarding permit, whenever we had that debate, they would
still have to apply the policy and advertise for two years. That has not changed, but there are lots
of hotels that could be released for housing. But the point I am making is none of that would change
under this. And I do not think the housing committee would have any force over Economic
2305 Development to free up this policy relating to hotels which is clearly of interest to the population,
in my view.

Then there are questions of delays. There is talk of delays and I am not entirely sure what it
means, but a laser-like focus. I would be using a floodlight. Let's cast a light as far as we can to see
as much as we can of all the problems. But this laser-like focus, again, speaking from the DPA's
point of view, people moan about how long it takes to change planning policies and bits and pieces,
but a significant factor in making any of these changes is the political differences. Yet, even if the
process was as easy as saying, 'We agree today what we will change tomorrow,' if we cannot agree
amongst ourselves what we are going to change and some of us want this, some of us want that,
2315 then it takes a lot longer. There is only a certain amount of time that you can save until you start
getting held up just by the political differences.

But anyway, it is not entirely clear to me how, under these proposals, the DPA might engage
with other interested parties when going through an IDP Review. Is it a case that the DPA would be
able to still consult with the construction forum or consult with other committees who have an
interest, which we do at the moment? Or would every bit of consultation have to come through this
new housing committee, because if it does, I think that would be negative, that would be a
retrograde step. Because I think it is beneficial for the DPA members to hear directly from the people
they are consulting with. That is just a bit that is not entirely clear with me. That is the policy creation
and direction.

2325

There is, again, Deputy Roffey took most of the words out of my mouth, this confusion in the
mandate. I will not rehearse the points that Deputy Roffey made, but it is a bit unclear where this
advising the States on policy development, because the DPA's responsibility is to advise the States
on land use policy and then the housing committee would be to advise the States and development
blah-de-blah, planning policy affecting housing in relation to the Island Development Plan.

2330

Yes, if you are in a situation like this where there was a requête that was referring to it, who is
going to be the one that actually comments, because if it is relating to the IDP and its
implementation, it should surely be the DPA that has access to officers that are implementing the
policies and actually working with them, as opposed to the committee that might be involved in
drafting the policies. And that feels a bit of a quirk, because at the moment, other committees assist
2335 in the formation of the policies that go into the IDP, but it is still the DPA that would then comment

on those once they are policies. I do not know if it is just bad drafting, I am not sure, but it is worthy of mention.

The final part, I am not going to go into my own personal concerns about this proposal, the final point is about the service level agreement that has been mentioned. This is very light on detail. Speaking quite generally, just the management resources for a service level agreement: the agreement has to be drafted in the first place; it then requires agreement on both parties on what the level of service will be; and then the ongoing maintenance of that to ensure that it is being adhered to. And then what happens if it is not adhered to? A bit like the section 46 where we can take action against the States for ugly and unsightly buildings, but we cannot really take ourselves to court. It does not really get anywhere.

If there is a service level agreement between housing committee and the DPA and the DPA do not live up to its expectations, what exactly is the penalty? Because I think there is a service level agreement. Actually I think that is a bad example. I think that was meant to be a service level agreement between some committees and the States' Property Unit, but I do not think I have actually seen the service level agreement for Home Affairs, but we have handed over the responsibility to SPU.

Anyway, then I would also be concerned about effective decision-making if you are placing a time constraint, because if the housing committee is going to be looking at the big stuff, I would not expect a housing committee to be coming forward with an application for one or two houses. It will be the big stuff, the big sites. What is the reasonable timeline to pay salt on some of these sites? Because there are significant factors that need considering.

And I think, suggesting that we need a service level agreement, because there are no examples cited in the Requête about why we need one or where the Development Planning Authority have actually caused delays, I think it just perpetuates a myth. Because architects take plenty of time. They have to develop their plans. There are all the finance arrangements that need to be taken. There are land negotiations. Planning does take time and the DPA's time in there, it can sometimes be held up by external parties. I think it can get very complicated trying to deal with this.

Speaking from my own personal experience, I spent eight years on the other side of the table, submitted many plans and it was an easy excuse. If a client phoned you up and asked where their plans were, if you have got the choice between saying, 'I am sorry, I have not done it', or, 'Oh, it is just Planning. Yes, law unto the unknown. Yes, yes. They are taking ages'. It is easy to blame Planning, but a lot of the time, the fault, it is not going to be popular to say, but a lot of the time, the fault can lie with the applicant not providing the right information or the agent not passing on messages.

That, I think, covers off from the DPA side of things, so hopefully that ... I am going to be ... I will give way to Deputy Moakes, because he does not often.

Deputy Moakes: Thank you.

And I only ask this question, purely just to help people out. And it is not a criticism at all. You have spoken in the first person about this throughout this speech. I know that two members of the committee clearly could not have a decision in terms of what the committee thought about this, because they are requérants, which left three of you, I think. I think we have got a view from the previous two speakers about how their committees in general felt about the Requête. What I have not heard yet is how the remaining three members of the DPA felt about the Requête. What I have heard is what you think about the Requête and I just wondered if you could help the Chamber out by explaining, with two people who clearly support it, what the other three members', including yourself, considered view was. Was it, the rest of you all said, 'Good idea, bad idea'. Two of you, three, I do not know. It would just help us out, I think, to understand what the position was.

Thank you.

Deputy Taylor: First of all, apologies to Deputy Vermeulen and Deputy Matthews for not giving way to them. I feel guilty now.

Interesting question from Deputy Moakes. If he has read the Letter of Comment which was signed by myself, but it had to be agreed by the remaining committee members, Deputy Dyke and Deputy Blin. I have really just expanded upon the points and given a bit more meat on the bone for those. It is not necessarily my personal views, that is the policy and how things work.

Obviously, the interaction with other committees, that is an observation. But really, I have expanded upon those. I think I am fairly safe to say, unless they have changed their minds, that it should be supported, most of what I have said. Maybe some tiny differences they might disagree with, but they will be free ... Here we go. Unless Deputy Dyke wants to do a point of correction.

Deputy Dyke: Well, possibly.

Deputy Taylor: I do not think he does. So I am not –

Deputy Dyke: Point of correction, then.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Dyke.

Deputy Dyke: Thank you, sir.

I will express my own views at the appropriate time.

Thank you.

Deputy Taylor: He took the words out of my mouth. I will not give way.

Let me just say, the remaining members of the committee are entitled to stand up and give their views.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Blin.

Deputy Blin: It is just again in the same vein that Deputy Taylor has inferred that it was all accepted by the remaining members, it was never stated like that. We are literally in the mode of listening and we have had conversations along the way.

Deputy Taylor: Well, I am sorry, sir. Maybe I do have to retract the letter that was signed and agreed by all of us. I do not know if I can do that, sir, the Letter of Comment. But I suppose maybe it still had a majority of two out of the three remaining.

But other Members can make their points in debate. I am just expanding on the letter that we agreed. I am sorry if that has offended any of them.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Well, Members of the States, there are a number of amendments that have been submitted. What I am going to do is just, you will get a paper copy of Amendment 5, swiftly. But I am going to take Amendment 2, first. And the reason I am going to take Amendment 2 and then Amendment 5, first, is that they are effectively on behalf of the requérants. It is the requérants trying to get the Propositions into the form that *they* want before we turn to any other amendments. And then I was proposing to take 3, 4, unless Deputy St Pier does not reappear and then Amendment 1.

Amendment 2, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, this is your amendment. If you can circulate Amendment 5 at the same time, but do not get distracted, please, Members, by looking at that. Amendment 2, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Amendment 2.

To delete Proposition 2 and replace it with the following:

"2A. To agree that the additional 2025 pay costs to accelerate the delivery of housing will be £200,000, resulting in a saving of £15,000 against the additional expenditure for housing approved by the Assembly through the Budget 2025 debate.

2B. To agree to transfer, for the use of the new Committee, the relevant portions of the 2025 budgets of the Committee for the Environment & Infrastructure, the Committee for Employment & Social Security and the Policy & Resources Committee that are allocated for housing functions for which the new Committee is to be responsible."

2435 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Thank you, sir.

I would like to call it, partially, a technical amendment. And it has come about because we are debating this Requête after the Budget debate. And as I said previously, we originally supported this P&R sursis to delay the debate, in order for that Budget debate to have taken place.

2440 Just to remind you, in terms of what took place throughout the Budget debate, is that we have agreed additional expenditure which is equivalent to £215,000 of pay costs to be attributed to the Committee for Environment & Infrastructure and £130,000 of non-pay costs. I believe the majority of them will be held centrally until budget requests are made by E&I to draw down those funds. That is non-pay costs within the Government's Work Plan or Budget Reserve provision.

2445 We have, obviously, finished the Budget debate in an unfunded budget position. We approved, by majority, the expenditure, the overall expenditure of £650 million, but failed to approve any revenue-raising measures. We obviously understand the pressure on public finances and we will be expecting, obviously, an emergency ... Well, a budget at some point in time, hopefully, in February.

2450 Just to remind Deputies that the housing, what is called the Housing & Infrastructure team that was created earlier this year and consists of four posts; one of which is very much an infrastructure post and the other a housing, is currently also carrying two, well, three vacancies in total, two of which are in housing. Right now, as my understanding is that there is only one person that is remaining in that team and that three vacancies have to be filled. This would be in addition to the three posts that have technically been approved through the Budget. So that would mean five vacancies, specifically, that need to be filled in relation to housing.

2455 As you can imagine, this is quite a significant undertaking and would present a really big disruption, first of all, because the team has to basically start from scratch in terms of hiring the right team and talent to take forward the work, the good work, that the officers have done so far, but that they have left.

2460 This amendment seeks to clarify the Requête position post the Budget debate. And what this amendment says is that, basically, we believe that we can deliver the Committee for Housing within or, in fact, with a cost-saving compared to the status quo we have agreed in the Budget debate. And most specifically, we are accepting that two of the posts should be filled, well, as soon as possible and would be for the full year, to support the ongoing work that committee is trying to undertake. But that part of the budget will be reserved for when the committee is established. And
2465 some of that will cover if we want to hire, for example, non-States' members. That is, I think, about £5,000 per year. So very small cost. If there is any presidential uplift required at that stage, that is currently covered. But again, if the President happens to be a President of another committee, I am not sure if that is going to happen, there will not be any additional uplift.

2470 That provision from July is also taking into account, well, do we want to hire a project manager? Do we want to provide a level of administrative support, specifically – a new post? Or do we want to use that pay budget for something else?

2475 The net position of accepting this amendment and the Requête will be a saving of £15,000 against the budget that we approved a month ago. And if the emergency Budget, in February, proposes further changes to the overall States' expenditure for specific areas, we will obviously have to work with that.

What the reduction in cost also does not capture is the reduction in administrative and officer burden across the organisation that will be released thanks to the establishing of this committee. We obviously understand that a lot of work is undertaken by the Committee *for* Environment & Infrastructure and Employment & Social Security in progressing some of the housing agenda. And so by removing those mandates and responsibilities, this will release some of the administrative resource within the wider organisation.

By creating this – I am not giving way. Deputy de Sausmarez can speak shortly. By releasing capacity, by taking the mandates away from the existing committees, we will be, effectively, releasing capacity, whether it is administrative from officers in an organisation. This is part of where those efficiencies and the savings come. By releasing the administrative support within the organisation, some of that could be allocated for the new community. So, net, there should not be any increase and we should manage it in a way which delivers a cost zero position from an administrative perspective, because we are amalgamating the work that is currently fragmented and currently distributed.

In the climates we are facing, the other thing I would like to address is that there have been concerns that somehow the committee will be inflicting damage to the infrastructure mandate and the costs that might start arising from that. As I said previously, there is a specific infrastructure post within the Committee *for* Infrastructure housing and infrastructure team, which is not due to move to the budget of the new housing committee. That will remain under the Committee *for* Environment & Infrastructure.

The way the Civil Service is structured, especially the matrix organisation that Deputy Roffey was talking about, some of the senior responsible officers currently managing some of those workstreams will also remain in place. Again, currently the CRO responsible for housing and infrastructure and also land planning will remain in place. In a similar way, the social housing team reports to one of the senior officers that will remain in place and that will continue to enable that cross-committee working that does take place at the Civil Service level.

There should not be any impact whatsoever in terms of what is happening with the infrastructure side of things. If the committee feels, overall, they have to employ more people to support infrastructure which they probably do, because it is a huge mandate and we do need a lot of things happening in infrastructure, the costs are not related associated to the establishment of the Committee *for* Housing.

This is largely a technical amendment to clarify the position following the Budget debate which very much came from us, accepting the sursis of the Policy & Resources Committee.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: And Deputy Ferbrache, do you formally second Amendment 2?

Deputy Ferbrache: I do, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.

Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has said that this is an amendment to help clarify the situation following the Budget. I have to say, I have never been more confused. I puzzled long and hard over this, as did the officers who had, apparently, according to the Rule 4 information being consulted, well, they had no idea what this amendment was actually proposing. And we think we got to the bottom of it and then some of the details that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has just explained have made me doubt that.

There are a few things that I do need to clarify from our perspective. Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is, I think, possibly, I could not quite follow her trajectory of what vacancies she thought were in

play. But all of the vacancies that I think she alluded to, currently, have either been recruited to or are currently live recruitment processes, some more advanced than others.

There are no, we are not sitting there twiddling our thumbs trying to think what to do with these officers. We have known exactly what we wanted before we asked P&R. P&R were kind enough to support our request and include it in the Budget and this Assembly was good enough to support that. We have not been sitting there for however many weeks wondering what to do. Obviously, we have cracked on because this is a priority. (**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Point of correction.) Unlike Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, I will give way.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: It is a point a correction. I did not make any insinuation that you were twiddling your thumbs. I just stated the fact that there were vacancies in that team.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Yes, and I will make very clear that all of those, if they have not already been appointed to, are in the process, in live recruitment processes. There are people potentially applying as we speak.

It would be hugely problematic. I am quite concerned about the effect of this amendment, because it means that we will have to stall that process. When Deputy Kazantseva-Miller replies to debate on this amendment, I would like to understand very clearly and explicitly whether she intends, should this amendment be supported, whether she intends that one of the three roles that have been approved through the Budget should not be recruited to at this time, bearing in mind that that is already a live process. That is a role that is already being recruited to. I would appreciate some clarification on that one specific point, because that is a real practical consideration for us.

And I would say, as well, that as I said earlier, we had, obviously, a very clear idea of what we needed the resource for. And obviously, we already have. And the detail is included in the body of Amendment 1. It will allow us to accelerate the work that is in the Guernsey Housing Plan. If we are not able to recruit the roles that we have planned, I think if we cannot recruit one of them, we will have to reassess. It is going to probably affect all three, not just one. And then I think we will have to reassess what impact that is going to have.

Obviously, as Amendment 1 makes clear, the work that we are very keen to progress without delay is on the homelessness strategy. And that is, indeed, what we have got lined up for the roles that we are hoping to be in place in January. I have to warn Members that this will have a practical, direct impact on the work that we are trying to deliver. And we have acted in good faith; given that there were no amendments to the Budget, we have acted in good faith on the Assembly's wishes to prioritise further accelerate work on housing, as we have done that.

Right, I think, what we are talking about here is pay costs. (*Interjection*) Pay costs. Although, I think Deputy Vermeulen's interpretation might not be far from it, if this carries. Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is correct, that what was approved by the Assembly through the Budget, in early November, was the resource for three additional policy officers to join the team, the established team, as housing and infrastructure officers. And I should also stress that all of the members of that team are housing and infrastructure officers. We do not have any specific housing policy roles or any specific infrastructure roles, albeit they have had a focus on certain areas, obviously, up until this point.

The impact of that, obviously, as we know, because we approved it through the Budget, would be an additional £215,000 in 2025. And it would also be the same amount, obviously, adjusted for inflation or whatever, from 2026 onwards. And I do think it is important, because I think this amendment gives a very narrow scope on what it considers savings to be.

As I understand it, the effect of this amendment, should it be supported, at substantive Propositions stage, would be that we would be down to two policy officers rather than the three that we are currently recruiting. We would have to stop that process, reassess the roles and then start again. There would be a delay, but we would be down to two policy officers only. That is *less* resource than we are currently planning for to work, do the front-line work on the ground. And that would have an impact of £150,000 for 2025 and also £150,000 from 2026 onwards.

I assumed, and this is the bit that I was trying to ask for some clarification from Deputy Kazantseva-Miller on, that the half year costs would be the committee's secretary role. But I got the impression from what Deputy Kazantseva-Miller was saying that it could be anything. It could be a project manager. And I did not know who was supposed to make that decision, whether we were supposed to wait until after July and then the new Committee have a think about it. Whether there would be a committee secretary in place, and if so, where is the funding from that coming from.

I was very confused about what the half year costs were. But I would make the point that, irrespective of what that role is, it does mean, of course, that we are taking out one of the policy officers and replacing it with a more expensive resource. And although we are only getting the benefit of half of that, well, they are only getting the budget implications of half of that more expensive role in 2025, from 2026 onwards, it is significantly more expensive than the current level of resource that has been agreed.

It is a false horizon, because this so-called saving is actually only a saving if you, first of all, discount the fact that we have got less resource to do the work. But assuming you are happy with that, assuming Members are happy with that, it is only a saving for the period of 2025, because from 2026, it is obviously *more* than what is currently being agreed.

My assumption was that that half year cost would be the cost of employing the committee's secretary role which the Requête refers to. And that is an important administrative role for the committee, but it is not a role that delivers on the workstreams in the Guernsey Housing Plan and the priorities as set out in the appendix of this Requête. That role, if it is, indeed, to be a committee secretary role, is obviously necessary in order to set up the structure of a new committee, but it is not something that is going to expediate the work that is going to make a difference to the housing situation. And it is also a role that is more expensive in the round; when you compare full year costs it is also more expensive than what the Assembly has already agreed through the Budget.

It may well be £40,000 for 2025, but that is just for half a year so if we look at 2026 onwards, it is actually £80,000. And in the Requête, the committee's secretary role was £90,000. It is potential that it could be £90,000 per year. And that is in addition, obviously, to the other pay costs which include the President's uplift and the non-States' members' pay which, again, is fairly modest when you just look at it at half a year. But of course, that does scale up to full year costs. And it does mean that even though this Requête, if you are prepared to accept that there will be less frontline resource, it does 'save', in inverted commas, £15,000 in 2025. It does mean that it would cost, potentially, £250,000 from 2026 onwards, possibly £260,000. I think it is a bit of a false horizon to present this as a cost-saving measure because it is more expensive and less effective in terms of being able to deliver the work that we are trying to deliver.

The costs of splitting the housing and infrastructure teams. When officers looked at the Requête, it seemed very much, and when the committees did as well, it seemed very much as though what was being suggested was a splitting of the housing and infrastructure teams. The housing and infrastructure team into two separate teams, one to look at housing and one to look at infrastructure.

And if that is the case, then that is a very expensive move indeed. And our business partner and the senior leadership team who, again, were allegedly consulted, have advised that those costs would likely to be in the region of £250,000 per annum going forward. So that is a very costly exercise.

At the moment, we do get enormous efficiency from combining housing and infrastructure within the one team and it does give us the flexibility to be able to focus that resource. And I will stress again that *all* of the people working in that team are housing *and* infrastructure officers.

2630 And we have seen, earlier in this States' Meeting, we had a great, a lot of love for the GDA policy letter, for example, and that was from the housing and infrastructure team. And obviously, there is a good overlap within that work, on housing as well so it made perfect sense to do that. That is why build to rent has been an integral part of those plans and etc. So obviously, housing is a very important part of that. It makes absolute sense. And it just means that, administratively, we can behave in a much more efficient manner by dealing with that under one team.

2635 If, as was very much suggested by the Requête, housing was to be taken out of that team – and Deputy Kazantseva-Miller suggested that would be an easy exercise; nobody involved in that thinks that is the case – we think it would be very costly and have significant ramifications in terms of the reorganisation that would have to happen. If that is not Deputy Kazantseva-Miller's plan, if Deputy
2640 Kazantseva-Miller just wants to keep the housing and infrastructure team as is, then literally, all we are doing is adding on the expense and additional complexity and additional bureaucracy of an extra committee. They will be pulled in even more directions. It just makes no sense either way.

2645 Either we split it and go for the sort of purist, we are going for this one stop shop Committee *for* Housing approach, so that all of the housing functions are under this and we have got it all nicely tucked away and that is going to have a very significant additional impact, or we are not going to do that and it is going to be more expensive anyway, because, of course, there is a cost to creating that committee structure. *And* the team is going to be pulled in even more directions than it currently is. I just do not see how this is adding clarity or helping us to deliver our objectives more efficiently or anything like that.

2650 To summarise the costs as I understand them, we have got ... Oh and yes, just another point actually, I very much agree with Deputy Roffey that if the Committee *for* Housing is going to be established as a Principal Committee, why is it only going to have a single administrative role in the form of a committee secretary? All other Principal Committees have got at least two, some of them more. And that is not counting any policy officers to help with things like all the administration, all
2655 your questions and things that come in, your taking of the minutes; there is usually an executive officer as well as a committee secretary.

I do not understand, if this is going to be a Principal Committee, how that is going to be adequately served by just the one committee secretary role, given the function that the office, if we are expecting this to be and act as a Principal Committee, how that is going to be adequate. I have
2660 not included any additional costs in my workings, but I would not be at all surprised if there were additional costs associated with the setting up of the committee structure as envisaged in this Requête.

2665 My understanding is that, in terms of pay costs, additional to what was envisaged when the Requête was first drawn up, which was before the Budget, the only additional costs on the status quo side of things is the £215,000 that was agreed by the Assembly through the Budget. And that gives us three officers, that very significantly increases our capacity to do the work. However, under the Requête's proposals, my understanding is that we would only have two such policy officers so we would have a reduced capacity to do the work for the first half of 2025 and then from the second half of 2025, there would be an administrative officer, unless Deputy Kazantseva-Miller wants to
2670 correct me on my assumption that we are paying the committee secretary, and that is going to add £40,000 to £45,000 for the second half of 2025. But the full year costs will be in the region of £80,000 to £90,000.

2675 And then we have got the cost of the Presidents' and the non-States' members' pay. And that is about £10,000 for the half year, but 2026 onwards is £20,000. And the consequential costs of restructuring the organisation to split the housing and infrastructure teams; the full year cost of that has been estimated by the business partner and the other senior leadership and the other senior officers, as being in the region of £220,000 to £250,000 per year.

2680 Whichever way the cookie crumbles, the Requête is more expensive than the status quo, but crucially, gives us less capacity to do the actual work to deliver on the States' housing objectives. And that is the bit that concerns us. And I would say that if this amendment passes, we have got significant concerns about how that would impact the recruitment process that is currently

underway and I would appreciate some clarity from Deputy Kazantseva-Miller on how she perceives that situation to optimally unfold. Whether she considers that we need to stop that recruitment process and halt the work and delay the work that we were planning to do in January or whether she considers that it would be okay to carry on. That is a very significant concern for us.

I am just checking to see whether there are any other ... I do appreciate that there are an awful lot of numbers in what I have just said. I may well circulate some numbers in written form if that would help people. But I have to say, this amendment has not made it very clear, what its intention is. And if people look at the explanatory note of Amendment 2, we can see that, I think, the key to this is in the tables. There are asterisks under the tables and the first table that is noted which is what has been approved through the Budget. These are the roles that we are currently recruiting to. And that says, 'Three posts for a full year'. And then under the second table which is what this amendment is proposing, it says, 'Two posts for a full year and one post from 1st July 2025'.

If that one post from July 2025 is not the committee secretary role, as I have supposed it must be, if it is a project manager or some other role, I would like to know who is going to make that decision. Is it supposed to be us making that decision so that person is able to start from 1st July, or do we wait until the new Committee for Housing has got its feet under the table and then begin that recruitment process? Either way, this amendment will cause significant delays to the work that we are very keen to get cracking with.

We are really grateful to the Assembly for supporting our request, and very grateful to P&R for taking it on board. I know they take housing very seriously, particularly Deputies Trott and Soulsby, who worked with us on the Housing Priorities & Progress Group. And we were really pleased to be able to capitalise, I suppose, on what I think is the one issue on which we are absolutely all united which is the fact that we need to deliver, to the *maximum* extent our objectives, as effectively and efficiently and as speedily as possible.

And that is what the funding that was delivered through the Budget, unanimously by this Assembly, I believe, is enabling us to do. So I am concerned about the effect of this amendment slowing that down and potentially, also, reducing the capacity.

Now I hear what Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is saying about the Budget constraints, I do not see why, of all the areas that we could be making savings from, why we are taking it out on our number one domestic priority. That makes no sense at all! In a debate, when we are supposed to be focusing on doing everything that we possibly can for housing, why are we choosing to reduce the capacity, the delivery capacity, in the one area that is going to make a difference? (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

I think this amendment is a really foolhardy step. I urge Members not to support it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Mahoney.

Deputy Mahoney: Thank you, sir.

Just briefly. I was not sure whether Deputy de Sausmarez supported it or not, then, until she clarified that at the end. It is crazy. She has done what she always does. She will throw a thousand figures at us. She will start talking quicker and louder. All in a hope just of confusing everybody in all of this.

Four years, nothing done. Nothing at all. And then suddenly the Requête comes along and now it is desperate. We need more money and we need officers. Everything is now a panic because suddenly someone is going to take her toys away and take her power away. So suddenly everything is urgent and everything must be done now. Must be done now. And then this amendment comes along which, really, most of what Deputy de Sausmarez said had nothing to do with this amendment. Really talked more about the Requête and with plenty of tedious repetition in it.

This amendment just tries to save some money. It states some stuff and tries to save some money. And now, suddenly, all we are hearing is, 'That is one less officer. Everything, everything we have now got planned is going to fall apart because we have one less officer involved, one less planner, whatever it is. And now suddenly, everything has just all gone belly up and we cannot do any of this.' This is absolute nonsense. It wasted about 25 minutes of our time to say absolutely

nothing other than, 'I disagree with it'. Really, she could have just said, 'I disagree. Please vote against it'.

I, obviously, will be supporting this amendment. I just hope others can speak briefly.
Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Prow.

Deputy Prow: Thank you, sir. I can be brief, as well.

I listened to what Deputy de Sausmarez was saying. Along the similar lines of Deputy Mahoney, isn't this amendment about the political focus and oversight around a major challenge of this Assembly? I do not think there is any argument, anybody would disagree that this is an absolutely fundamental key priority.

And a large part of the discussion, so far, has been taken up by the implications on civil servants. From the requérants' point of view, they are obliged to look at the Rule 4 implications. I have no difficulty there. But I would just like to remind the Assembly that Home Affairs have restructured Population Management & Immigration and directed reviews of target operating models of the Fire and Rescue Service and the Police, without having to have a debate in this Assembly.

The Population & Immigration Management Review simply asked the Assembly to agree the merger of Population Management & Immigration. And then we got on with it (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) And we got on with it on the basis that it was to make efficiencies and to do things better and to make transformational savings in the long run. We did not come to the Assembly, restructuring the desks in Sir Charles Frossard House or down at the White Rock. Or the target of operating models of the Police and Fire & Rescue, getting into the weeds of what that means. We left that to senior civil servants to work out.

What we did is gave political direction that said, 'We need to do these things more efficiently, more effectively and look at it as at a strategic level'. And this is one of the themes that I hear Deputy Murray telling us all the time is about looking at things strategically and not delving down into the weeds of who sits at what desk and who reports to who. I find, along the lines of Deputy Mahoney, this very unhelpful. Can we not pick this debate up around what is the best way for this Assembly to tackle a massive, *massive* issue for this Island, which is housing?

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Dyke.

Deputy Dyke: Thank you, sir.

Well, I listened very carefully to Deputy de Sausmarez and to be honest, it brought to mind a quote from somewhat a hero of mine, Javier Milei, the new President of Argentina, who recently stated that, 'Government is the problem'.

I think what we do and we have done it on planning and housing. We have too many policies, we have too many policy officers. I started out in the Assembly. It takes a while to find your feet. The first thing I started worrying about was GP-11 which was a policy that we had imposed that had clearly stopped, in particular, private housing from happening. It took about three years and we managed to get rid of that.

Deputy Taylor: Point of order, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of order, Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Rule 17(6)? any relevance?

Deputy Dyke: Well, it is about housing.

The Bailiff: I think that is probably right, Deputy Dyke, that –

Deputy Dyke: Yes, sorry, sir. Well, the point –

2790 **The Bailiff:** It is Friday afternoon. We really want to concentrate on whether to approve this amendment or not.

A Member: Hear, hear.

2795 **Deputy Dyke:** Yes, sir.

I think that, well, just to back up very slightly, we are working in a situation where we passed a £650 million unfunded budget. Not unanimously. Some of us brought amendments to reduce that cash flow. Part of that expenditure was for three new policy officers for E&I which, personally, I think is ridiculous and it is the last thing we should be doing now. That is the background of where I am coming from.

2800 Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, going on to the Amendment 2 in front of us ... As I understand it, the point is that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller's proposal for the housing committee, the amendment is to ensure that it does not add to the costs we have already agreed by transferring officers from E&I to the housing committee that she is proposing. On that narrow point, if I have understood it correctly, then I think the amendment is very sensible in terms ... Just talking to the amendment, not to the whole policy, the amendment must be sensible in that it stops her Requête from adding more to the costs which are already too high.

In that context –

2810 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Point of correction.

Deputy Dyke: – I think we should vote for her Amendment 2.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy de Sausmarez.

2815

Deputy de Sausmarez: The correction is that this actually adds more to the cost than the original status quo, than what has already been approved by the Assembly.

2820 **Deputy Dyke:** I thank Deputy de Sausmarez for the intervention. Clearly, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller will address these issues because that is not what the amendment says. If there is a conflict there, perhaps she can address that when she sums up.

Thank you.

Deputy Inder: I am going to move Rule 26(1), sir, with your permission.

2825

The Bailiff: Will those Members who wish to speak in debate on Amendment 2, other than Deputy Kazantseva-Miller who will reply to the debate, please stand in their places. Is it still your wish, Deputy Inder, that I put a motion to the Members?

2830 **Deputy Inder:** Yes.

The Bailiff: Well, the motion is that there be no further general debate on Amendment 2. Those in favour; all those against.

2835 *Members voted Contre.*

The Bailiff: I think I can safely declare that lost.

Deputy Roffey.

2840 **Deputy Roffey:** Thank you, sir.

Before getting into the guts of the amendment, let me say, I personally felt that Deputy Mahoney's tone was rather unfortunate, because he has basically alleged that this was an attempt by Deputy de Sausmarez to hang on to power. And yet we know that the Requête is only talking about what is going to happen in the next political term.

2845 I know it is not inconceivable that Deputy de Sausmarez could be, if she is a glutton for punishment, E&I President in the next political term. But I think she is passionate about what her department are doing but I do not think in any way it is an attempt to hang on to power, because it is talking about something that happens in the next Assembly.

2850 One of the constant criticisms of this Assembly has been, and the last one and the one before that, is flip flop decision-making. Well, we had four days of debate over the Budget and one of the big decisions we made, we may not have funded it properly, but one of the big decisions we made was to significantly increase the capacity of the policy team at housing and infrastructure in order to develop the policies that would make a difference on the ground. And I think that was long overdue. I think something we have done wrongly in this Assembly is that should not have been in
2855 Year 4, that should have been in Year 1, because it has been such a constraint. And I think the current P&R, now that they have had their feet under the table and got involved in housing issues, have seen that that is really important.

And it is all very well to say, 'Oh, there should not be policy officers'. Well, politicians, I know our job is to draw up policy. The clue is in the title, politician. But frankly, without professional policy
2860 officers to do some of the groundwork ... I do not know whether it is SLAWS, whether it is the emergency budget that has being worked on. The idea that politicians alone could sit round the table without the expertise to feed into that and make a difference is fanciful, frankly.

We made a great decision, three years, probably, too late, a month or so ago, to really increase the capacity at the front end of policy making on housing in order to deliver on the ground. And
2865 this, as I see it, just absolutely ... I mean apart from the fact that they are trying to recruit from the three officers and I do not know what they will do if suddenly it is only going to be two. I think this, as I understand it, is an attempt to change the narrative, that the narrative has been or this is going to be more expensive and more what we have got now. And therefore, by cutting out one of the three posts we just agreed on and by rather slight of hand quoting half years that will be very
2870 different when it turns into full years, the narrative is, oh no, it is not going to be more expensive. But not only will it be more expensive, but more importantly, we will by 33⅓ percent be undoing the decision that we took some weeks ago to increase the capacity of the housing and infrastructure team. And if housing is our absolute number one priority, and it is mine, I think that will be just incredibly perverse and so I cannot possibly support this amendment.

2875

The Bailiff: Deputy Ferbrache.

Deputy Ferbrache: Pot, kettle and black, really, in relation to Deputy Roffey who criticised Deputy Mahoney. And then he said, 'Sleight of hand', in relation to these figures. Well, I am sure,
2880 knowing how diligent Deputy Roffey is, that he would have read the original Requête and he would have seen a preamble, the length of which is rarely seen because the detail was given, and it has got from paragraph (p) downwards, resources and funding.

Now, what Deputy Kazantseva-Miller did over the next six or seven paragraphs, was set out the figures for the half year 2025 and all year 2026. And we see at, (w) Table 1, Additional budget
2885 estimate for Committee for Housing between July and December 25th on top of budget transfers outlined in section (t). I am not going to read section (t). You have got the figures. Six months, £75,000, full year, £150,000; £310,000 in one column, £155,000 in the other. I do not know how that sleight of hand.

This amendment talks about the six months from July of next year. I may be misremembering, I am getting old, I am tired, it is Friday afternoon, Christmas is just around the corner and I would rather be thinking of other matters, really. But in relation to where we are, I have a recollection that E&I wanted six or seven officers at £420,000. I am not going to give way unless it is a point of correction. And with negotiations with P&R came up with three officers at £200-odd thousand, the figure that is given a –

Deputy de Sausmarez: Point of correction.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy Ferbrache: If it is a point of correction, I will give way.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Our core request was, indeed, for three officers and we said if they would like to give us another three, we could make very good use of them as well. But the core request was, indeed, for three.

The Bailiff: Deputy Ferbrache.

Deputy Ferbrache: I really am more confused now. I am not sure how that is a correction, but it does not matter. It is Christmas and I am generous and I have always been a generous person, unless I have got to open my wallet.

But in connection with all of this, and the position that we are in is, as Deputy Mahoney said in his usual exuberant terms, forthright terms, 'Nothing has happened for a long time'. This gives us a chance.

Deputy de Sausmarez, I am sure, in absolute good faith, gave us lots of figures in her 25-minute speech. Some of them I am not aware of, some of them I have heard for the first time. I would have thought, because the actual Requête has been around for a fair bit of time – the amendment has been around, obviously for less time – that there could have been discussions between Deputy de Sausmarez and Deputy Kazantseva-Miller over those particular figures, rather than being alluded to, thrown out on a Friday afternoon.

With no disrespect, no attack on the integrity of anybody, but Deputy Kazantseva-Miller – I have known her for the last four years or so – does her homework. And I would not have seconded this amendment if I had not thought she had done her homework.

She said, in the amendment which I am happy to second, that at worst the costs are neutral. There is a slight saving. The costs are neutral over the six months. We then look at the 12 months for 2026 when we come to that in the Budget proposals of next year which some of us will not be here to consider them and others will be. And that will be a matter for the Budget to be addressed by then. But of course, and I am being facetious, because it is Christmas, we will have the Wind Farm then, and we will have millions and trillions and zillions of pounds coming through, and we will all be able to buy ourselves a house in the South of France on our taxable income. But anyway, perhaps I omit that.

But going back to this particular amendment, the figures are well researched, they are well worked out. They have not been done on the hoof with little notice. There has been no sleight of hand. The matter has been properly ordered and considered.

The Bailiff: Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Thank you, sir. I will pick up on the last point. Whether or not these numbers are on the hoof or they are inaccurate, we are talking about £15,000. Am I missing something? Yes, if everything is correct by Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, we save £15,000. But in the context, £600 million in a year works out about £1,100 a minute. Therefore, this £15,000, we spend that in about

13 minutes. And the size of the problem we are looking at, because, let's be honest, what we want to achieve at the end of the day is to get from £100 per year to £300 per year are being built. It does not matter. That is £200 extra per year we need. And if there were 50m² per house, that is 10,000m² of construction and a very conservative estimate of £3,000 per square metre. That is £30 million that needs to be spent on constructing houses.

Are we really, whether it is accurate or not, we really need to carry on discussing this £15,000, unless I am missing something.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Yes, as I see it, this amendment is making a real attempt beyond a gesture – I know Deputy Helyar mentioned, I like gesture politics, but that is the bingo side of it – to reduce the costs, because one of the prime considerations of the opposition and lead us on Policy & Resources was the potential explosion in cost, especially after a budget that was not fully funded. But we heard good arguments from Deputy Prow and others that housing is the priority. And we know at the end of the day, and many others have said, Deputy Burford, that housing success in achieving more housing is a crucial prosecution of survival and enablement.

I am prepared to not put costs as the only consideration. I know some people on social media land are saying, 'Well, John just wants to spend all the time'. But the thing is, we do have to invest in the future. And I do not particularly want one of the policy officers to lose their job. I respect a lot of what you said and how you do not want to duplicate resources, but useful policy officers were. I know the suggestion was at six and they call me great. I think at times that States' Members should be more directly involved, not just in policy, but sometimes in negotiation and delivery. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) And I think it would just delegated to people we ended up passing recipients of achieving, in some cases, nothing. I do think we have to work hard, and for that reason I will support this amendment because I think if they attempted cost reduction, whilst at the same time, it is much more proactive political Requête.

The Bailiff: Deputy Vermeulen.

Deputy Vermeulen: Thank you, sir.

I am a bit confused, sir. A couple of days ago, this same Assembly, which I think I am sat in today, was saying what a *great* job the GDA had done with just three people. Here is an amendment – (*Interjection*) The Guernsey Development Agency, yes. Here is an amendment which looks to react to where we are. It reacts to the problem. It explains something that needed more clarification. But to be quite honest, some of the comments I have heard and the problems which are allegedly there blocking us making any further progress, some of these arguments would give an aspirin a headache, sir.

It has been quite difficult listening to it and thinking, is this the same Assembly that thought it was so good to have three people? We are setting something up direct. It has got the full support of the Construction Federation and the full backing of the forum. And yet we are trying to find reasons why we should not do something new. We have just got to keep on doing what we have always done.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: I feel like Deputy Vermeulen is getting into the pros and cons of a housing committee, not whether or not the housing committee will cost us £15,000 more or less. Rule 17(6), sorry.

The Bailiff: That is a point of order.

Deputy Taylor: A point of order, sorry.

2995 **The Bailiff:** That is not a point of correction which is what you asked for.

Deputy Taylor: I am pretty good with them normally. Sorry, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Vermeulen, please continue.

3000

Deputy Vermeulen: Thank you, sir. I am keen to make progress and sit down actually.

The problem we seem to have is that we are all policy and no action. Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is a lady of action. The requérants who have put this together, they are people of action. They are responding to something that is going on.

3005 It is homes that we want –

Deputy Matthews: Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Matthews.

3010

Deputy Vermeulen: Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: I think Deputy Vermeulen said earlier in his speech that the GDA, although I think he said GDP, but GDA had produced fine work with just three people. It is my understanding that the GDA has quite a considerable budget. I do not think that all the work that they have done has been done by themselves. I think it would be not quite correct to say it was just three people working by themselves who produced the work that we have seen.

3015

Thank you.

Deputy Vermeulen: Thank you.

3020

Once again, sir, Deputy Matthews is mistaken. They do not have a considerable budget by any means at all. But what they have turned out is a remarkable report for the redevelopment of St Sampson's – remarkable – and the eastern seaboard.

There we go. It is homes that we really want, not barriers to progress, not thousands of policies to stop us doing this and stop us doing that. Not more and more jobs, not more and more building sites, even, which we have been snapping up, costing millions. It is actually homes we need.

3025

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Oliver.

3030

Deputy Oliver: Thank you, sir. I think a lot of us seem to have forgotten that we always talk about this as our money. Well, it is not our money, it is the people out there's money that have their hard-earned taxes that come to us and we are meant to do the best we can. And whenever we talk about saving money, it is almost like we always think of all these negative reasons why we cannot do it.

3035

We have an amendment here that says that if we set up the Requête, then the Requête will not cost money, it will save £15,000. So can we just, please, get on and vote for this (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) and stop wasting time?

The Bailiff: Well, no one else is rising, so I will turn back to the proposer of Amendment 2, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller to reply to the debate.

3040

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Thank you, sir.

I think, as Members would know, I do take my numbers seriously and I do not put numbers without having done a proper consultation and feedback. And this is exactly what has happened which has taken a little bit of time to get with officers to the exact position of what budget was approved for what, pay costs, non-pay costs which is what has been outlined in this Requête.

And I think this Requête, as was correctly pointed, has been in play for a number of time. And it was actually Deputy de Sausmarez, with the previous requête, I asked her what would happen, would a committee be able to make other decisions in the meantime or would they wait for an outcome of the Requête? And her comments back then, I think, it was the requête about the PEH field was, 'Well, usually, if a requête is in play, the committee would wait for the outcomes of the requête before making any concrete commitments and decisions'. And I think, to clarify, yes, this Requête is proposing that we have got two policy officers from January or wherever possible so we would be going down from that immediate January effect of what was agreed.

And I think I have got to talk about the housing and infrastructure team because, again, Deputy de Sausmarez made it sound like it would be completely the end of the world if part of that team will suddenly start reporting to a different political structure. That housing and infrastructure team was created by, effectively, just reallocating the officers that were previously under ESS to E&I. And somehow, that separation did not cost £250,000, it was just a notional separation. It is the same people basically doing the job.

We know that the Civil Service works in a matrix structure. We know that people in all sorts of committees, for example, in Economic Development, we have got people working on trade deals. A lot of that part is part of the external relations work. We have got all sorts of examples where you have got this cross matrix structure. You have got the most senior director in ESS has taken oversight of the housing and maintenance team. That will continue. That kind of structure will continue because that is how the Civil Service works. We are not then trying to separate and create completely different organisations with completely different new CROs etc.

I think this scaremongering that somehow dividing by putting different political structure on top of housing will suddenly create this quarter of a million cost is complete and utter ... I am not going to say the word. I think what is key is that we are looking for the 2025 Budget, right. This is what we debated in our Budget. This is what is at play. We do not know what the budget for 2026 will be. And this is the purpose of a new committee coming in to have a fresh look and to understand how do we want to run this unit? What kind of resources do we need? So we take it from there. None of us could actually say what 2026 would look like. I am sorry. I am not giving way to Deputy de Sausmarez.

In terms of the question about the committee secretary, yes, there would be some support that this committee will require, but I am looking at it from, and also whether additional administrative resource will be required. I am looking at it from the perspective of, we are releasing the burden of, losing administrative burden, from within the various parts of the organisation. That includes the Committee for Environmental & Infrastructure. It includes Committee for Employment & Social Security in particular.

By releasing administrative costs from elsewhere, we are creating that capacity with the organisation to serve another structure. And this will be very much ... And I really appreciate Deputy Prow's interjection, because it will be very much then partly for the senior civil servants to help us create from that, the right structure for organisation.

Just to be clear, there is a provision for an administrative project management support, but we are giving them an envelope to work with. And early on, when I was discussing this Requête with the senior officers in the committees, they were very much of the view to say, listen, we work in a matrix structure, we want to find the best way to service this new organisation effectively, which is effectively putting a new political body on top of it.

I have addressed this completely overexaggerated scaremongering about the splits from infrastructure will be costing £250,000. I wanted to point out that we have had a couple of amendments earlier to the earlier Requête, where we wanted to establish the States' Assembly

3095 Investigation Committees. And no costs, there were never any costs attached to any of these Propositions, right. The cost, it will be serviced from within the organisation.

The whole point of this Requête is that we are going to be doing things differently. We are removing administrative burden from within the organisation and putting it under one. We are creating more capacity elsewhere. We are reducing those inefficiencies and the burden when
3100 officers, just one officer that has to go and update five committees, for example, on a constant basis.

Deputy Prow, I think, really nailed it. And his experience in reorganising business units is exactly spot on. We give a direction and a cost envelope to work with. I think the amendment makes it very clear where those costs will be allocated and the finer details will be worked with the senior officers and the chief executive when they are in play. The CROs for the roles will remain and some of them
3105 will continue working as they still do on infrastructure side of things, on also forward planning etc.

Deputy Dyke summarised that the Government is the problem and, having been more and more in Government, I do tend to agree with him and I think he is completely correct. We have been given a cost envelope within which we have to work. And this amendment is about really showing some financial prudence and to say, listen, we have had the Budget, right, we have had the Budget
3110 debate. We have ended in a very unfavourable position. And I do want to remind Members that, I think it was only Deputy Queripel and Deputy Roffey from the Committees for Employment & Social Security and E&I that approved any revenue-raising measures. No other members from the committees approved either immediate or future revenue-raising measures.

It is all good to say, oh, look, we need resources, but we are not prepared to make, you know, any decisions. I think, Deputies, this is the reason this debate is taken post-budget because we have
3115 got to consider our Budget position. And while we are delivering a small cost-saving on the projectors, I think it is really important, because the narrative has been that this committee will somehow cost £500,000 which is again, we are giving a cost envelope through which the organisation have to work with.

Deputy Ferbrache, absolutely, we are not hiding anything about the Budget 2026. Those decisions will have to be made and this new committee will come in and look at it with fresh eyes and look freshly at what budget will be required for the following year. Deputy Taylor, it is a small saving, but it is a saving nonetheless. But I think it is really important to send the message, this is
3120 the cost envelope we are working on.

I very much agree with Deputy Gollop. I think if we were living in a perfect world, I do not want to lose policy officers in certain areas. I do not want to maybe lose resources in other areas. I want to invest in a lot of things, but we are not in that financial position. And what we are trying to do with this committee is reduced inefficiencies, reduced costs and do things differently (**A Member:**
3125 Hear, hear.) because the way we do them now is simply not enough.

It has been identified as being too little, too late. And one of the reasons also given to me, when you have got your own committee, it is easier to ask for resources and it is easier to fight for your committee through a budget. And having an independent committee will make that process easier.

Deputy Roffey said, 'Well, we finally made a decision, but it was too late'. But that is exactly the problem. Why has it not been done previously? Why are we catching up and that we are suddenly
3135 talking about six new policy officers? Let's throw all this money instead of thinking, how can we do things more efficiently? How can we do things better so they do not cost us, so that the opportunity cost of wasting, the inefficient time-wasting is reduced.

Deputies, please support this amendment. I think this is a non-contentious amendment. It gives us the guardrails, financial guardrails through which we have to work if we are to establish this
3140 committee.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Well, Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 2, proposed by Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, seconded by Deputy Ferbrache which, if successful, will substitute
3145 Proposition 2 with two new Propositions. And I will invite the Greffier to open the voting, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Amendment 2.

3150 *Carried – Pour 21, Contre 10, Ne vote pas 4, Did not vote 4, Absent 1*

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

The Bailiff: In respect of Amendment 2, proposed by Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, seconded by Deputy Ferbrache, there voted in favour 21 Members; 10 Members voted against; 4 Members abstained; 5 Members were not participating in that vote. But I will declare it carried.

3155 The next amendment we are going to deal with is another one from Deputy Kazantseva-Miller. That is Amendment 5. If you are prepared to move that one, please. Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Amendment 5.

At the end of Proposition 1, to insert the following: "subject to deleting "12. planning policy affecting housing in relation to the Island Development Plan;" from the responsibilities listed under the heading "Responsibilities – Policy, Advisory & General" in Appendix 1".

Deputy Kazantseva-Millier: Thank you, sir.

3160 Members, this is another, I think, technical amendment. I do appreciate and thank Deputy Taylor for raising that because that has not been the intention of the Requête that the mandate of the statutory process of the IDP Review, in relation to housing or other matters, is moved. But by adding the point 12 in the appendix, I think it makes it a little bit ambiguous. I think it could be read and misinterpreted and leave us in a confusing position. The amendment is seeking to remove that point

3165 12 through the appendix.

Just for clarity, the intention of the Requête is that this new committee will play a very active role in providing the evidence in developing the delivery plans that will feed into future housing policy developments. While they do not, it was never intended to play any statutory role in this process, there will be an absolute key committee. And this is exactly the gap, I think, as DPA and Deputy

3170 Taylor, maybe other Deputies may have different views, but my experience that we have had a real vacuum of information on which to base our decisions. And what has been interesting, we have always been forced by officers to say, 'Well, that is not in your mandate, that is not in your mandate, that is someone else's mandate'. Or there is another workstream, there is a workstream here and there and there and that is the problem.

3175 We wanted to have a wider body of information to work with. One of the most important ones would have been which sites would be delivering how many houses and when. And that information

is still completely absent. It should have been the first workstream established under any housing group, to look what sites do we have available? What planning applications have we got outstanding? Why are things not coming through? It is just to show that ... This again is a technical amendment. Hopefully, very not contentious. And I do thank Deputy Taylor for bringing that for clarity to clarify that it is taken out.

Thank you.

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

Deputy Mahoney: Yes.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.
Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: I suppose, just to put on record my thanks to Deputy Kazantseva-Miller for listening. Occasionally, I do say something with a bit of sense.

Yes, I cannot speak on behalf of the DPA, because we obviously have not discussed this. I will be supporting it. And in the interests of making the Requête more palatable, I would hope others will as well.

But I do have to put some distance between some of the comments about how I do not think ... I hope Deputy Kazantseva-Miller was not saying that as part of the IDP Review, we should have been considering which sites were ready for developing housing straight away. I think that is separate from planning policy. But it is too late in the day for any discussions like that.

But thank you for bringing the amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Oliver.

Deputy Oliver: Rule 26(1), please.

The Bailiff: Can I invite those Members who wish to speak in debate on Amendment 5 to stand in their places. Deputy Oliver, is it still your wish that I put a motion to the Members? Well, Members, the motion from Deputy Oliver, pursuant to Rule 26 paragraph 1, is that there be no further debate other than hearing from the proposer. Those in favour; those against.

Some Members voted Pour; others voted Contre.

The Bailiff: I think we might need to ask you to vote formally on that. That was close. I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on the procedural motion, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Rule 26(1).

Carried – Pour 18, Contre 16, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 4, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Aldwell, Sue	Brouard, Al	St Pier, Gavin	Le Tocq, Jonathan	Haskins, Sam
Blin, Chris	Burford, Yvonne		Meerveld, Carl	
Bury, Tina	Cameron, Andy		Roberts, Steve	
De Lisle, David	De Sausmarez, Lindsay		Snowdon, Alexander	
Dyke, John	Dudley-Owen, Andrea			
Ferbrache, Peter	Fairclough, Simon			
Helyar, Mark	Falla, Steve			
Inder, Neil	Gabriel, Adrian			
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha	Gollop, John			

Mahoney, David	Le Tissier, Chris
McKenna, Liam	Leadbeater, Marc
Moakes, Nick	Matthews, Aidan
Murray, Bob	Queripel, Lester
Oliver, Victoria	Roffey, Peter
Parkinson, Charles	Soulsby, Heidi
Prow, Robert	Taylor, Andrew
Trott, Lyndon	
Vermeulen, Simon	

3220 **The Bailiff:** The voting on the recorded vote was that there voted in favour 18 Members; 16 Members voted against; 1 Member abstained; 5 Members did not participate. I will now declare it carried which means that I will simply turn back to Deputy Kazantseva-Miller to reply to the debate if she wishes to do so. *(Interjection)* Well, Deputy Taylor spoke.

3225 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Thank you, sir. There is nothing to add.
Thank you.

3230 **The Bailiff:** In that case, Members of the States, we will move, without further ado, to the vote on Amendment 5, proposed by Deputy Kazantseva-Miller and seconded by Deputy Mahoney. And I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 5, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Amendment 5.

3235 *Carried – Pour 32, Contre 3, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 4, Absent 1*

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

The Bailiff: In respect of Amendment 5, proposed by Deputy Kazantseva-Miller and seconded by Deputy Mahoney, there voted in favour 32 Members; 3 Members voted against; no Member abstained; 5 Members not participating. And therefore, I will declare Amendment 5 duly carried.

The next amendment is Amendment 3. If Deputy St Pier wishes to move Amendment 3.

Amendment 3.

To insert the following additional propositions immediately after Proposition 1 and to renumber other propositions accordingly:

“AND, in the event that Proposition 1 is approved:-

2A. To agree that responsibility for the operation and management of St. Julian’s House shall be transferred from the mandate of the Committee for Health & Social Care to that of the Committee for Housing at a time to be mutually agreed between the two committees.

OR, in the event that Proposition 1 is not approved:-

2B. To agree that responsibility for the operation and management of St. Julian’s House shall be transferred from the mandate of the Committee for Health & Social Care to that of the Committee for Employment & Social Security at a time to be mutually agreed between the two committees.”.

Deputy St Pier: Sir, as Deputy Ferbrache said, it is Friday afternoon. It has been a long week, so I shall be brief. This is, being all candour, an opportunistic amendment. It definitely goes, I would suggest, sir, pending your ruling otherwise, Rule 26(4) beyond the Propositions. (**The Bailiff:** Rule 24(6), yes.) It is seeking to deal with the matter quickly and expeditiously without needing to refer into great pieces of work to review where a matter should sit.

And very briefly, as is explained in the explanatory note, St Julian’s House was built in 1832 and it has really continued in its role pretty well unaltered since then. It currently does sit, and I think it has since the early 2000s, at least, possibly before, quite likely before actually, under the operational management of what is now the Committee for Health & Social Care and operational management is with the mental health services team.

And whilst many of the residents of St Julian’s House do require mental health services, they are effectively living in the community and they should, therefore, be treated like any other members of the of the community who require mental health services by outreach. This is, to all intents and purposes, emergency housing.

As Deputy Roffey has pointed out to me in the consultation with the Committee for Employment & Social Security, the emergency housing currently sits with the Committee for Environment & Infrastructure. However, the operational management of course of States’ properties and tenancies does sit with Employment & Social Security. They have the experience of handling tenancies and, indeed, they are engaged with seeking to place those who are in the residence of St Julian’s House who need to be moved on to alternative accommodation.

It makes no sense whatsoever that it is within the Committee for Health & Social Care’s responsibility. A majority of the Committee for Health & Social Care, the President accepted, are supportive of this amendment. I understand that the requérants, or at least the lead requérant is, I think, indifferent at least or ambivalent, has no objection.

I believe the Committee for Employment & Social Security have considered it and are not supportive which I am disappointed that they do not wish to support it, because I really do not think that we should be wasting more time in resolving this. It is something that can be dispensed with today. And I wish, in particular, to draw Members’ attention to the alternative wording or to the wording at the end of each of the alternatives which is that the matter should effectively be transferred ‘at a time to be mutually agreed between the two committees’.

This is not something that will happen on the passage of this Proposition. There will be a need for a transition. But let’s make the policy decision here and now and let the committees sort out the minutiae of how to make it happen. We do not need a lot of further time and work in making this decision. I hope that Members will not choose to throw it out under Rule 26(4). If they wish to move straight to a vote under 26(1), that is absolutely fine and dandy. But I hope that they will support

this Proposition. And I am grateful to the Vice-President of Health & Social Care for agreeing to second this amendment.

3280

The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater, do you formally second this amendment?

Deputy Leadbeater: Yes, sir.

3285

Deputy ???: It is 24(6), sir, not 26(4).

The Bailiff: It is 24(6) rather than 26(4). But what is wrong with changing the numbers around?

The motion is that there should be no debate on this amendment and no vote taken thereon. I am satisfied, as Deputy St Pier has indicated in his opening on it, that it does go further because it is inserting additional Propositions.

3290

I will simply put that motion to you. Those in favour; those against.

Members voted Contre.

3295

The Bailiff: I will declare that lost.
Deputy Mahoney.

Deputy Mahoney: Thank you, sir.

Just a couple of questions. It is seconded by the VP of HSC. I just wondered whether Health & Social Care had considered it as a committee and whether they were supportive. We have heard that ESS are not supportive.

3300

I give way to Deputy Brouard because it looks like he wants to stand up.

Deputy Brouard: Thank you.

3305

The committee, by a majority, is supportive of moving St Julian's. I have a slightly different position. We are not the UK. In the UK, you have 24 ministries, 20 non-ministries, 422 agencies, so you end up with 460 departments. You will have a department for left-handed screwdrivers! We do not have that luxury here. And whichever creature looks after St Julian's, there will always be some pros and cons with whoever department it goes with. I think it sits best with Health & Social Care. My colleagues on the board, very valiantly, have a different opinion.

3310

As long as someone looks after it, because it is some of the most vulnerable people we look after there and ensure that we have a house that is suitable and not in the state of affairs that it is at the moment. There is a lot of work that needs to be done to that place *or* to be moved to another location. I would prefer it stays with ourselves, but even some of our staff, to be fair, are also very supportive of it moving to a different department.

3315

Thank you.

Deputy Mahoney: Thank you, Deputy Brouard, for clarifying that for the Assembly.

And secondly, is presumably, this comes with a cost which it is silent on? Deputy St Pier's shaking his head. So there is no cost involved whatsoever with St Julian's House which I am sure will come as a surprise to most people in the Assembly – that it does not cost us anything to run.

3320

Yes, the cost will move to the new committee, whether that be housing or ESS, depending on ... But there is no note of what that is. It would be useful, if Deputy St Pier, when he sums up, knows what that cost is, if he could let the Assembly know.

3325

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Roffey.

Deputy Roffey: Thank you, sir.

3330 I thought I had better get in early before somebody tries to guillotine this, because under 2B, it is going to be coming to ESS.

And earlier on, Deputy Mahoney was accusing Deputy de Sausmarez of trying to hang on to her empire. Well, this is not me saying no, we do not want this. Really. We really do not. What we are saying is that the decision-making has to be done properly.

3335 I really care about St Julian's. I have had a relationship for a very long time with it. No, I have not actually been living there (*Laughter*) and I tried to get it moved from the old Parochial Assistance Board who used to look after it, to a more appropriate authority and lost the day at the time. So I really do care about it. And I have no inherent objection to the idea of it coming to ESS. Although, I think it does need a radical change. It probably does need an entirely new site. I do not know. I do not think you can make ... Although, it is got some endearing features and the greenhouse behind it and all that sort of stuff, I do not think in the modern world it is a suitable facility any more. But if it stays where it is, it needs a major redevelopment which would probably mean somewhere else would need to be found temporarily, at least, while it was being developed which is what leads me to think we should have a new St Julian's.

3345 But although it caters for a particular type of people with homelessness, it is part of the emergency housing and homelessness piece of work and it needs to be viewed in that context. And my understanding, what we are told on ESS by E&I, is that is one of the first pieces of work to be done. Frankly, even if we set up a new housing committee, it is going to be done in the first six months of next year anyway. That is, absolutely, it has reached the top of the pile to do something on emergency housing and homelessness.

3350 And therefore, it just seems logical to take the policy decision of St Julian's in the context of that work that is going to be done. Because what if that work actually comes out and says, ESS is not the best place for St Julian's to fit. Or that we need a completely tangential approach that does not involve something quite like St Julian's which has morphed over.

3355 I can remember when it was principally accommodation for people who, that part of it was a dry house, but part of it was very much a wet house. And the rule was, if you could crawl across the doorway, you were welcome. And it actually saved some people sleeping rough who were unable to do so. Now this is a different stance and a different approach, although, that clientele is still out there that needs to be approached.

3360 All I am saying is, this is almost, it has got nothing to do with this Requête. It has been bolted on. It is either bolted on to the new committee or it is bolted onto ... I understand Deputy St Pier's impatience, but I think his impatience is leading to poor decision-making here. I think it does need to be done in the context of the whole homelessness bit which is going to be done over the next few months.

3365 We assess, absolutely. Walk out of here and kick the cat. If we were told that we have got to take it on. No, not at all. Well, we will probably relish it, but we just do not think it is the right way to go about things. And I do not think it is certain that there will not be cost implications, because I think the terms and conditions of the HSC staff that are employed are different to the ones that would apply. I do not know, it could be cheaper, it could be more expensive, I do not know. I do not think we can be sure what the relative costs would be. But this just does seem a very strange process for making a decision.

The Bailiff: Deputy Soulsby.

3375 **Deputy Soulsby:** Thank you, sir.

I must admit, I had a wry smile when I saw this amendment because it reminded me of back in last term. HSC thought that it should move to ESS and I think we actually asked P&R about that and under Deputy St Pier at the time, but nothing happened. So it was interesting to see this amendment.

3380 I hear Deputy Roffey. I have been to St Julian's House. Obviously, it was under HSC and I really do believe that work needs to be done in considering is it the right place and, possibly, is it operating

in the way that we need it to at this moment in time. And there was always close working with ESS at the time, as well. ESS are the ones responsible for emergency housing and do that work now anyway. It made more sense that it did sit under ESS or, now, it will be the Committee *for* Housing.

3385 I have got no problem making the changes now. I think it is such a small element that it would be something that P&R, under its powers, could do itself anyway. If it is not agreed here, it might be something that the P&R might consider.

Thank you, sir.

3390 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

I will be supporting this amendment. It was one that we discussed at the committee table at HSC. It is something that I think is overdue. The officers who look after St Julian's in HSC, it does not really fit with what they do during their day job. And I think there also have been many changes in the landscape of homelessness over recent years. Whereas St Julian's was, possibly, in its day, considered a convenient way to move rough sleepers out of shop windows and into somewhere where they could be out of sight, I think it is getting used for more and more purposes now. And it is not in good condition. It is not great. It is something that does need work. And in fact, the whole issue of emergency accommodation for people is something that really does need to be grasped much more fully than it has been to date, because it is becoming much more of an issue than it had been in the past.

I think it is the right thing to do to move it to the committee. Well, to the committee that is responsible for operationally managing emergency housing which, at the moment, would be –

3405 **Deputy Roffey:** Point of correction.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Roffey.

3410 **Deputy Roffey:** I may be feeding ammunition to Deputy Kazantseva-Miller (*Laughter*) for her final summing up on the whole Requête, but emergency housing definitively does not sit with the ESS.

Deputy Matthews: For the committee which, I think, Deputy St Pier thought would be best placed to operationally manage emergency housing.

The overall responsibility for where emergency housing sits is entirely unclear, because part of it does sit with Environment & Infrastructure. And this is an example of where I think the States had, perhaps, lost its way a little bit about how to divide up responsibilities.

3420 St Julian's is one where somebody at some point in the past had presumably thought, 'Well, HSC, there is a convenient place to put it, we will put it in HSC and they can manage it alongside with their day jobs'. Along with lots of other bits of housing that have been put in different bits of different committees.

And it would be much more preferable, I think, for it to be managed alongside the type of functions where it would make sense which at the moment would be, to me, I would agree with Deputy St Pier, the Committee *for* Employment & Social Security. If there were to be a Committee *for* Housing, I would hope it would be at the top of their agenda to be looking at improvements that could be made. Because Guernsey is a wealthy society. We should not have homelessness in Guernsey. We should not have the type of situation where people are sleeping rough. And St Julian's does occasionally get full and does occasionally turn people away. And this is not a situation that we should have. We should have much better management of this type of thing and we should be setting the type of policies to ensure that people in Guernsey always have somewhere that they can stay at out of the elements.

I will support this amendment and I hope the rest of this Assembly supports it as well.

Thank you, sir.

3435

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

3440 Yes, just to confirm some of the points that were alluded to in Deputy Roffey's speech. This, absolutely, is the first tranche of the homelessness work that we were hoping was going to start as early as possible in January.

3445 Although I totally understand and appreciate the arguments put forward by the likes of Deputy St Pier and Deputy Matthews, I do have to voice the officers' concerns of the potential risk of going through the whole process of moving something and then retrospectively doing the thinking and realising that there might have been a better solution than having to double handle the whole issue.

3450 I do think, given that this is an issue that is going to be addressed, imminently, I do think that due process should be allowed to take its course. For that reason, I cannot support this amendment, but I absolutely can provide my commitment that this is an issue that is being looked at with considerable seriousness and empathy. And it is an issue, as Deputy Matthews has also made clear, that means a lot to us. It is a really important piece of work.

3455 And of that whole piece of work, this is a really important element. It will be the first element that is addressed, but the concerns that have been voiced, on the operational side of things is that, really, this is the cart before the horse. And we could inadvertently end up taking more time by double handling the issue because we are just not going through the proper process of considering things in a slightly more logical order. For that reason, I cannot support it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Bury.

Deputy Bury: Thank you, sir.

3460 As a Member of ESS, and according to the Rule 4 information, we were consulted, and we were, but the explanatory note was not included at the time. And one of my questions was the reason, I did not really understand the reason for the suggestion and we did not have it during that consultation. Now I have seen the explanatory note, it does not really tell me either. I do not think there is a particularly compelling argument in there. But like, Deputy Roffey, I do not think we are going to kick the cat about it. If it comes to ESS, it comes.

3465 But I think if I agreed with the creation of a housing committee, I would agree that is where it potentially should sit, but I do not. And I think that St Julian's is one of those classic cross-governmental things. Most residents in St Julian's will have contact with some element of Government, whether that be within HSC or maybe Social Services or key workers, adults or children. 3470 It might be Home Affairs, Probation. It might be ESS with Benefits and Employment etc. As Deputy Brouard said, I think wherever you put it, some parts of it will fit and some parts of it will not. While I will not support it, I am not yet going to lose any sleep about it if it comes to ESS.

3475 But I think I would just mention something that Deputy Matthews mentioned around the state and the operating of St Julian's right now. I think it is probably widely recognised within HSC and Deputy Brouard mentioned it, that it is not running and operating, probably, as it should be. And so it feels like a little bit of a hospital pass, potentially. And the budget has been mentioned; I think the indication was that it will move with the responsibility for it. But perhaps it needs more. And perhaps all of that really needs bottoming out before it starts getting shifted around.

3480 I would be more than happy to take Deputy de Sausmarez's commitment that this is going to be addressed by the committee where it sits and that we will move it as appropriate, if necessary, once that work has been done.

The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater.

3485 **Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, sir.

Deputy de Sausmarez need not worry about double handling. If she looks at the amendment and it specifically says, 'At a time to be mutually agreed by the two committees to ensure that it is at the right time for those two committees and proper planning has happened'. It is not just something that is going to happen instantly. It is written into the amendment. I do not think there will be any double handling. And if this amendment is approved today, then the committee will be mindful of that when they are examining their homelessness work in January. I do not think that should put Members off supporting it.

I was surprised when I joined HSC, that this was under the mandate of the committee, I really was. We visited the place and I had look around and it is a mess, it really is. It needs a hell of a lot of money spending on it. It needs work doing to it. We do not possess offices in HSC to be able to even survey it or we have not got any inspectors to go and have a look at the facility or anything like that. We do not possess anybody with any sort of construction, maintenance or whatever it is, background whatsoever. We do have the piton which is failing us considerably, by the way, but that is another matter.

The stigma about the residents of St Julian's being alcoholics and druggies etc.. I really wish we could move away from that, because they are really not all like that whatsoever. I met a young guy, probably about 18 months ago, in my local pub. He was at The Meat Draw. We ended up chatting. Lovely young guy. He has had some challenges in his life. Does not drink, does not take drugs. I found out that he stays at St Julian's. That is where he lived, because he did not have anywhere else to live. He was a real lovely, hardworking young lad. And I do not think people like that should be categorised and stigmatised in the way that people do when they talk about this facility, because it is it is completely not fair.

It does not sit with HSC, though. It clearly does not sit with HSC. It is emergency housing. I know emergency housing sits somewhere in E&I for some strange reason, I have got no idea why. I think this is the whole reason why we are having this debate about the housing committee (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) because everything should be in the same place, not fragmented all over the place. And this is an actual prime example of why we need this committee.

We have got we found out now that Deputy Matthews, who sits on E&I, thought that emergency housing was ESS. It is actually with E&I. Why it is with E&I, I do not know. I am not being disrespectful, (**Deputy Matthews:** Point of correction.) Deputy Matthews.

The Bailiff: Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: It is the operational management of housing that is not entirely clear where it is best placed for it to sit.

Deputy Leadbeater: I take that point of correction, sir.

But it just does not sit with HSC. It sits with the new Committee *for* Housing or it sits where housing sits. If we do not have a new Committee *for* Housing and housing is going to stay with the ESS, then it sits there. It does not sit with HSC. We probably would be in a better place now if key worker housing sat with HSC. But again, that is another matter. Thumbs up from Deputy Brouard, I can see.

This is a no brainer as far as I am concerned. This is not going to cause any great deal of officer time being spent or lots of money being spent. All this is doing is putting housing with housing, where it should be. I would encourage Members to support the amendment.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: I am jumping up.

Little reminiscence. Deputy Matthews reminded me that I spent three Christmases running Christmas Day going round to St Julian's with Deputy Matthews' father and the late Deputy Paul,

who were running the St Julian's Friends of St Julian's. And that was a charity that raised money. I was giving out cigarettes to the residents. You would not be allowed to do that now. But that was in a different era, perhaps. But St Julian's had plates and all kinds of things, but it is very much a creature of its era.

It is interesting, the amendment talks about it being founded in 1832 as a dry house and all the rest of it. And we need to move on. I think the new homelessness charity has made an impact, but it is not an operational charity. It is an awareness raising organisation. I think Deputy Leadbeater spoke well about the need to destigmatise. But one of the good reasons, not just for thinking about a housing committee, but moving it as soon as possible, is moving it in itself can bring about a cultural change, innovation, a change of thinking, a change of approach. And there is no doubt that there are anomalies with it about the types of residents, whether it is for homeless people or people with other social issues or being rehabilitated in one way. It is too much of an institution. It is not the way for Action for Children and other organisations to grow.

We sadly, are seeing the closure this Christmas of the long-standing house at the top of Brock Road Grange which has done wonders. We really do need to get ... Maybe Deputies Roffey and de Sausmarez are right; there are other ways of doing this, working in partnership with the third sector etc. But I would also add that if you listen to the subtext of some of their speeches, you hear words like 'process', 'operations' and 'officer concerns'.

Alright, I will give way to Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: I thank Deputy Gollop for giving way.

And it is just he raised a really interesting point, because he did suggest that when he was providing some examples of other ways that this could potentially be done, he mentioned the third sector. And as with so many cases where, especially around homelessness, actually the third sector is in the best position to provide that wraparound support. I think that is a really interesting suggestion.

And it was really just to respond to Deputy Leadbeater who helpfully pointed out that the clause in this amendment, that this could happen when it was mutually agreed between the two committees. But what if it is not going to either one of those committees? What if that work says that it is not going. And then if it can happen anyway, what is the point of this amendment? Why bind ourselves through this?

Deputy Gollop: Well, I thank Deputy de Sausmarez and I agree with the idea that it could and maybe should be a third sector partnership. And we have to listen to officer advice, but balance those concerns with the willingness to change and do action.

And the thing is, it seems to me that if it goes to housing or a new committee with a new people, or to ESS which I have great respect for, I was part of the team there for a decade ... one focuses on ESS for a minute which has a broad mandate. ESS already have successfully worked with the third sector in all kinds of areas, whether it be supporting Grow or Action for Children or other organisations that are involved in training. And it could well be that we should support Deputy St Pier's amendment and then the Committee that it gets allocated to, in the fullness of time, would then look at it holistically and whether the best vehicle would be with a charity or another third sector organisation.

But I say, give Deputy St Pier the chance to get this change at least working now.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: Sir, I think, obviously this amendment is fairly sensible for all of the reasons set out by Deputy Leadbeater and Deputy Gavin St Pier. This is what is in front of us, so this is what I will support. But I would have done something different. I would have directed Policy & Resources to sell the whole building off completely; 1832 buildings, 180 years later. We are going to spend, probably, via Health, a lot of money refurbishing and keep refurbishing. It just does not work at all.

3590 Buildings like that are past their sell by date. We should be flogging them off. Prime site in the middle of town. Just get rid of it. Get it properly developed.

It is my fault, I did not put the amendment in to do that. But there is an opportunity to make it better than it is now. But it does not get me to the place where I think it really should be.

Thank you.

3595

The Bailiff: Deputy Murray.

Deputy Murray: Thank you, sir.

3600 I am just trying to get up to speed here, if I am perfectly honest. I think, probably, in his introduction, Deputy St Pier said that it was somewhat opportunistic. And I do not necessarily have a problem with people doing that. But I think as this is beginning to unfold, I think we are beginning to realise it is not maybe as straightforward.

3605 I have to confess, I do not know a great deal about St Julian's. And I think, probably, as Deputy Leadbeater mentioned, I have probably had some preconceptions about what actually happens and the sort of people that occupy it which are probably quite wrong as it happens. But, obviously, it seems to have been, and I hesitate to use the word, a bit of a dumping ground for people that we do not know quite where else to put. *Or* alternatively, it is the only place that has got any type of a bed or accommodation at all.

3610 I am more inclined to Deputy Inder's position, because not only are we trying to transfer a responsibility and I understand the rationale for that. If housing is housing, then everything is in the one place. But then there are the ramifications about the estate. And with the responsibility for SPU, I begin to see how this could start to get quite expensive. I also think that the third sector is, indeed, probably going to be in a better place. I feel they are closer to the actual problem that we are trying to solve. But the logistics of how we get to that situation, obviously, there are a few steps to take.

3615 I am not, in principle, against this moving from HSC, but I think at the moment, I am not entirely sure that the route that is being taken is actually the route that is going to be the best for it. I am still trying to make my mind up about whether or not this is actually the right way to go, or whether, in fact, I will abstain from this or even vote against it, because it is a little bit short notice, with a whole variety ... And being perfectly honest, I am not in HSC to that extent so I do not know the challenges that it has made for HSC. But I do understand that maybe there is a bit of disagreement, even within the committee, about the best thing to do with it.

3620 I am quite sure that, obviously, some of the people that are going to St Julian's may need some sort of assistance, perhaps from a Health perspective. I also can see the situation where people who are perhaps destitute or whatever, and it would sit maybe more closely with the ESS. And you have got a mixture of all of those and then on top of that, we have got to do something about the premises that we are putting them in because, clearly, that is not acceptable premises as described by Deputy Leadbeater.

3630 I was not aware of the premises situation. Either it has fallen through the SPU net or it is because it has been sitting with somebody else at this point in time. There are a number of agencies here that need to be involved in making the decision, the right decision. It does seem that we are just moving the deckchairs around a little bit here and hoping that that will get to the right solution.

3635 It may very well be that this is just the first step. And if this is better than what we have currently got, then I can accept that. But I think we need to be quite clear that, obviously, there are other things beyond just this first step that need to be taken into account. And I think maybe to some extent, Deputy Inder's suggestion that P&R, perhaps, should have had some involvement in the first place, either by consultation or at least to be alerted, so that we could see whether there was anything that we could do to assist the process, so that we could do things in the right order.

3640 I think, on balance, my leaning is towards this becoming a third sector responsibility and us doing what we can in terms of the premises to make sure that it is fit for purpose, because I suspect because it sits between so many different committees at the moment, it is not necessarily going to be the best solution for the people who are required to use that, just by saying it is in housing,

because suddenly housing is going to have to take on a responsibility for people with difficulties and challenges. And I am not entirely sure if that is necessarily where it is going to end up. It makes sense to do that ... Sorry, I will finish in a moment.

I am not sure if that is entirely how we are perceiving what housing will be. Or I guess I had not thought through some of those ramifications for housing, because it is a housing issue. But it is more a social issue as much as it is a housing issue at this point. It is a little bit difficult to place it directly in one place and say, problem solved. Because I suspect it will not be problem solved.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Ferbrache.

Deputy Ferbrache: Sir, I was going to vote for this amendment, but having heard representatives of ESS and Deputy Murray, I do not think I can at the moment. Because if we were to, as I hope we very much, whenever we are going to do it, pass the Requête, then we will have a housing committee. But we may not pass the Requête. And this decision is being made now and I appreciate it is in the alternative and it says what it is.

What ESS is saying is, 'respectfully, we do not want it'. And I do not mean that in a discursive way at the moment. And I do not mean that in any pejorative, critical way at all. I think in relation to this, we should wait and see, because there is no harm ... We could always come back to it in due course. Nobody is saying that the housing committee should be set up before July of next year anyway. And we could make that decision to consider basis in due course, whether it is us or the next Assembly. Nothing is going to happen in practical terms over that six or seven months. And it may be that there can be discussions over whether it should, in due course, after proper... and I am not saying there has not been some consultation, but after more detailed consultation, come across.

For the reasons that I think have been well expressed by Deputy Roffey and Deputy Murray, but no disrespect to Deputy St Pier and the other members of the health committee who were otherwise going to support it, I am not going to support it at this stage.

The Bailiff: I will turn to the lead requérant, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, in respect of Amendment 3, please.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Thank you, sir.

I think Deputy Leadbeater was spot on to say this is probably a perfect example of those pockets of issues which are left neglected because they are spread among different committees. And I do want to remind Members that the idea for the housing committee came out of the homelessness report that was published by the Guernsey Community Foundation last year, because it narrowed down exactly on some of the issues that, because it is so split, that it does not have a home anywhere.

But I do want to maybe, on that point, help Deputy Murray and maybe Deputy Ferbrache as well. I think the point of the committee is that by combining the mandates, but also the operational oversight of, for example, Social Security tenancy team, the key worker accommodation via SPU team, this committee will be best placed to both drive policy, but understand, operationally, what could happen to St Julian or anything else.

The committee will be in the perfect position to decide whether, if that will be a completely third sector, that this is the right direction. They will build, hopefully, on the work that E&I and anyone else do in the meantime. But by combining those responsibilities under one committee, they are best positioned to decide what is next.

I feel actually, it is quite in spirit, well, certainly Proposition 2A. In relation to 2B, I am more indifferent than that. But I think 2A makes complete sense. And I think, on that, I personally would be willing to support this amendment.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: And finally, the proposer of Amendment 3, Deputy St Pier, to reply to the debate.

3695

Deputy St Pier: Thank you to the Members who have spoken in this debate and to the lead requérant for her support. I apologise to Deputy Soulsby. I do not recall the matter being brought to the Policy & Resources Committee on which I served, which probably illustrates exactly where this this issue sits. It is the facility that time, and indeed, the entire government system has pretty much forgotten.

3700

Deputy Inder is absolutely spot on. The solution for St Julian's House – (**A Member:** Point of correction.) (*Laughter*) The solution for St Julian's House, undoubtedly, in the medium- to long-term, is almost certainly to bulldoze it and redevelop it. And given its prime location, to use the value realised to build a better purpose-built facility somewhere else. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

3705

However, that should not stop us making the correction that is now required. It has been said that radical change may be needed. We may need to move this in discussion with the third sector and so on.

3710

I would submit, sir, to the Assembly, that it is far better that that conversation takes place from within the Committee for Housing or the Committee for Employment & Social Security, if they are responsible for housing, the operational side of housing, than it continues to sit with HSC, because HSC just becomes yet another person that needs to be consulted and managed and discussed on the whole thing, if this is going to be progressed.

3715

In relation, I want to respond in particular to Deputy Murray, because it is my mission to try and convert him from either sitting on the fence or a 'no' to a 'yes'. (*Laughter*) I will see whether I can convince him.

3720

Sir, Deputy Murray needs to know that this is not a hospital environment. It is not remotely suitable, therefore, that Health & Social Care should be providing facilities. It is no different to the other facilities which exist elsewhere. For example, extra care housing which sits under the GHA, in which there are tenants who will need support from Health & Social Care, who will go in and treat those individuals in the community. They will provide the services to them in the community. This is no different. It is just wholly inappropriate that it is treated as a hospital environment. Including, I would say, all the same rules about no smoking within the environs of St Julian's House. Well, that is a very real challenge given some of the nature of the challenges which those that live there are faced with. And yet, we still try and pretend that it is a hospital environment which is wholly inappropriate in 2024, going into 2025.

3725

It is already the responsibility of the States Property Unit (SPU) and that is not going to change. Wherever it sits and, indeed, its future, whether it should be developed and sold off or a new facility built, all of that will continue exactly as it is. Nothing in that regard changes.

3730

In relation to, but also it will be a particular challenge for Deputy Ferbrache, for whom this term can be, no person in this Assembly can be more associated with the term, 'Action this Day' (*Laughter*) If ever there was a –

I am not going to give way. If ever there was a –

3735

Deputy Roffey: Point of correction.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Roffey.

3740

Deputy Roffey: Deputy St Pier said that the property would remain under the SPU. I think under 2A, it certainly would, but 2B, ESS has its own property team and does not use SPU.

Is he suggesting that there is a strange arrangement for this one part of the ESS operation, they would use SPU, where they do not use them for anything else that they do?

3745

Deputy St Pier: Well, I was not particularly suggesting that, but I think these are the details that can absolutely be sorted out, as is suggested at a time, to be mutually agreed between the two committees. Which is why, as Deputy Leadbeater said when he spoke, if E&I are working currently

on a home, imminently moving in January on a homelessness ... that they are part of that part of their mandate, there is no reason to incur any double move. If there is a better solution, then that can all happen. But let's, for goodness' sake, not delay it with further reviews at this stage.

And again, I am urging Deputy Ferbrache to be bold, be courageous. I want to pick up on some of his phrases this term (*Laughter*) and back himself. Be bold, back 'Action this Day'. And again, it is an interesting example of our system of government that we are even discussing this at all of course, on the floor of this Assembly.

But ultimately, yes, let's get to the point that Deputy Inder said, but for goodness' sake, let's not wait for perfect. Let's at least move the operational part of this facility, as it now is, from where it definitely should not be, Health & Social Care, to someone that is at least a little bit more appropriate, either the Committee *for* Housing or the Committee *for* Employment & Social Security.

I urge Members to support it, sir.

The Bailiff: Well, Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 3, proposed by Deputy St Pier, seconded by Deputy Leadbeater. And I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on that amendment, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Amendment 3.

Carried – Pour 24, Contre 10, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 4, Absent 1

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

The Bailiff: In respect of Amendment 3, proposed by Deputy St Pier and seconded by Deputy Leadbeater, there voted in favour 24 Members; 10 Members voted against; 1 Member abstained; 5 Members did not participate in the vote, but I will declare it carried. We will worry, in due course, about the numbering. But at the moment, it will be 2A and 2B.

Members of the States, I am going to test whether you want to deal with Amendment 4 and just Amendment 4 before we rise today. The motion is, are you prepared to sit to deal with Amendment 4 and then we will deal with the Schedule and everything else will be deferred to the next Meeting? Those in favour; all those against.

Members voted Contre.

The Bailiff: Okay. We will not do Amendment 4. Then we will save that one for January.

Deputy Oliver: Could I have a recorded vote, sir?

The Bailiff: Yes. Members of the States, as there has been a request for a recorded vote on the motion, I am going to ask the Greffier to open the voting on that to deal with Amendment 4.

There was a recorded vote.

Motion to continue with Amendment 4.

Not carried – Pour 12, Contre 21, Ne vote pas 2, Did not vote 4, Absent 1

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

The Bailiff: On the motion to continue to deal with Amendment 4, there voted in favour 12 Members; 21 Members voted against; 2 Members abstained; 5 Members did not participate. We will not deal with Amendment 4 or, indeed, any of the other matters. But we are required, as you know, to deal with the Schedule. So, Greffier. Yes, sir.

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

13. Schedule for Future States' Business – Proposition carried

Article 13.

Whether, after consideration of the attached Schedule for Future States' Business, which sets out items for consideration at the Ordinary States Meeting on 22nd January 2025, they are of the opinion to approve the Schedule.

The States' Greffier: Article 13, Schedule for Future States' Business, Policy & Resources Committee.

3800 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott, is there anything you wish to say?

Deputy Trott: No, sir. Other than in so moving the Schedule, make the point that January does look, notwithstanding the business we have yet to finish from this session, relatively light.

3805 **The Bailiff:** Well, there have been no amendments received. And therefore, I will invite the Greffier, in a moment, to open the voting on the Schedule, please.

There was a recorded vote.

3810 *Carried – Pour 34, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 5, Absent 1*

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

3815 **The Bailiff:** In respect of the Schedule, there voted in favour 34 Members; no Member voted against; no Member abstained; but there are now 6 Members not participating in that vote as absent. And therefore, I will declare the Schedule duly carried.

Christmas greetings

The Bailiff: So that is it, Members of the States, for another year.

3820 When I looked at my *Times* yesterday, they have a little cartoon. I spend more time looking at the pictures than I ever do the words. It is a cartoon in the Law section called King's Counsel and it is on the 12 days of Christmas. And I thought you might just be amused by some of it, at least, particularly Deputy Prow who has the Justice portfolio.

3825 'On the 12th day of Christmas, my client gave to me, 12 bailiffs bailing' (*Laughter*) I particularly like that so there might be one soon. 'Eleven fines unpaid, 10 cell blocks overflowing, nine judges quitting, eight fees overdue, seven warrants waiting, six clients fleeing, five prisons full! (*Laughter*) Four trials adjourned, three legal aid cuts, two late retainers and a justice system in anarchy.' (*Laughter*)

3830 That does not reflect what happens in this jurisdiction, of course, but I did find it vaguely amusing that somebody would write something like that. This is my opportunity to wish all of you a very Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year.

3835 And I do hope that although work will, I am sure, be going on, and I think the time-honoured phrase is 'at pace' at the moment, that you will all get some opportunity to take some time off over the Christmas break and enjoy seeing friends, family and being with other people. It is important that you recharge your batteries, because as you will have seen from the schedule of States' Meetings in early 2025, they come along quite regularly for a time being.

But please do have a good break. Do enjoy yourselves and I look forward to seeing you in 2025.

Deputy Gollop: Point of order sir.

3840 I also want to take the opportunity, on behalf of myself and all the States' Members, to wish you, sir, a really Happy Christmas and your family. And all of us, but particularly the States' Greffier, the Court team, the Law Officers and other people who work so closely with us. (*Applause*)

The Bailiff: And I will ask the Greffier to say the closing prayer, please.

The Assembly adjourned at 5.28 p.m.