



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

STATES OF DELIBERATION

OF THE

ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

HANSARD

Royal Court House, Guernsey, Friday, 26th January 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	D. J. Mahoney
C. P. A Blin	A. D. S. Matthews
T. L. Bury	L. J. McKenna
A. Cameron	C. P. Meerveld
D. de G. de Lisle	N. Moakes
H. L. de Sausmarez	R. C. Murray
J. F. Dyke	V. S. Oliver
S. P. Fairclough	C. N. K. Parkinson
S. J. Falla	R. G. Prow
A. Gabriel	L. C. Queripel
J. A. B. Gollop	P. J. Roffey
S. P. Haskins	H. J. R. Soulsby
M. A. J. Helyar	G. A. St Pier
N. R. Inder	A. W. Taylor
A. Kazantseva-Miller	L. S. Trott
C. J. Le Tissier	S. P. J. Vermeulen
J. P. Le Tocq	

The Clerk to the States of Deliberation

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

Absent at the Evocation

Deputy A.H. Brouard (*absent de l'Île*);
Deputy Y. Burford; Deputy A. C. Dudley-Owen (*relevée a 9h 50*);
Deputy P. T. R. Ferbrache; Deputy M. Leadbeater (*relevé a 9h 50*);
Alderney Representatives S. Roberts and E. A. J. Snowdon.

Business transacted

Evocation	181
Billet D'État I	181
13. Fixed Penalty Notices – Increases in Fines – Debate continued – Propositions carried.....	181
14. Castle Cornet Bridge Renovation – Propositions carried.....	190
15. Schedule for Future States' Business – Proposition carried.....	213
<i>The Assembly adjourned at 12.07 p.m.</i>	214

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States of Deliberation

The States met at 9.30 a.m.

[THE BAILIFF *in the Chair*]

PRAYERS

The States' Greffier

EVOCAATION

Billet D'État I

COMMITTEE FOR HOME AFFAIRS

13. Fixed Penalty Notices – Increases in Fines – Debate continued – Propositions carried

The States' Greffier: Billet d'État I, Article 13 – the continuation of the debate.

5 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Aldwell.

Deputy Aldwell: Thank you, sir.

I just wanted to explain something. I have already spoken to Deputy Falla but he asked about dog fouling and fixed penalty notices, and I wanted to just say that they have been used.

10 We had an occasion up at Torteval. The fields up at Torteval are not common land; they are all owned by farmers and we had an incident where one gentleman who lived in Town came everyday up to Torteval and he let his three dogs out of the car and allowed them to foul all over the place and then he would go back home without collecting it. And he did this for quite a time, half-past seven in the morning – he was a very regular gentleman – and at half-past six in the evening. It just
15 happened that quite a few other ladies walk their dogs' round in Torteval on the cliff paths and they were extremely annoyed about this and came to the Constable's office and asked what could be done.

It was also very handy that by Mont Herault is a Douzeniers house, so she noted the car number, she watched him come every day. She watched him come in the morning, she watched him come
20 up in the evening. Then we spoke with the Agriculture, Countryside & Land Management and they had a wonderful officer there, a special constable. And so we knew the times that he was doing this and we had spoken to him on several occasions and so she waited for him. And so we have photographic evidence. The Police were involved and they knocked on his door at home and they gave him a fixed penalty of £100 and he was told that if he did this again he would be caught. So it
25 did work. Caught would have been £500, I believe, and we have not seen him in Torteval again, which we are very grateful for.

So I just wanted to say, yes, it has been used and I am sure it has been used elsewhere but, like all fixed penalty notices, they are a deterrent. That is the main thing, they are a deterrent and, if you do not commit the crime, you do not need to pay a fixed penalty fine. That is the message, really.

30 Anyway it was just to answer Deputy Falla.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Vermeulen.

35 **Deputy Vermeulen:** Thank you, sir.

Lovely day today again, and there will not be a 20-minute speech on the parking fees but I have got to commend Deputy Prow for the opening speech he gave on this. He gave a thorough explanation and I do not think it has sunk in, judging by a lot of the debate, the last part of yesterday afternoon.

40 The main fact is that those fees have not been increased for 10 years. Previously, we were saying that we have got money problems, we are a bit short of money and that sort of thing. No business would get away without reviewing their prices for 10 years and inflation increases each year but the fees have not been going up with inflation since 2014 which, for the States, is not the longest amount of time. I have seen things which have not been put up since 2007 but that is another story.

45 We are not sure when the fees are next going to be reviewed after this year. It might be in five years; let's hope it is not in another 10 years; maybe you will look at it again in three years' time. So I think if you look at that period of time and put in inflation, the fee increase is fair and proportionate, and we are looking at other things outside of these fees, as Deputy de Sausmarez explained very well yesterday.

50 So I think it is fair and proportionate and I am going to be supporting it. I would not be supporting it if I did not feel it was fair and proportionate but, yes, I would just like Members to take note of that and to consider supporting it when they come round to voting.

Thank you, sir.

55 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Yes, I too will be supporting it because I like and admire the work Home Affairs generally do, and we have just heard from two of their able Members now. I agree that Deputy Aldwell has a point. We do want to minimise the dirty dogs ... indeed the dog fouling is £100, and actually it probably would be better if you could involve more Douzeniers, Constables, special constables in the implementation of this.

60 But when one looks at the degrading of the affairs in the appendix, not all of the offences in Band C are perhaps of the most serious nature ... foreshore riding, riding a horse, I do not know ... maybe without a helmet is not a good idea. We need to maximise health and safety. But I am curious to see smoking in the Airport – you are allowed to smoke outside the Airport at the moment in certain places – is regarded as a £100 offence. Yes, we do not want to encourage smoking in the Airport.

65 But when you look at the £40 Band A lists, that of course we are voting to upgrade, there are some nasty ones there really. We have already dealt, Deputy Gabriel dealt well with driving on the footpath, which has always concerned Living Streets and many other members of the public, whether it be buses, lorries, cars, speedsters, doing it.

70 Actually, I am surprised to see in the £100 category, before I leave it, the brakes properly maintained. Now I would say that is a rather serious issue that goes beyond this. But you notice in £40 you have got vehicle smoke excessive; that seems lenient. Then here is another one I do not particularly like: one-way prohibited driving. Now that can be very dangerous if somebody is driving down a one-way street and I think it rates more than a minor offence.

75 Indeed, a lot of people listening in would say this is going back 20 years to the days when myself, Deputy Trott and Deputy Le Tocq were first in the Chamber, when we had lots of uprating policy

80 letters like this. And it is a kind of micro-management and arguably should be delegated to a Committee or a ministerial system. (*Interjection*) Yes.

85 But I think it has raised other issues. Wearing both my Living Streets and possibly other hats as well. Because what would be better to come out of this, and I think we have heard already some positive noises, from Deputy de Sausmarez and other Members, perhaps of Environment & Infrastructure, of a more thorough review, cross-party, cross-Committee working, because we have to ask the more fundamental question: What are the aims and objectives of these penalties? I would say one obvious penalty is to improve people's behaviour and make for a more cohesive society. That means we have to, as Deputy Aldwell said, focus on the deterrent, and I am not sure all of these fines are that much of a deterrent, especially as, as Deputy Roffey I think identified, most people will pay the £10 reduction, in real terms we are reducing that reduction because the fines are going up but the reduction is not.

90 But if the main objective is to have a deterrent for environmental or health and safety reasons, or policing reasons, or if the main reason is to not only have a better environment and society but raise more money for our depleted cash reserves, surely we need to consider fines. There was an attempt, of course, at one point to have income-related fines but that did not go anywhere ... but to have fines that are meaningful ... and possibly no reductions, or a different way of doing it because that question as to why they are giving an incentive to pay early is an intriguing one.

95 That brings us to another point – and I am not speaking on behalf of Policy & Resources or anyone else here, just giving a little personal view – that on some of these you could streamline the administration perhaps. I thought, although I am sure the public would hate me for this, I know that the traffic wardens do an outstanding job and they are also very fair people and they will sometimes give marginal cases the benefit of the doubt when there has been an issue but, if we franchised out the parking penalties to an external contractor who would then take a commission of it and also give the wardens a commission, we would possibly save in the long term on our establishment, and I suspect that we would see a higher rate of penalisation. Again, I think there is a tendency in Guernsey to be a bit of a compromise, saying we need disincentives, we need penalties, but we do not want to make life too harsh for the motorist or for society as a whole.

100 But I think, frankly, over the next few years we have got to sit down and rethink our objectives. What are our goals for an environment? What are our goals to both work with the motor industry and improve the condition of vehicles? How can we fulfil a point I have raised – and Deputy Blin and many other Members, Deputy Queripel – about noisy motorbikes and other noisy vehicles in an efficient way that does not require too much court time? And how can we maximise income to our society and streamline government?

105 So I would welcome if Deputy Prow can respond to some of those points. Whilst I support the work that is being done, I might question individual elements of the uprating and also individual elements of the percentage rise.

The Bailiff: I do not see anyone ... Deputy de Lisle.

120 **Deputy de Lisle:** Sir, I just want to make the point that there is an amendment currently being circulated with respect to this area.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Lisle, the requirement is that any amendment needs to be circulated formally. Once it has been submitted formally it will then be circulated, paper copies will be brought in and it can then be dealt with. (**Deputy de Lisle:** Thank you.) Have you submitted it?

125

Deputy de Lisle: Members of the States, is there anyone else who wishes to speak in general debate at this stage?

Deputy Bury.

130 **Deputy Bury:** I do not normally speak for the sake of it, sir, but I did have slight point that I will
use to fill the time. It follows on from some of the points that Deputy Gollop was touching on, just
in terms of 'fair and proportionate'. I think the language used is from the point of view of 'fair and
proportionate in relation to the 'crime' in inverted commas. *(Laughter)* However, fair and
135 proportionate in relation to the individual, perhaps not, and that is what Deputy Gollop touched on
in terms of perhaps income related fines, so it is something they do in Finland with speeding fines –
so the fine is related to the income of the person, which is a proper deterrent. **(A Member:** Oh yes!)
So a deterrent of a £100 fine for someone who has £300 a week to spend, compared to someone
who might have £100,000 a week to spend is very different.

It reminds me of a Christmas party I used to attend every year. I worked for the Island's largest
140 private employer and their Christmas parties were notorious. We all used to descend on Town one
evening and most pubs would be ready for us. But there was one pub in particular that we used to
go to and as many of us as possible would cram in to that pub; and every year the licensee for quite
some time was fined for having too many people in that pub, but it was worth it for the money that
he made on the drinks. It was only when the licence became under threat. Law Enforcement, I think,
145 understood that the fine was not working, it was still happening every year and essentially safety
was at risk each evening, having too many people in that establishment. So they realised they had
to go about it a different way and the licence actually became under threat.

I think it is a similar comparison that if you like speeding in your car in Finland and you know
that the fine is actually going to be really impactful, you will not do it. Their policy strategy was
150 actually really wise. I went to a talk on this as part of the Guernsey Literary Festival and the reason
for it was that they had decided that they wanted to eradicate infant death, and when they looked
at their statistics, the biggest cause of infant death was car accidents. So they then designed their
policy to try to reduce that.

I realise this is really tangential to where we are today, but I think it goes back to the policy letter,
155 that if it is to be a deterrent, for some people if the penalty is a fine and you are well off then it is
not really a crime is it. **(A Member:** Hear, hear.) and I think it was to Deputy Queripel's point
yesterday when he was saying you need to increase it to £1,000; well, perhaps to a single dad on a
low income really struggling and having to have benefits to top up, the level of the fine is far more
of a deterrent.

160 So I think it is worth consideration. I imagine the administration of such things, when you read
what the Finland policy is, is very complicated, but I do think it is worth consideration.

I think I have filled enough time, so thank you, sir.

165 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater, Deputy Dudley-Owen, is it your wish both to be relevéd?

Deputy Dudley-Owen: Yes, please, sir.

Deputy Leadbeater: Yes, please, sir.

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

A Member: Sir, can I ask for a Rule 26(1) please?

175 **The Bailiff:** Can I ask those Members who wish to speak in general debate to stand in their
places. Is it still your wish that I put a motion to Rule 26(1)?

A Member: Yes, please, sir.

180 **The Bailiff:** I am going to put the motion, Members of the States, that debate on these
Propositions, this policy letter, be curtailed at this point, subject to hearing from Deputy Prow in
reply to the debate. Those in favour; those against.

Members voted Pour.

The Bailiff: I will declare that carried. But –

Deputy Queripel: Recorded vote, sir, please.

185

The Bailiff: Can we have a procedural motion on Rule 26(1) please, Greffier?

A Member: Sir, sorry sir.

190

The Bailiff: You may also need to admit some Members.

A Member: Sir, could you just clarify, you said that is 'carried, but' ... just to help with the vote, what was the 'but'?

195

The Bailiff: The 'but' was actually I was going to continue with something else, but now I am not going to because Deputy Queripel has asked for a recorded vote. So the 'but' you can ignore! But the 'but' will come again in a moment! (*Laughter*)

Is everyone who is eligible to vote admitted? (*Interjection*) Yes? Everyone is admitted. In that case, will you please open the voting, Greffier.

200

There was a recorded vote.

Rule 26(1)

Carried – Pour 19, Contre 14, Ne vote pas 3, Did not vote 0, Absent 4

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

205

The Bailiff: So on the procedural motion to curtail debate pursuant to Rule 26(1) proposed by Deputy Haskins, there voted in favour 19 Members, 14 voted against, 3 Members abstained, 4 Members did not participate, and that is why it is declared carried.

210

Now, Members of the States, you heard from Deputy de Lisle that he is submitting an amendment and therefore, if that is to be dealt with, it will need to be submitted, circulated and provided, but it is in your gift at this stage as to whether or not you will either adjourn or, what I am going to put to you is that we suspend debate on these Propositions to enable that amendment

that you have heard about from Deputy de Lisle to be submitted and circulated, deal with the next item, which is the States' Trading & Supervisory Board's Castle Cornet Bridge Renovation, and then return to this so that we can deal with the amendment.

215 I am not inviting any debate on it. I am simply going to put the procedural motion to you that we adjourn the debate on this and defer it until after we have dealt with the next item of business and then we resume it at that point. Those in favour; those against.

Members voted Contre.

The Bailiff: I am going to declare that lost.
Deputy Prow to reply to the debate please.

220

Deputy Inder: So the whole point of the 26 was?

Deputy Prow: Thank you, sir.

225 Once again a long debate on, on this occasion a very short policy letter, but I thank everybody for their contribution. Lots of the points that were made were repeated by other Members so I will perhaps not refer to everybody in turn, so I apologise to those Deputies up front.

230 Sir, I think I will start with Deputy Queripel and his questions. I must say I do thank Deputy Queripel because, as he said in his speech, we did have a long conversation where I was able to explain some of the logic; and, certainly, some of the points that he made to me during that conversation that he has made in debate I actually entirely agree with, and I will go through that.

I start with Deputy Queripel, who had many 'give ways' so it was quite a thorough part of the debate. He basically distilled, very helpfully at the end, into three questions, which were: why £25; what was the criteria; and he spoke about the severity of offences and in his speech he put some meat on the bone.

235 Dealing first with the 'why £25?' and, indeed the criteria, what is absolutely fundamental in this debate to point out is that we are talking about fines. We are not talking about a bill that comes through the post, say from your electricity bill, which I actually believe has gone up way above the inflation rate. This is talking about a fine and a deterrent and, what the Committee for Home Affairs is seeking to rectify is that they have not been increased for 10 years. That means the deterrent
240 effect that you had 10 years ago is simply not maintained. It is quite interesting in this debate, sir, that there seems to be a range of views. A lot of those Deputies who spoke said: '£25? That is nowhere near enough,' and based with an observation around the banding if the £25 is applied to each band that that has a disproportionate effect. But this is not really an RPI issue; this is a fine and a deterrent. If you do not want to pay it, do not commit the offence. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) That
245 is quite simply the view that Home Affairs took when we were looking at this on that particular aspect. So, sir, that is where we ended up.

But there is a fiscal element to this, sir. All Committees of the States have been asked to look at their costs and to see what should be done about this. Now, of course, this is a fine but it does cost money, taxpayers' money, to actually enforce the law. In actual fact, the position is – I will just see
250 my relevant note because I do not want to mislead the Assembly – yes, sir, it costs annually over £230,000 to administer the vast majority, not all, of the enforcement of the fixed penalty. So there is a cost element to this. At danger of repeating myself, this is not a fee, it is not a payment for a service; it is a fine, but it does cost taxpayers' money to administer. And I go back to the point, and Deputy Vermeulen helpfully has made this, this has not increased for 10 years – for 10 years! – so
255 the deterrent effect has to be a lot less.

Now, sir, I think Deputy Queripel has raised an issue and that certainly has been expanded upon during the debate, and I agree with him. I agreed with him when I spoke to him and I agree with him now around where you look at the banding A, B and C and he picked out two very helpful examples. I will refer to one which was the using of a mobile phone while driving. I think that is a
260 good challenge but what I would say to the Assembly is this is not for this debate but certainly

perhaps this debate has teased that out. Deputy de Sausmarez, I think in a 'give way' opportunity, very helpfully outlined the work that Home Affairs Committee and E&I are doing which, to some extent, does touch on that issue. Because there are complexities in it, and Deputy de Sausmarez outlined them well, it is being properly reviewed.

265 Unfortunately, reviews take time and it is yet for both of those Committees to come back and consider the outcome of that review but it will touch upon the question of fixed penalties. And, as Deputy de Sausmarez has outlined, it is not so much the fixed penalty element, it is the actual offences and how you evidence those offences and how you can apply them in a fixed penalty way. So it is not as straightforward and simple as it seems and, as I say, I thank Deputy de Sausmarez for that, and I would assure this Assembly that on these sorts of matters, traffic offences, there is good and close liaison between the two Committees, which I applaud.

270 In regard to the severity of sentences, in the specifics around the ones we have before us – some of which Deputy Queripel has highlighted, other Deputies have highlighted others – that, sir, in my opinion, is not the debate for today. The assurance I am giving the Assembly is that these are matters in hand. Further to that, within the justice framework, which is part of the Government Work Plan, the whole question of sentencing and furthering the justice policy is a workstream, and I think that is a wider piece of work.

275 Deputy Gollop, in an interjection, made the very valid point that these things need to be very properly thought through before they are brought to this Assembly but, sir, that takes resource. It is not specifically resourced in the Government Work Plan so as part of our business as usual we will endeavour to progress that and I thank Deputy Queripel for raising the issue and for giving me an opportunity to say I agree with the points he has made and I agree with the points others have made. And what I am submitting now, sir, is this is the way to address them, which is through the workstream that Home is doing with E&I –

285 **Deputy De Lisle:** Point of clarification, sir.

The Bailiff: Is that a point of correction, Deputy de Lisle?

290 **Deputy de Lisle:** As I understood it, this is an interim measure. Deputy Prow had made that point very clearly and I cannot see him making the point right now. But it is an interim measure and I cannot see that this should be done before consultation, actually, before hiking the rates to the extent that they are being hiked, particularly as they will have a very major impact on –

295 **The Bailiff:** Deputy de Lisle, I am not sure that you are making a point of correction as such. I will comment later –

Deputy de Lisle: It was a point of clarification, sir.

300 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Prow to continue, please.

Deputy Prow: Thank you, sir.

I do not think I used the word 'interim'. What I am actually explaining is answering the very valid questions put by Deputy Queripel and I am seeking to explain what work outside of increasing fixed penalties across all the Bands by £25 ... I am seeking to inform the Assembly following those questions of what we are doing and they may or may not have a bearing when we come to review fixed penalty notices in the future.

310 What the Assembly has clearly been asked to do is to increase across all the bands by £25. I cannot really make that clearer. I am starting to repeat myself; it is a fine, it is not a bill, so that is that particular point. Please view this as the deterrent effect and that is what we are trying to do.

So just one point on the financial aspect. I have said that this does cost taxpayers money to provide this deterrent and there are clearly, in the banding, different, higher deterrents for those

bandings. We are simply asking for the increase across all the bands by £25. But one point I would make is the prevalence of the Band (A) offences, particularly around parking. This is not paid parking; this has got nothing to do with an RPI figure on fixed parking. When you come to Town, for example, when you park in a three-hour parking space, you are required to leave that parking space so that somebody else can use it for the three hours. That assists those people who go to Town and go shopping in Town and it is a deterrent. So it will cost you £25 more if you do not leave that parking space. If you do not want to pay the fine, do not do it. It is quite simple.

I will try to make progress, sir. Deputy Gollop and Deputy Bury –
I give way to Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, Deputy Prow, for giving way.

I was just wondering when you were summing up, you were just talking about the fine and the cost of delivering this public service, could you confirm that if you have the figures that the £230,000 is adequately covered by the fixed penalty notices or is it an actual sunk cost and is there a cost to the public service, or is it that the costs are recovered in full by the cost of the tickets?

Thank you.

Deputy Prow: I thank Deputy Gabriel. Yes, the amount collected in the fines is adequate and, in fact, it is more than the amount that it costs to collect, but that is the point I am making: that it does incur a cost to provide that deterrent. That was the point I was trying to make.

So, sir, in making some progress, I hope my answers to Deputy Queripel have answered most but I just pick up on, I think, a theme that Deputy Gollop and Deputy Bury have made, and I thank Deputy Gollop for his support and his support generally for the work of Home Affairs; it is very much appreciated. He spoke about the aims and objectives and it is about behaviour and it is about providing a deterrent and we think the £25 increase across the bands will do that. He also endorsed the point around further considerations and I hope I have given him answers on that.

He spoke about streamlining administration and that can be done and there are suggestions around improving the IT. That all costs money but they may well indeed make the administration smoother but then that ties back into the work being done with E&I where those sorts of considerations could be put in.

There is the interesting point about fair and proportionate. I will not rehearse or repeat the Committee view on that but, of course, around income-related fines, because that is quite an involved subject – and again, I do not really think that is a matter for debate today but it is an interesting consideration – but that goes right across the whole of the criminal justice system, and that is a matter that is perhaps a subject which, in looking at sentencing policies, one has to say they really are generally a matter for the Court. I think whatever proposals are brought back to this Assembly absolutely have to take that into consideration. I think the main point that I have taken away from the comments of Deputy Gollop and Deputy Bury is the requirement in the bigger pieces of work around consultation.

Deputy Gabriel also very helpfully suggested that the Committee should have the flexibility to do this through Statutory Instrument – it is currently done by Ordinance – and I hear what he is saying. **(The Bailiff:** I don't.) I think perhaps before the end of term the Committee may be inclined to review the effects of the £25 increase and that is perhaps a matter that may be worthy of looking at, but I thank him for making that observation.

I hope I have managed to answer the questions that I was given and I have put some meat on the bone. Twenty-five pounds across all the bands is a deterrent. If you do not want to pay the fines do not commit the offences.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Members of the States, there are two Propositions, they are interlinked and therefore they will be put to you together and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on both Propositions, please.

365

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 34, Contre 2, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 4

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

370

The Bailiff: In respect of both Propositions there voted in favour 34 Members, 2 Members voted against, no Member abstained, 4 Members did not participate in the vote and therefore I will declare both Propositions duly carried.

375

I will simply comment for Deputy de Lisle and possibly anyone else's benefit that the effect of what is now the second Resolution is that there will be a draft Ordinance that returns to the States for approval, so if anyone is unhappy with what has been agreed in terms of the £25 increase then there can be an amendment proposed to the draft Ordinance.

Deputy de Lisle: Thank you for that, sir.

STATES' TRADING SUPERVISORY BOARD

**14. Castle Cornet Bridge Renovation –
Propositions carried**

Article 14.

The States are asked to decide: -

Whether, after consideration of the Policy Letter entitled 'Castle Cornet Bridge Renovation' of the States' Trading Supervisory Board, they are of the opinion:-

1. To note that Option 6, as described in Table 4, Section 4.6 of the Policy Letter, provides the lowest costed risk solution for renovation by way of replacing the existing Castle Cornet Bridge with a like-for-like structure with some design enhancements and to agree that it is the preferred option.

2. To direct the Policy & Resources Committee, subject to its approval of the Full Business Case, to increase the existing capital vote for the replacement of the Castle Cornet Bridge, funded from the Capital Reserve to a maximum of £7 million to fund the like-for-like replacement of that structure with some design enhancements, in accordance with Option 6, including the professional fees and contingencies

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The Bailiff: Next item of business, please.

The States' Greffier: Yes, sir. Article 14, the State's Trading Supervisory Board – Castle Cornet Bridge Renovation.

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The Bailiff: I will invite the President of the States' Trading Supervisory Board, Deputy Roffey, to open the debate, please.

Deputy Roffey: Thank you, sir.

390

I have actually got very little to add to the self-explanatory policy letter but I will just say a few words in opening.

395

The first is: why is this being brought by the STSB? It is not because the replacement of the bridge is in any way crucial to the operation of the harbour; it is not. It is useful to be able to drive vehicles over the castle breakwater but all of the maintenance on the breakwater can easily be done through the work boat and, indeed, if this was an STSB project in the normal sense of trying to maintain the fabric of the harbour for commercial ports reasons, this would probably be quite a long way down our priority list. Not only that, but the funding mechanism would be different. We have been proposing that it would be funded out of port charges, which would really have made the Guernsey Boat Owners Association happy, I am sure. However, it is quite clear that from the broader Guernsey point of view it is inconceivable that we should not have proper access to what is our premier ancient monument and one of our leading tourist attractions and also very important to local people to visit. All sorts of things go on at Castle Cornet.

400

At one stage, I think when I was on ESC quite a few years ago, there was a question of ESC bringing this forward, because it is primarily about maintaining access to Castle Cornet. However, when it was thought about the STSB probably have the in-house project management capability to make us probably the best people to do it on behalf of Guernsey.

405

It is a project that has been rather delayed by COVID; both the financing and the expertise on-Island got put in question mark for a while and therefore it has been delayed so it has become rather more urgent than we would have liked. We would have liked to have done it before the bridge reached the state that it is in at the moment.

410

Members will have seen the rationale for Option (6), which is an approximate like-for-like replacement, although it will be modernised and the design will be updated. Partly it is about that it has been delayed and we want to make sure that we get the quickest possible route to replacement. It is quite clear, having spoken to Planning, that the risk-free route is to have

415 something really similar to what is there now, not least because the planners make absolutely the
valid point that the bridge is not the star in this part of St Peter Port; it is the 13th century castle
that stands behind and, therefore, if they were particularly looking for a statement they want
something in a way understated not to detract from it. So we were quite attracted for a while to the
idea of having an architectural competition and seeing what people could come up with but there
was a real risk both on cost and on timing for doing that.

420 I think the other two points that have been mentioned – some people have said, ‘Why a
minimum 50-year lifespan? Can’t we do much better than that?’ And the answer is yes, of course
we can. A minimum of 50 years is just one of those industry standards that you put forward. The
last bridge has lasted for 70 years. It was not particularly well designed; the reinforcing bars were
too close to the external part of the concrete for such an exposed maritime area. That mistake will
425 not be made again. I expect it to last 100 years and if it is showing signs of failure after 90 years you
can knock on my door and I will be answerable for it! (*Laughter*)

As for the cost, yes, it is expensive. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) It is expensive and we are not going to
be aiming to spend the maximum. We are not asking for a blank cheque of £7 million; that is the
maximum of the envelope. We will not only be striving ourselves to bring it in below that but all
430 you are doing is giving the authority to P&R, if they are satisfied with the business plan and that it
is delivering value for money, to sign it off, and we expect to be rigorously examined by P&R in that
process.

The final thing I would say about costings is we did put a few copies on a confidential basis of
the breakdown of costs in the library. I see from the number that are left that people have not quite
435 got the idea that they were meant to stay there. What I would say, particularly to those people who
have half-inched any, is please do treat them confidentially, not because we are being cloak-and-
dagger, but putting those figures out there will compromise our ability in the procurement exercise
to get the best possible deal for Guernsey.

So, as I say, I am standing here almost by happenstance. It could have been any Committee of
440 the States. This is really something that Guernsey needs to do as a whole and I think it is ... I would
like it to be cheaper. We all know that all building costs are coming in very high at the moment and
we are trying to be realistic in what the envelope might be but we will bring it in as cheaply as
possible. But it is absolutely crucial, I think it is inconceivable that pedestrian access ... we already
have vehicular access; we have had to stop that because of the state of the bridge, and the idea
445 that in two or three years’ time we may have no pedestrian access to Castle Cornet as well is
absolutely unthinkable, so I ask for Members’ support.

The Bailiff: Deputy Vermeulen.

450 **Deputy Vermeulen:** Thank you, sir.

I was astounded, when I read this paper, at the cost. And two days ago, sir, I think we voted for
an extra million pounds to pile ... an engineering piece of work to do the piling and construct a
reinforced concrete slab on top of that for the sixth-form college, and that was a very wise decision.
I believe that the floor area square meterage is 1,111 m² for that school. That is a lot of piles, a lot
455 of concrete, a lot of reinforcement but that is the cost. What astounded me was that the bridge is
not that long; it is not even 100 metres. I know Deputy Roffey was a long distance runner and the
President of States’ Trading is a 1,500 m specialist or whatever but yes, Usain Bolt ran 9.58 seconds
for 100 m with a terminal velocity of 27.8 miles per hour. So I would be a tad behind that (*Laughter*)
but it is not that long – No! No, don’t laugh. It is just a tad. There was not much in it back in the
460 day. (*Laughter*)

So yes, the square area, if it is three metres and 95 m, the square meterage is 285 m² for the
bridge. So that is what we are talking about. So it is four times ... it is a quarter of the size of the
sixth-form college. Now, for £7 million we could build seven bases for sixth-form colleges; that is
by the by, but we do not need £7 million, we only need one, which we are going to have.

465 Deputy Roffey did a really good job of his opening speech and I think what I heard ... I think he explained that it is the lack of cover on the reinforcing bar and the reinforced concrete which has caused the problem. That, in the 1950s, was common; it is known as concrete cancer when corrosion hits the reinforcement bar and it blows off the concrete. That can be repaired; it happens in many motorways across England. They usually replace it with pre-cast roadways; so they are dropped in
470 on the supporting piers, by a crane in segments. That is usually how it is done. This bridge would have been done in situ, castle, all in one. But it does raise serious concerns on the cost.

It also raises this issue; that it is 70 years old but I see some very spritely 70-year-olds when I look around, well-maintained, and any property you have got, whether it is a house, a castle, or whether it is even a car, you regularly need to maintain these things and, if you do not, if you never
475 change the oil in your car, it will not last very long at all – if you never check the oil. And buildings are absolutely no different, so I am not –

Deputy Oliver: Point of correction, sir.

480 **The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Oliver.

Deputy Oliver: A building compared to a bridge which is being hammered by the sea is very different in maintaining.

485 **The Bailiff:** Well. Deputy Vermeulen to continue.

Deputy Vermeulen: Yes, but the castle has done pretty well since it was built in the 13th century, hasn't it? It is still there. So that is, by my mathematics, probably 700 – well, it is, isn't it, 700 years old. We are talking about a bridge which is, you are quite right, close to the salt water.

490 We have put pre-cast concrete blocks on the east arm of the QEII Marina and they are beautifully faced in granite veneer. They were lifted in, like LEGO blocks, interlocking. Superb job. And they are wearing very well too. They are in a marine element. But my point is, if you do not maintain your property on a regular basis, be it a castle, a car or a bridge, you are going to hit problems and I know that the ports used to have a team regularly going around the harbour making repairs. Deputy
495 Roffey almost explained that it is just the bridge; it is not really an operational part of the harbour so we have not put a lot of emphasis on it. That is the point – we have not looked after our property, we have not maintained it on a regular basis; and if we had this concrete blowing off would have been dealt with. The problem would not have been so bad and you certainly would not have been looking at a £7 million cost.

500 Where the bridge is different to a house is a house can be constructed by a domestic builder but a bridge like that is an engineering piece of work. So is the piling at the school, so like-by-like I am not very happy with the comparison and the value for money of the taxpayers' millions that we would be spending on this. It asked for money from general revenue; I think it would have been better to have been regularly maintained year on year all the way through its life but that has not
505 happened. But I do question the value for money on this. It does look extortionately high and the paper you very kindly gave us in the library to look at and not talk about did not go into an awful lot more detail. I would be happy to work with States' Trading on this and look at it and look at other options to save those costs, but they do look extortionately high.

I am definitely not going to advocate a 'do nothing' approach, sir, definitely not. That would be
510 ludicrous, but I think we should look after our property and I think that should come from the repairs and renewals budget of the harbours, I really do. Whether you have got an airport in Alderney, a runway that needs to be looked after, or whether it is a bridge down at the castle, those two are the same.

So that is where I am coming from on this, Deputy Roffey, and I would like you to consider what
515 I have said here. Yours is a hypothetical cost, I expect, that the college is an actual cost from a builder. Perhaps those two are slightly different. And I do know that it is difficult to give an estimate

for engineering because they are never really sure what the final bill will be, so we are not quite comparing eggs with eggs, but it is the same materials that will be used for the bridge; the reinforced steel, the concrete, and there perhaps are other options. I have spent a lot of time fishing
520 down there. I used to catch [inaudible] in the floodlights outside the castle and I used to launch my boat on the old lifeboat slip, and it is beautiful. It is 70 years old, the bridge, but it is beautiful. The parabolic arches in the piers, it does give a great character and it does set the harbour off well, but there are other options.

That is all I have got to say, sir, thank you.

525 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Yes, an interesting speech from Deputy Vermeulen because, as he said recently in the Chamber, he has a building construction background in many ways as well as hospitality. But
530 I have to say he was right when he said probably Policy & Resources would look at it carefully and the Board, especially Deputies Trott, Soulsby and, of course, surveyor, Deputy Murray, ask very challenging questions about any building or construction project that is put to us.

But it is quite hard, especially for more of a lay person like myself, to know how the costs are conducted, especially as Deputy Trott has frequently said the Guernsey economic model of
535 construction is both high inflation and is subject to structural cycles. And Deputy Oliver, in her interjection, another surveyor too, raised the obvious point really, that this is a specialist structure in the middle of a churning sea, which makes it potentially a project that could go wrong. Indeed, the policy letter does the job; it is a business case. I would argue it is more of a project case but it goes into great detail about the percentage of defects that is slowly increasing from 53% to 64%.
540 The cheaper option – well it might have been cheaper initially – of Option (4) is not viable because of the pessimism bias maybe that the bridge could already be beyond repair and therefore you have issues there. And Deputy Vermeulen is right: the time it has taken has been an issue.

The policy letter in its way, says that if we just did Option (4) it would be an amazing £10.5 million or £11.5 million or Option (6), replacing like for like, is what we are going for, £6 million to
545 £7 million – hopefully less. Option (7), replace an unknown design by a design competition, was estimated at £8.6 million to £9.6 million. Now I know there were correspondents and delegates who suggested that maybe we should have had a design competition but the downside of that, apart from this cost estimate – it could have come in cheaper of course – though was the risk of collapse of the bridge, of delay, of issues with planning or maybe a project that won but for some reason
550 did not go ahead. So you have to balance corporate risk against what would be more of a private sector approach.

Of course, the policy letter also refers to environmental matters. Deputy de Sausmarez and other Members will be interested that pulling out the concrete is not ideal and could affect the marine
555 environment and even the blue economy and have repercussions for the fish in the sea, but hopefully that can be minimised and there is speculation the concrete could be re-used.

Where I think the report is a little bit deficient is, it does not go into long-winded anecdotal history – I will come to that in a minute – but it puts it in a strategic context and of course mentions the advantages of the harbour breakwater for fishing and recreation. It mentions the health and safety point of access to emergency vehicles but I would say that is very important; we do need to
560 have a robust structure that can cope with that. But the gap in it, I thought, although it is mentioned on page 3, paragraph 2.2, is the access to Castle Cornet issue: we want better and better access, not just for people with disabilities but for the whole public.

And listen to the points here that are put rather briefly. I think if Education, Sport & Culture or Economic Development had been putting this policy letter they would have flagged it up more:

Castle Cornet is Guernsey's most popular visitor attraction with charged admission. It is a venue for community and civil events, provides tenanted accommodation. It does also weddings, corporate events, arts events, the very popular, thousands-attended each summer, the Summer Nights.

565 And it is net revenue, not net loss. It is £224,000, nearly a quarter of a million pounds, in a difficult trading period. And it is huge for visiting cruise ship passengers; it is arguably their first choice.

I used to be very friendly with, sadly, a late marketing manager but I heard the points made by others ... that Castle Cornet, if it was anywhere off the coast of France, would be incredibly well used; it would be a flagship for *son et lumière*, for great events, for more ... I mentioned yesterday the contribution – well, two days ago the Bailiff kindly mentioned the late Deputy Mike Garrett, who used to hold *vin d’honneurs* day. I was on that Committee also with Deputy Dudley-Owen’s mother and it was a happy time. But one thing that was not great about the Committee was we put a case in, I think to Treasury & Resources, because we knew the bridge was foundering, between 2008 and 2012, but we had an austerity drive and FTP and everything. So it is not surprising, as Deputy Vermeulen says, that possibly a combination of a lack of maintenance and delaying the project has led to ridiculous cost inflation. I think in those days it could have been done for something like £2 million. We pay the price for the downsides of our economic model in terms of construction.

My point is let us get on and do this. Let’s bring Odd Socks back if they wish to go there, and all the other large events that we used to have, because we could make more money from a business point of view by using Castle Cornet more, maybe even having an element – a lot of new museums there too, but maybe more of a hotel-type atmosphere, more events for people across the community, including maybe high net worth events. We could really use Castle Cornet as a flagship, so not just for health and safety and environmental reasons and heritage reasons but I think this project actually has a happier commercial look to it than just a big expense.

585 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: Thank you, sir.

Irrespective of what people think might or could be done with Castle Cornet, and I agree there are a lot more opportunities there, I do not think this is the debate for it, the debate is whether we want to continue in linking the Castle and the pier to St Peter Port and, quite clearly, that argument is made. It would be a complete nonsense to allow that to collapse or have a big yellow sign on it and told we cannot use it for years.

Deputy Vermeulen spoke about piling but, as I understand it, reading the response from one of the officers, this has got nothing to do with the piling. This is effectively potentially pre-formed concrete arches –

Deputy Vermeulen: Point of correction, sir.

600 **The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Vermeulen.

Deputy Vermeulen: I spoke about the piling in relation to a cost we had approved two days ago for the sixth-form college. Piling is an engineering work and the reinforced slab on top; similar materials, similar engineering work, sir.

605 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder to continue.

Deputy Inder: What I was going to say was the pre-casting has got nothing to do with piling but, what I was going to say, and I am intrigued to know this, is that quite clearly, pre-casting anything in arching is going to be more difficult. It is not clear from the policy letter, and I am aware that Cow Bay is a suspension bay and I think the water goes over around eight metres. I am just intrigued to know why I believe a cheaper option would have been mass filling, getting rid of the bridge completely, walling down the side and mass filling and putting a deck over the top of that. I just wonder if that was –

615 **Deputy Vermeulen:** Point of correction, sir.

Deputy Inder: I am asking Deputy –

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Vermeulen.

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Deputy Inder: I am asking a question.

The Bailiff: I understand that, Deputy Inder, but Deputy Vermeulen stood up and said point of correction, so I will hear his point of correction.

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Deputy Vermeulen: I did indeed, sir, and I do apologise to Deputy Inder, but you are saying stuff which is not correct.

It is generally accepted everywhere in the world that using pre-cast construction, concrete panels, concrete beams is cheaper than doing it *in situ*, i.e. on site. So it is very different.

630

You are correct, however, in that the mass option would be cheaper but it might not look as nice.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder to continue.

635

Deputy Inder: That was not a point of correction because I was asking a question. I was asking a question of Deputy Roffey whether his Committee had considered mass filling rather than pre-casting but it may be the case that the suspension bridge at Cow Bay is related to that in some way and there may be some architectural reason to have done that.

640

But finally, I think I am going to support this but, much like the Airport runway, I have got concerns, as always, every time we get figures for anything from STSB. I am sorry, I am going to say this, and I may not vote for this; I may have to abstain. The simple reason is, and I have said this before, I remember when this Assembly was asked to approve £30 million for Long Hougue south – I think it was 2017-19 – we were told at the time, you have heard me say this before and I will repeat it again, at £22 per tonne I think it was with all the waste going into Long Hougue south it was going to wipe its face in about 15 years, so the maths had already been done. We voted as a Assembly for £30 million – that is what we voted for. Very quickly it became £42 million and within 18 months it became £60 million and the last figure I heard, I think it was from Deputy Ferbrache towards the end of the term, is around £65 million-£66 million. Three years, on we must be screaming towards £100 million.

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650

So, Members, be careful what you vote for, and I would like a commitment from Deputy Roffey that, if we as the Assembly are voting between six to seven million pounds, if it goes above that he will bring this back to the Assembly because I have got great concerns. Again we get put in this position; it is a wide range of costs. By the time it is done the assumption is often the case is that because we have approved the bridge we are actually approving the funds as well. I have seen this happen before where, effectively, 'Oh, it is too late. We are half way down the route; it now becomes twelve million quid,' or something like that.

655

So those are the kind of responses I would like from Deputy Roffey but in the main, of course, how can we disconnect Castle Cornet and the pier from Guernsey?

660

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Thank you, sir.

665

I actually really feel for the Ports because I think they are caught up being a little bit in no man's land to some extent and having to do something while it is not really within their responsibility or operations and business plan. This is a clear example of when we have to look at the need to provide a certain public good and the STSB has been the last man standing.

What is interesting is that when I was on the Ports Board before the election we talked about this project and I checked with officers, this was the first project that was put on the capital project

670 list in 2017. It literally is numbered project number one. Deputy Ferbrache at the time was the Chair
of the Ports actually and there was a lot of discussion whether it should be Ports who was managing
it or it should be Education, Sport & Culture. In fact what I understand has happened is that this
project has been kind of transferred to Education but they have recently transferred it back because
they do not have the skills and expertise to manage this kind of project. So what we have had is a
bit of ping-pong in the Government for this project and what this ping-pong has meant is that the
675 costs have spiralled. Cost estimates were undertaken in 2018 and the project estimate at the time
was half of what is being presented today. Half! Okay, £3.5 million. So we have had nothing short
of 100% inflation within this period of time.

As Deputy Roffey said, we have two key aspects of what the bridge provides; access to the
breakwater, and the lighthouse obviously, and access to Castle Cornet. Deputy Roffey mentioned
680 that the access to the breakwater and the servicing of the breakwater can be undertaken if we
absolutely had to. If we had an emergency with the bridge it could be undertaken through the boat,
so without needing to spend £7 million.

So really, the key medium- to long-term aspect of why the bridge is essential is the access to
Castle Cornet. I believe we cannot look at the need to invest capital and maintain the bridge in
isolation to what is happening with Castle Cornet, and of course we all know how invaluable and
685 how important the Castle is as a historic monument, as a tourist attraction and the social and cultural
value it provides to Guernsey. It is our Colosseum of Rome; it is the Tower of London to us but what
is the real value of Castle Cornet to Guernsey right now?

First of all, we started evaluating our fixed assets with the IPSOS framework. My understanding
690 is that historic assets have zero, technically, value on our balance sheet because of their length of
time; that is my assumption. So, technically they appear as zero on the balance sheet and revenue-
wise, Deputy Gollop confirmed, and I think it was confirmed, previously that the revenue – not the
profit, the revenue – of Castle Cornet right now, last year, or in the last couple of years, was about
£225,000 to £250,00 – the revenue. I can put my hand on my heart to say I am sure this cost does
695 not cover the operations of running ... if you actually visit all the costs of running the service, that
revenue would not cover. So this is loss-making already, never mind having enough money to be
able to contribute to the investment and the capital and the maintenance that is required. So, right
now we know it is a huge asset but are we making the best use of it? And then are we attributing
the actual costs needed to maintain such assets, such as, for example, maintaining the bridge back
700 to the cost of providing and maintaining our heritage services? I really do not think so, and this is
in no way trying to reflect badly on the heritage service itself.

The business case to some extent for the requirement for investing the money rests on point 3.4:

... through Culture & Heritage Services, has mandated responsibility for the management of States' museums ...

705 They have a published heritage service work plan 2022. The policy paper says there is a published
work plan. I have been trying to find this work plan and I have engaged with the Committee. I do
not think a plan has been published and would be happy to hear more from the Committee.

I give way to Deputy Inder.

710 **Deputy Inder:** Thank you, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

I just wonder if pursuing this line about which pot it comes out of ... I just wonder does it actually
matter, because it all comes out of the taxpayer's back pocket?

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Well, I think that is the point I am trying to make. So I think what I
715 am trying to say is the policy paper states that there is a published heritage service work plan. I have
not been able to find this plan and, from memory, I do not know what the strategic plan for our
heritage service is.

There are four points being outlined in this plan that the castle bridge obviously supports:

- [Ensuring] ... our assets and collections are understood, managed, cared for ...
- [Developing] ... partnerships to ensure a holistic and collaborative approach ...
- ... enable people to engage with Guernsey's heritage ...
- To realise the economic and social value of our assets and collections.

720 I have never seen this plan and I think we need to have a much better plan for what is going to be happening with our heritage assets. The one point that I think is missing – and this is what happens when we retain this kind of service within Government – is a point within this plan about the financial model of how we take care of our heritage assets. The key point is that they do not have to just remain with Government.

725 There are different models of taking care of delivering and maximising the value of our assets while absolutely ticking all the strategic boxes we need in preserving them, etc., but when they could be managed in a different manner and maximised. For example, in Jersey, they have Heritage Jersey and this enables them to put much more of a financially sustainable focus to them to ensure that, as Deputy Inder was saying, not all money is ... it is not the taxpayer who is on the hook. You are looking for models where we are using the assets to be able to maximise their value from user-paying, from sponsorship, from bigger events, from developing partnerships with investors and developers that are making more use of this asset.

730 I will give examples really not far from our waters: for example, in Jersey, the Elizabeth Castle. You are able to stay in the Castle, for example, in an apartment, so that is an example of an income stream that Elizabeth Castle is generating. In Alderney, Fort Clonque is managed by the Landmark Trust. The Landmark Trust is a charity which manages over 200 historic properties in Britain, in Europe and obviously in Alderney. I have never stayed in Fort Clonque but I am sure many others will have stayed. Deputy Vermeulen is nodding. That is just an example of the types of partnerships or initiatives we could be looking at to develop with our own heritage sites.

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740 And so the point I am trying to make is that I feel we cannot look at trying to invest so much money without having a better understanding of what is really the future for Castle Cornet, especially in terms of the financial model, in making sure we can maximise this asset. I feel that, without having that understanding, it is almost premature to commit to such a substantial commitment of money.

745 So I find myself in a very uneasy position because I think the options are we do not support the project and it is very likely that the costs will accelerate, knowing that costs are probably always going up and the project would not be finished for a number of years, given how long it is going to take to go to tender, etc. It does not feel we are yet at an absolute crunch point; we may have a little bit of manoeuvre to wait a little bit. It is always difficult to say but I feel it is important that we have a plan for Castle Cornet but also the wider heritage services. So I would be really curious to hear from colleagues in Education, Sport & Culture whether that is something that could be on the table and how we could work together, whether through projects such as reducing the cost of public service. So there could be a project scoped out of that to say, listen, we can look at the target operating model for heritage services that could come out of that and be a medium-term project that we carefully work on.

750 So I find myself in a very uneasy position because I think the options are we do not support the project and it is very likely that the costs will accelerate, knowing that costs are probably always going up and the project would not be finished for a number of years, given how long it is going to take to go to tender, etc. It does not feel we are yet at an absolute crunch point; we may have a little bit of manoeuvre to wait a little bit. It is always difficult to say but I feel it is important that we have a plan for Castle Cornet but also the wider heritage services. So I would be really curious to hear from colleagues in Education, Sport & Culture whether that is something that could be on the table and how we could work together, whether through projects such as reducing the cost of public service. So there could be a project scoped out of that to say, listen, we can look at the target operating model for heritage services that could come out of that and be a medium-term project that we carefully work on.

755 So, I am really sitting on the fence of whether today is the right time to greenlight such a substantial investment while I feel strongly that we have quite a lot of answers still missing from the bigger picture of what is happening to Castle Cornet heritage assets at the time when we need the money to invest in the rest of the critical projects on our agenda.

760 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Trott.

Deputy Trott: Thank you, sir.

765 I thought Deputy Kazantseva-Miller's speech was good in parts but, of course, the point is that unless you enable access no improvement to the commercial aspects of the Castle can be enabled.

770 Sir, the Propositions refer to a full business case which will be prepared, and Deputy Inder asked a question of Deputy Roffey with regards would this matter come back to the States if it was felt it was necessary to. Well, I am able to give an undertaking that I would certainly recommend to my colleagues on the Policy & Resources Committee that that was the appropriate action rather than the use of delegated powers, delegated authority should that scenario manifest itself, because this is clearly a must-do project. I say that because depriving access to the Castle is, and will remain, unthinkable to most Islanders – a point that Deputy Roffey made in his opening remarks.

775 But I confess, sir, to being a lay person when it comes to marine engineering but I also confess to being absolutely flabbergasted at the cost of some of these projects. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) They are baffling to me. They are baffling even though I have some really unpleasant experience of a marine project from my first term in the States, and I refer to the new jetty remediation project. The new jetty remediation project went millions overspent, and the reason it went millions overspent was because the particular type of marine engineering contract specified that this work
780 had to be done. And you may say, well how could they get the cost forecast so out of kilter? Well, what happened was there was some fairly thorough testing, looking for the 'concrete cancer' that Deputy Vermeulen referred to earlier, and it appears that pretty much by and large the supporting pillars that were tested turned out to be the best of the bunch. It was quite an extraordinary bit of bad luck. So when they started remediating them all it turned out that absolutely all of the ones
785 that were not tested were, without exception, if my memory serves me correctly, worse than the ones that were and the contract was spectacularly expensive. So I do know how these things can develop if not very carefully monitored, although this is different in that regard.

Now, one of the points I wanted to make is the States' report makes clear that we will not be entering into a contract with the successful tenderer until after this Assembly has risen. The earliest
790 it would start will be the third quarter of 2025, so we will be responsible for making the financial commitment but it will not even start until this Assembly, or some of us in this Assembly, are enjoying their retirement.

So I hope that is helpful. Deputy Inder is not here but I am sure he is listening and will be satisfied with that answer, and that is all I have to say.

795 Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater.

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

800 My eyes were drawn to the same figure of £224,000 for the revenue for Castle Cornet as Deputy Kazantseva-Miller because I was astounded it was that low. I know that this is not the main focus of what we are discussing today but it is included within the body of the policy letter and I think it is worth discussion. I mean, Castle Cornet would not have been subject to GST as its turnover is so low, so that clearly is an issue because we are told that it is our most popular visitor attraction for
805 which admission is charged so, clearly, this policy letter has highlighted a piece of work for ESC to have a look to see how they can maximise the potential out of our own little mini Mont St Michel, if you want to call it that.

Some of the costs, yes, Deputy Trott said that he was astounded by the estimated costs, and I am too. I am not going to say what I think it will cost because I am not a marine engineer. I have
810 never been involved in these sorts of civil engineering projects but the costs rising so considerably in a short space of time is clearly a concern.

But things like we are told in Table 6, that before we even get to the contract award stage we are spending £686,000 in professional fees. It is absolutely astounding, bearing in mind that we are already factoring in £265,000 of internal project management costs, so that is nearly a million
815 pounds in fees that are nothing to do with the design and build of the actual bridge.

I think across the board in States' projects professional fees need to be examined because this is having a material effect on the cost of every single one of our capital projects and I think we need to rein it in, I really do. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) Some of the percentages that are being

820 charged, especially bearing in mind that these people are designing the buildings and they are dictating the end cost and they are taking a percentage of that end cost, we need to focus in on this because I do not think they are sharpening their pencil well enough and I think we could save a considerable amount of money if we really drilled down, setting the construction costs aside, but the professional fees, because they are just getting absolutely unsustainable and incredible. Deputy Trott just told us this was £3.5 million recently and the professional fees are now a million pounds, 825 pretty much. Absolutely astounding; this cannot continue. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

Deputy Vermeulen talks about the cost of what the Assembly agreed to for the foundations for the sixth form and comparing it. I do not think you can compare stripped foundations for piling or a floating slab or whatever with a bridge over water, be it troubled water or otherwise. I really do not think you can compare the cost but I take his point, the same as Deputy Trott's point; I think 830 these costs are getting pretty much out of hand. Because if you look, a 95 metre-long bridge, that works out about £75,000 a linear metre, which is quite a lot of money.

But I will say I am going to support this because I do not think we have got much choice. I really do not think it is going to come in at £7 million. I think that what we need to do ... we are told, actually, in 4.18, I think it is:

... there is scope for some innovation on the part of the contractor that may help keep the overall project cost down.

835 Yes, I like this; I think this is what we need to do. We need to engage with a contractor not just necessarily consultants and architects; we need to engage with a contractor and say, okay, this is what we have got, how can we save some money? How can we do things smarter here? So I really like this section here in 4.18 because I think it needs to be replicated across every project that the States does: engage with the contractor, whether it be X, Y or Z of local contractors or otherwise 840 but we need to engage with them to see how we can sharpen our pencils across the board, bearing in mind that we have got massive wish lists of capital projects that we want to complete and we have got nowhere near enough money to, bearing in mind the estimates that were given for those.

That is pretty much all I want to say, sir, and I will, reluctantly, be supporting this policy letter. Thank you.

845

The Bailiff: Deputy Ferbrache.

Deputy Ferbrache: [*Inaudible*] ... Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, she is absolutely right as to the chronology. The only error that she has made in what was otherwise an excellent speech was I was 850 not present at the Ports Board; it was Mr Stuart Falla, CBE, but I was a member of it. I remember when she came along with another colleague and they brought fresh ideas, fresh vigour and energy to that Board and made a substantial contribution over the time they were there.

But she is right. We looked at: 'Is it really for us, is it really for Education, is it really for somebody else?' And the point has been made by Deputy Inder in one of his interpositions is: does it really 855 matter? It is all public money and it is all paid for by the taxpayer. We spend too much time considering that kind of issue rather than the actual issue itself.

What I would ask Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is not to sit on the fence. This is a vital project. We really have got no time left at all because, as Deputy Trott said in, again, an excellent speech, even if this Assembly, which I am sure it will overwhelmingly, approves this project going forward, it is 860 not going to start work for another couple of years or so. And that is about the end of the time that it can start because the report that was brought to P&R, I think in July or August of last year from a very able member of the STSB harbour team, if I can call it that, or Ports team, was that we have run out of time. We have got this engineering report which they had had literally a month or so before, which said you are out of time. You will not be able to use even pedestrian access to Castle Cornet 865 in a very few years' time. So you have got to get on with it. So there is no more time to defer, etc. Deputy Leadbeater made some good points, one of which was he, like me, was surprised that the revenue is about £224,000 from our jewel in our crown. That is because we manage it. We are uninspired in our management. We are cautious. We delay everything. If we bring something back

870 to this Assembly we will have 40 different opinions as to whether it should be a hotel, whether it
 should be a casino, whether it should be open on this, whether we should do that. It will be done
 to death and we will do nothing. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) It will be a good idea to have somebody
 who is independent with a commercial heritage bent, because we do not want it to be turned into
 a Monaco casino-type thing; to look at it, be sympathetic because it is our best tourist resort, but it
 875 *surely* could yield significantly more revenue than it is. Undoubtedly, it costs the States money. It
 costs more than £220,000-odd a year to administer Castle Cornet.

Deputy Gollop also made an excellent point that in the era 2008-12 the Committee he was then
 on said let's get on with it because work was needed then and it would have cost about £2 million;
 we are now looking at a multiple of much more than that because we do not do things.

880 Deputy Vermeulen often speaks about his commercial experience. Now, in a commercial world,
 you would not be telling those that you might be contracting with how much money you are going
 to spend. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) You would say: 'I want to build a hotel, or I want to build a house
 or I want to build whatever I am going to build. This is what I am going to do. Can you please put
 in a figure?' Here we have got to start the figure. That is no criticism because this is public money
 and we have got to be able to say how much money is available, and put aside so much money as
 885 available, to do the very long list of capital projects that we need to do. So it is different. But there
 must be a different way to say to a builder, or in this case a specialist contractor, 'Well, we have got
 £6 million to £7 million to spend, what can you do for £6 million to £7 million?'

I am always interested, as I say, and we have had, I think, a useful exposition of piling costs from
 Deputy Vermeulen. I wonder what advice he would have given to those that would have perhaps
 890 put the piling in before upon which the outside toilet that I used as a child would have cost all those
 years ago. We may have heard of what that might have been.

But anyway, coming back to where we are in relation to these points, I again agree with Deputy
 Leadbeater. Professional fees of a million pounds on something like this is outrageous. I am not
 saying we can do much about it in this particular case. They are outrageous. We are not as
 895 competitive as we should be but I do not think we can do much about it in relation to this particular
 project because the bridge has had its life. Whether it lasts 60, 70, 80, 90 or 100 years ... I know
 Deputy Roffey will not be around then. I will not be around then. It may be they would have to
 knock on Deputy de Lisle's door in 100 years' time (*Laughter*) and no doubt he would be wanting
 no more cost increases of any kind at all, unless there was inflation, and only if it was inflation of
 900 less than one percent. But anyway, that is for another 100 years' time and there will not be too many
 of us around from this Assembly at that particular time.

We have got no option but to do it. But what we do need to do is to turn our assets, and Castle
 Cornet is probably our greatest asset in that field, into a more commercial with a small 'c' usage
 because we are just not doing enough.

905 As for the project, we have no time. It came up all those years ago. Deputy Gollop has told us
 about it. It came up during my time as President of STSB. It has come up during P&R six to eight
 months ago. I am glad that Deputy Roffey and STSB, I think very sensibly and ably, have brought
 this matter to the States. We must approve it.

910 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Aldwell.

Deputy Aldwell: Thank you, sir.

Obviously – well, not obviously – I am on ESC and I do know that there has been a review about
 the Castle and all the heritage properties because it has been difficult, and it was catch-up time
 915 after COVID trying to get people into the Castle because it was basically closed for a time. Then,
 when the Island was in lockdown it was used by locals; most locals have used it. Then we had the
 cruise ships and then the cruise ships are down in number so the tourism, which we had thousands
 going in there, that has come down again.

We do use it for lots of corporate and wedding functions, but without having the bridge
 920 refurbished it has caused a great problem and even for Liberation Day, the fireworks, we cannot

have a truck to go on there to put the fireworks; we had to find another location for them to be released. It is just basically to say there is no option; we have to do this.

925 Hatton Gallery also, I remember in the first few months of our term, the museums had the most wonderful project to turn the Hatton Gallery into a real big, massive attraction and we hoped that that would happen, but Economic Development did not like that particular proposal so the space is still empty, I believe.

Deputy Vermeulen: Point of correction.

930 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen, point of correction.

Deputy Vermeulen: I am on Economic Development and I love the idea – I absolutely love the idea – so it was not unanimously turned down by Economic Development. I think the idea of an experience in that Hatton Gallery would be fantastic for the Island and I wholeheartedly support it, supported it then, support it now.

Deputy Aldwell: Well that is great news. Thank you very much!

The Bailiff: But there is a difference. Deputy Aldwell, just wait.
940 Deputy Vermeulen, what Deputy Aldwell said was it was not supported by Economic Development. Whether that is by a majority or whether it is unanimous it does not matter; it was not supported. So it was not an inaccurate statement on behalf of Deputy Aldwell and therefore was not a valid point of correction.

945 **Deputy Vermeulen:** Sir –

The Bailiff: Deputy Aldwell to continue.

Deputy Vermeulen: Sir, I –

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The Bailiff: Deputy Vermeulen, you have had your interjection.

Deputy Vermeulen: But I am not sure what you are saying is right, sir.

955 **The Bailiff:** That does not matter. I am explaining to you what my view is on whether or not that was a valid point of correction.

Deputy Vermeulen: But you were not on the Committee, sir.

960 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Aldwell to continue, please.

Deputy Aldwell: I am very pleased to hear that one of the Members, or maybe more of the Members, supported it, but it did not happen, so there has been a review, there has been thought on what could happen there and they do work – all our Committees work hard – Heritage does work incredibly hard; they have looked, had a deep dive, but the main thing for me is we just have to get the access to the Castle working. It is our jewel in our crown, so I absolutely will be supporting this policy letter.

Thank you.

970 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Dyke.

Deputy Dyke: Thank you, sir.

Some good points made in this debate; the one that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller initially raised as to whether we are making good use of the Castle is obviously a good one and everyone agrees.

975 My suggestion on that is that isn't this sort of subject more for Economic Development than Education, who are tied up with a million other things? It seems crazy to add this to the burden of Education when it really would sit better with Economic Development, on which Deputy Kazantseva-Miller sits, so she could start the ball rolling ... and Deputy Vermeulen, Deputy Inder. So that might be one thing to be thinking about.

980 Secondary to that, with all this lack of maintenance we seem to be doing, I question: is anyone maintaining the Castle or are we suddenly going to find there is a hole in the roof and a £25 million bill to fix that? I do not know; perhaps we can have some information on that.

985 With the figures I do think they are astounding. I guess we are going to have to vote for this in some way. But looking at some of it, going forward as part of this £7 million figure, we have got £265,000 for internal project management costs. So what is that? Is that three surveyor staff working full time, doing nothing else for a year on this project? I do not know what that figure is.

990 And then we have got page 14 of the policy letter, Table 6. Others have alluded to this, but the costs are just fantastic; how we get to these huge figures I just do not know, and they really do have to be looked at. So we get to the £686,000 and then another £200,000-odd— pretty much a million pounds for all the soft costs without getting to the actual building. I just think that has to be looked at.

995 In terms of how we present these things we have discussed it before how unhelpful it is to have a huge figure floating around before you go out to tender to the builders and I do think we need to do something about this. At least on this project the base cost seems to be £4.3 million and then there are various other risk and optimism biases. Maybe the headline on this should be the base cost. That should be what we are talking about: £4.383 million as a maximum. Perhaps that should be the headline coming out of here and perhaps that should be what we vote on; that we vote for a project with a maximum of that figure, which at least would be less bad than the much bigger figure at the end of the calculation. So perhaps that is something we might do.

1000 And the last thing I would say, I would reiterate what Deputy Leadbeater said. If you actually talk to the construction companies, and at a lesser level I have had it on my old farmhouse, which was very complicated to renovate 30 years ago, and you speak to the contractors and you say, 'Can we save some money here, can we save some money there?' And they will say, 'Well, if we take this out, we can do it or if we put the steel here ...' All that sort of thing, pre-conversations, you can learn quite a lot.

1005 So I guess we are going to have to vote for this but one point that comes out is should we actually be voting for, in terms of actual expenditure, this base cost figure of £4.38 million and not a £7 million figure? That is something that perhaps Deputy Roffey and Deputy Trott could talk to each other about; I do not know.

1010 Thank you. That is all I have got to say.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Lisle.

Deputy de Lisle: Thank you, sir.

1015 Seven million is an awful lot of money to spend at this time on the Castle Cornet bridge renovation, given our fiscal position with very limited resources. I question, quite sincerely, approving funds of this amount when medium-term repairs may be the preferred option, given our fiscal circumstances. It is one thing to rate options on the basis of long-term solution but that has to be considered against our fiscal ability to spend the money.

1020 One can look at the needs all over the harbours, actually, the harbour structures that require structural replacement. It is one after the other and they have come up in the States over the last number of years. But, given our fiscal situation, they are being left to repair and we satisfy ourselves with that, by and large.

1025 To undertake essential repairs where current defects exist to provide design life of 10-15 years, we could go for the medium-term repair scenario with remedial works taking approximately 12 years but access remains to the Castle. It provides time to decide a long-term solution and not commit the future States to this horrendous £7 million reconstruction.

1030 So I would suggest that we look again at this on the basis of medium-term repairs, to undertake essential repairs where the current defects exist and will provide a design life of 10-15 years through remedial works. That would get us through this period of our difficult fiscal situation.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Matthews.

1035 **Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, sir.

I listened with interest to Deputy Vermeulen's speech on this and I think that he made some very valid points about the construction methods.

1040 I am minded to vote against this, purely on the basis that it is just so incredibly eye-wateringly expensive – the cost of this policy letter. I do, of course though, think that the construction itself very much does need to be done, and I have no objection at all to the construction being done so, Deputy Roffey, I think, has some work to do to persuade me to vote for this in terms of what on earth is going to be done to look at the construction costs and bringing them down.

1045 Now I do appreciate that, to a large extent, this is a technical matter to do with how the construction is done and it does allude ... I do not even know why we have got estimates in the policy letter in the first place; I suppose we have to put some number in there and this is some finger in the air amount that has been pulled out from the air and may not relate to anything because it actually says in the policy letter:

7.2 The final project cost will not be known until the tender of the design and build contract has been completed. It will, however be influenced to a large extent by the construction method that is eventually adopted, and while reasonable estimates have been made, there is scope for some innovation on the part of a contractor.

1050 Well, I think there is scope for an awful lot of reduction based on the fact, as Deputy Vermeulen talked about one of the main improvements that could be made would be to look at pre-cast concrete as opposed to *in situ*, and that could be vastly cheaper than ... presumably, the cost estimates here are based on *in situ*. If not then I do not know why they are so high because one of the reasons why ... Deputy Vermeulen did compare a construction of the concrete base for schools and actually, one of the comparisons that I had ... I know schools are not the same things as bridges
1055 but the comparison is valid for roughly weighing things.

1060 Where my mum's house is in the Republic of Ireland, a town called Kingscourt they recently built a school and I paid attention to the construction costs. It was a school a similar sort of size to the ones we have here of 550-odd pupils, secondary school – 22 million euros. I mean the amounts that we spend here are so enormous. We are not talking about a few percentage points, or double, it is three or four times the cost and it really must be looked at. And that was built with pre-cast concrete panels and that is one of the reasons why it was cheap. It happened to be located next to one of the country's leading providers of pre-cast concrete products.

1065 But one of the disadvantages, I understand, of using pre-cast concrete in Guernsey is of course that the shipping and transport costs to get the stuff over here on these small boats has always been very expensive but then, once over here, moving stuff around the Island, getting it through the docks and through our tiny little roads and up to where it is supposed to be is incredibly difficult. But that does not apply in this case because it is being built on the coast, so there is a very strong case, I think ... and I do not know if that has been done; I would like to know if anybody has been out to – I know we have not of course been out to tender but if anybody has been out to get some
1070 initial estimates from providers who would of course be further afield than Guernsey, we would need to be looking to the UK and Europe for these providers. But this is quite a common thing, as Deputy Vermeulen said. It happens all over the motorways where we drop these pre-cast concrete

1075 sections in. So we are not asking for something that is entirely unique. The only difficulty I think we would have is of course the transport over here and arrangement to do it here but that is a problem that can be solved with a bit of innovation.

1080 So they are the questions that I would like to ask: have we looked at it; if we have not looked at it why haven't we; and is it something that is going to be pursued? Because I would expect that the base cost – I know that there is the transport difficulty – could be very much less if that type of construction method were used. And that is the sort of thing I think it would take to persuade me to vote for this. At the moment, although I very much appreciate the need to do it – even without knowing ... you do not need to be, I think, an expert in the field to look at those costs and think, well, that is incredibly high. So if I can have some reassurance that would help but at the moment I think it just looks too much money for me. I will leave it there.

1085 Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Oliver.

Deputy Oliver: Thank you, sir.

1090 I am loving how many engineers we have in this Assembly. (*Laughter*) It is amazing. Everybody knows what they are doing, talking about well in the UK you drive up the motorway and there are loads of bridges. We could just use one of those, maybe. Oh, my goodness! Really, guys! This is a completely different beast. This is a bridge over water. We have one of the biggest tides in Europe over here and we have some pretty rough weather. This year alone we have had more storms than any ... well, nearly, we have got two more and then we have had more storms than any other previous year.

1095 I just think people need to take this into reality and have trust in STSB that they will actually get the quotes that are needed. They will look at the design more when they actually get tenders because I am sure an engineer will actually come out and say this is the best way to go ahead with this project. At the moment we are in this predicament that, if we do not get something done with it, we will probably lose access to Castle Cornet within a number of years and that is what we are trying to prevent.

1100 I just think that everybody needs to take a step back because, I can assure you, and I am imagining, as soon as ambulances and fire engines cannot drive over that bridge, the you will have to close Castle Cornet because if somebody has a heart attack in Castle Cornet, a tourist or a local, that will cause uproar. And then everybody will say to the States: 'Why did you not pay for the bridge to be done?' So please, people, let the engineers do their job and let's get on with the vote.

The Bailiff: Deputy Moakes.

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

1115 I was going to say something very similar to what Deputy Oliver just said, and that was I am privileged that I am surrounded by so many engineers, project managers, quantity surveyors, building experts and architects because we all seem to have an opinion and I am not sure any of us have got any experience. I think probably the nearest thing is one of my wife's ancestors was a bridge builder and he designed Sydney harbour bridge. If he were alive maybe we should have asked him to come in here and give us some advice.

1120 I do agree with much of what has been said, however. Yes, the costs are incredibly high but the cost is there to say it could go up to this amount; I hope it does not for obvious reasons. But it is what it is, and can I remind people that part of the reason there is a cost here is because not that long ago this Assembly voted that all this information should be laid out in front of the Assembly and all the information should be given so that you could discuss it. So that was very clearly a direction given by this Assembly. Please correct me if I am wrong on that.

I also agree that we could do an awful lot more with the Castle, a huge amount more. I am sure there is ... again, I am not an expert on castles, I am not an expert on architecture, so do not ask me

1125 what we would do with it but it seems like it is one of the jewels in the crown of the Island and logic dictates that we should be able to do more with it. Let's see.

But the bottom line is that this bridge that we currently have is beyond, almost, repair now. Again, I am not an expert; I can only refer to what we are told. The metalwork that is within the concrete is so close to the edge now that ... a couple of points that have been raised here: 'Why don't you just patch it up for a few years?' Well I am told it is beyond that. You patch it up and it will look alright probably for a few weeks and then it will all start leaching through again. How long can that go on for? We can repaint over the rust, we can do this, we can do that, it might look alright; it does not stop the issue that this needs to be urgently addressed.

1135 So, as much as I agree with you about costs, about what we could do with other bits of infrastructure around that area, I think we have to agree that we need to move forward with this. I think Deputy Trott is not here at the moment; he said if it becomes more than that – I hope it does not come to that but if it comes more to that – then I think he said he would bring it back to the Chamber.

1140 So you can vote against this. Wait for the bridge to fall to pieces and then ... well, I do not know, or you can vote that we should at least look at this, move forwards with this, investigate this and see what the options are and what the costs are. I really do not think there is any other option so I would strongly recommend that people support this even if they still have questions about certain elements of it because we are not the experts in designing bridges.

Thank you.

1145

The Bailiff: Deputy Dudley-Owen.

Deputy Dudley-Owen: Thank you, sir.

1150 I do find the tone of some of our debates are rather arrogant, and I am sure that those listening on the radio find it equally astounding that people are getting up and making statements as if they were experts on this. We are politicians chosen from lay people who put themselves forward for probably one of the most difficult jobs but we are not experts and it is our duty to question the experts that we employ at often great expense. So if Members have these statements and searching questions, surely they should be approaching officers before the debate and possibly, in this instance, maybe STSB/ESC dropped the ball and should have given yet another one of those famous presentations that we are well-known for doing. But that is the time to be asking those questions.

1155 But some of the statements that Deputy Matthews has made ... I am sorry, I will not say it because it is unparliamentary, but really I do wonder whether he applies the same sort of acute focus scrutiny to the hospital modernisation programme, (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) because I really hope he does, and demands the same type of value for money outcome that he demands of the Education, Sport & Culture and STSB projects.

1160 I wanted to speak also to the heritage points that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has raised and I think we are all on the same page. I do not think there is anybody in this Assembly who would not want to ensure that we really are squeezing the biggest value for money out of our heritage assets at the same time as respecting the heritage of those assets. And, of course, the Education, Sport & Culture Committee supports the work that has been done by officers in that space in terms of looking at Island heritage strategy.

1165 It has long been on the cards of successive Education, Sport & Cultures and I think before that Culture & Leisure Committees, about what we do with our Island heritage assets, such as our fortifications, our *Festung* from the German era and before that from the Napoleonic era, etc. The list goes on because we have got such a rich history. Not only that, other assets that we have in terms of the Occupation museums and other privately-owned collections and how we assist and support those. But again, our resources are very scarce so it had been within the gift of the Committee to put this within the GWP but we have got to be realistic about what we can ask for and what money is available. And certainly, as Deputy Aldwell referred to and Deputy Vermeulen ...

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I was very pleased to hear that Deputy Vermeulen was so supportive of the maritime museum idea, which was a fabulous project in prospect and we had the opportunity to put that to –

I will give way to Deputy Vermeulen.

1180 **Deputy Vermeulen:** I am grateful for the Deputy to give way.

Sir, I am not so sure that we actually did take a vote on that subject but, as Tourism lead, fully supportive and we have also had a few changes since it came to our attention. There is this visitor tax which could be perhaps harnessed to, indeed pay for this, sir, if it was the will of the States, this Hatton Gallery experience.

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Deputy Dudley-Owen: I thank Deputy Vermeulen for his interjection, and anything in that regard would not come forward in this term now anyway just due to resourcing but, of course, the vision is there to enhance our heritage offering which, in turn, creates cultural richness for Guernsey and also a tourism product offering for Guernsey to give people a reason to come here and visit. And there are loads of ideas that would be put forward and we have those heritage experts within our employment – for Deputy Ferbrache, he mentioned before. And also there is a vision there. The show that has been put on between Art for Guernsey and our heritage staff, our museum lead, for a Renoir exhibition recently, has been amazing and has put us on the map globally.

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With energy, vigour and a collaborative working between public and private partnership in addition to cross-Committee working within the States we can achieve great things if we adopt a can-do attitude. Very sadly, we just simply do not have the resources this term to do that.

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But – *but!* – going back to this particular policy letter, until we put a bridge between ourselves and the Castle, we cannot really do anything, can we? Because it is not just about the Castle. If we left the bridge to fall, which has been suggested, actually, access to the further port assets which the bridge is part of, to the Castle light and the breakwater itself, would be limited by sea access only. That, I think, would be an inflexible approach and I should imagine, not being a maritime person myself but just as a lay person, I should expect that that would severely limit and curtail our ability to be able to manage not only the maintenance of the breakwater itself but also of the Castle light, which is a significant navigational aid, I understand, into the harbour.

1200

So I think we just need to be pragmatic. Yes, the costs are high; they are always high in Guernsey. We are unique in our island situation. I think that drawing comparisons with mainland prices is unrealistic and we have to look at the inflationary nature of bringing supplies on Island. I invite Members who are significantly concerned about that to have a conversation with our property specialists in the States, of which we have many, and to understand the inflationary pressures that we as an island have which make us not comparable to mainland jurisdictions.

1205

I urge Members to support this policy letter.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Queripel.

1215 **Deputy Queripel:** Thank you, sir.

Like Deputy Ferbrache referenced in his speech, I have never understood why the States tell contractors how much they have got to spend. Contractors out there are laughing at us. It does not make sense.

1220

I was involved in the construction industry for the majority of my working life, ran my own business for 29 years. Never once did a potential customer say to me: 'I've got this much to spend, can you do the work for this much?' It does not work that way anywhere else, so why do we do it? The way it works is a potential customer contacts a company or a tradesman and says: 'I have got some work to be done, can you please give me an estimate?' It is a nonsense the way we do things.

1225

Sir, in this case, the contractor out there could work out an estimate for, say, £2 million and then they know the States have got £7 million to spend, so they come in with an estimate of £6,999,000 and they get the job. Absolute madness!

1230 Staying with the cost. just a few years ago, something like, I think it might have been, a quarter of a million pounds was spent on repairing the Havelet slipway. It broke down within two years, had to be closed and repaired again so more money was spent. So it would appear, and I might be wrong but I stand to be corrected, that there were no checks on the quality of the work as the project was ongoing, so I am really concerned about the quality of work that will result from this work. So my question to Deputy Roffey is will the work be monitored and checked by a qualified States' employee as it progresses?

1235 When I first heard of this project, I did not know the extent of the work, but my first response was, 'Good grief, £7 million for a new bridge! Is it going to be gold-plated?' And then when I read the policy letter I was astounded to read in paragraph 4.15 the following:

All ... options retain the structures already fixed in the seabed ...

1240 So, to my logical way of thinking, that means we are not even going to get new foundations for the bridge even though it is going to cost £7 million. I thought for £7 million we would at least get the complete works, foundations and all, but it does not sound like it. So how do we know those foundations are sufficient? How do we know they are going to withstand the test of time? Have any tests been done on those?

1245 I am also intrigued by what we are told in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2, where we are told the following:

Key to the delivery of the project is the appointment of a specialist technical and design advisor at the outset, as they will have the expertise and contacts to undertake initial commercial assessment to evaluate potential delivery capability and capacity.

So my question to Deputy Roffey is, is the salary for this person coming out of the £7 million or is that in addition?

It goes on to say:

With this information obtained, the next overarching steps will be the preliminary design ...

1250 I repeat:

... the preliminary design and submission to DPA, preparation of tender documentation, Expressions of Interest, Invitation to Tender ... followed by works on-site.

1255 And then we are told in paragraph 5.2 ... which, I am somewhat confused by this; I might be missing a fundamental point, I appreciate that, but it says in paragraph 2:

The procurement strategy will follow current States Corporate Procurement Policy and Rules. It is proposed that the contract used will be design and build, for which the main contractor is responsible for both design and construction.

1260 But, hasn't that work already been done as laid out in paragraph 5.1? It seems like duplication to me. I appreciate I might be missing a fundamental point. But it sounds like there is a lot of work going to be done in paragraph 5.1 and it does not need to be done again in 5.2, but it sounds like it is going to be done again in 5.2. So I would like clarification on that please from Deputy Roffey when he responds.

Bearing in mind the States has an appalling record for maintenance of its own buildings, absolutely woeful, has any provision been made for maintenance of the bridge once it has been built, once it has been put in place?

1265 I am going to vote against this Proposition. It will make no difference at all because it will sail through. The vast majority of the Assembly will vote in favour of it. But, once again, this is a gun to the head and I am fed up of guns to the head; I am fed up of the way the States works, absolutely sick of it. A lot of this is because of the lack of maintenance and here we go again. I get tired of

1270 hearing myself say it. If you build something, if you own something, maintain it. Do not just neglect it because what is going to happen? It will fall to pieces.

So I do not like guns to the head. I have had too many in the States in the years I have been a Deputy. I am going to vote against this on principle. I do not like the way the States works. I do not understand it, it does not make sense. As one would find the words on a school report, 'Needs to do better,' well, the States needs to do better when it comes to trying to ... I am just amazed that we tell people how much we have got to spend. So yes, we need to do a lot better, maintenance-wise we need to do a lot better. Several other areas we need to do a lot better but in particular this. I am amazed, absolutely amazed, that we are not even getting new foundations. I think I have got that right. For £7 million I would expect new foundations; I would expect new everything.

1275 Sir, I will leave it there. I could say a lot more but I think I have said enough.
1280 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Mahoney.

Deputy Mahoney: Thank you, sir.

1285 I will be brief because I know there is a Rule 26(1) brewing; I am pretty sure of that.

I understand the arguments, and anyone that had jewel in the crown on their bingo card this morning is probably doing pretty well. But if it is a jewel then it is a jewel that is not being used and I am afraid I am too much of a pragmatist.

1290 I am certainly not going to go into any of the engineering detail. I am not an expert but I will leave it to the many others that are currently sat in front of me.

Many previous speakers have expressed their shock and horror at the costs, but then followed by saying, 'But I guess we have got to support it.' And that is the problem; we do not have to support it. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Voting for these big numbers every time, all that does is ensure that the next time something comes before us, it has got big numbers in it again. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)
1295 And that is just a self-fulfilling prophecy to me. I know most people in here disagree with that but that is my view. You keep voting these through and we are just feeding the animal.

I would rather this £7 million was used towards the TEP project. We have had big debates over this over many months and I would rather it was used towards that. To my mind these 'nice to haves', and that is what this is, should be playing second fiddle to the 'must haves'. We can have those 'nice to haves' when we have been brave enough as an Assembly to vote to raise sufficient revenue to afford them, and we have not done that.

1300 It strikes me, by listening when I was next door just a moment ago, that the cost-reducing committee could save some money by closing the Castle. That seems to be a drain on us at the moment – £220,000-odd revenue and expenses more than £220,000 equals opportunity to save money. We should just let someone else get on with that because I bet they would make a profit out of it.

To finish, can I just note that, pretty much all of the figures in the document which was on the table next door, which was very clearly marked, 'Commercially Sensitive and Confidential', have now been given out by this Assembly on the radio. What on earth are we doing? (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) I am afraid in all good conscience I cannot support such expenditure when the cupboard, frankly, is bare.

Deputy Prow: Could I try a Rule 26(1) please, sir.

1315 **The Bailiff:** You certainly can, Deputy Prow.

So can I invite those Members who wish to speak in debate on these two Propositions to stand in their places.

Is it still your wish, Deputy Prow?

1320 **Deputy Prow:** No, thanks.

The Bailiff: Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Thank you, sir.

1325 I will not keep Deputy Prow long. I have only got questions that arise from debate, one seeking clarity – I know it is not necessarily the point of this policy letter, but this revenue figure that is being bandied around for Castle Cornet; because the figure at paragraph 2.2 is net revenue, and I just want to know how that was arrived at, if Deputy Roffey can give any information. It might have been covered.

1330 The other one arising from the costs that were in the sheets that were meant to be private next door, option 7 was the unknown design and I just wonder, the cost for the unknown design was considerably higher than the known design – this is kind of known unknowns and known knowns – but if the design is not known, how do we know the cost?

A Member: We do not know any of these costs!

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Deputy Taylor: That is all I have got to add, sir. It is not going away. I will be supporting anyway, but thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Haskins.

1340

Deputy Haskins: Sir, I will also try and be brief but I did want to respond to some points that were made regarding the Castle. As Deputy Ferbrache highlighted, and Deputy Roffey, this is urgent anyway so whether it is pedestrian or vehicular they are both urgent. One does impact on the Castle, which is the vehicles. So for all those Castle nights etc. that are free to attend, music events and the rest of it, they all need heavy equipment so taking them from a longer way away is inconvenient, to say the least.

1345 But I did want to mention a couple of other things. I think the figure was £259,000 that was mentioned. The figure for the income for Castle Cornet is, I believe, £327,000. The £251,000 is for admission charges; then you have shop sales, then you have the accommodation that is there already and then venue hire for certain events.

1350 Also, 80% of the visitors to the Castle are tourists, so mainly from cruise ships. As that has decreased it has meant a decrease in our revenue. But I do completely take the point that the revenue needs to be increased but with that, to maximise that, you would need that access too, so this debate, to me, is a no-brainer. I do understand the issues on the costs. I can see it, but that is why we have experts to ask.

1355 Just on the workstreams for the heritage sites, we do have the Island heritage plan that I think is coming by the end of this year. That is a review of that. I think it was put together with the tourism product plan so now that there is this new Board from Economic Development, they are working closely, officers in heritage are working closely with them to see what can be done and come back. So I am surprised that Economic Development are unaware but then I guess that is because it is arm's length now.

1360 There is also a piece of work going on between officers with SPU, the States' Property Unit, because they are the ones now who have more of the contract on how they maintain it and they are also looking at alternatives for ... like Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, they will be offering other alternatives. But it is all conjoined: all that work should be done together. But again, either way, this bridge, as much as you do not like the price, needs to be done.

1365 But I think this debate has shown, is signalling, that there is an issue, we have said it many times, with procurement, and I know that there is lots being done to address that issue but it does not go to this debate on whether we need to do this bridge or not, which we clearly do. So I am flabbergasted as to why there is so much debate and why it has not been ... there have been no amendments on this. You are either saying yes or no and the majority are saying yes, so in my mind I hope this will be the last speech and we can just get down to the vote.

1370

Thank you.

1375 **The Bailiff:** Well, it will not be the last speech, Deputy Haskins, because I will invite Deputy Roffey, as the President, to reply to the debate. So, Deputy Roffey.

Deputy Roffey: Thank you, sir.

1380 I am going to go through some of the individual contributions but just a couple of points first. It has been said that this is a big number; and it is a big number, but it is not a big number that has come out of left field.

1385 This project has been sitting at the core of the capital portfolio of this Assembly for several years, and not just in the broader portfolio but, when P&R came forward with the various options in the Funding & Investment Plan, this was part of the core that, even if we did not raise extra money, was actually there as something that we must do. And, from memory, I think it sat in there at a range of £5 million to £10 million, so this is sitting well within the range of the portfolio that had been approved. If people thought it would be better spending on the TEP or on other things they could have amended that portfolio, particularly those who were actually sitting on the Committees that were responsible for it at the time, but nobody actually sought to do that.

1390 The second thing is just to take Members back to what stage we are at, because we are only being asked to agree two things today: first of all, the approximate design of the bridge, in other words similar to what is there now but obviously modified to bring it up to date; and to authorise P&R to be able to use their delegated authority up to a maximum of £7 million. This Assembly is not being invited to vote £7 million for this project.

1395 The other general point I would make is that this policy letter has been in the public domain now for quite some time. Not a single Member has come to STSB with queries and questions about it and yet today they have been legion; for example, construction method. Anybody who had come would have been told that, once this authorisation is granted, exactly – Deputy Leadbeater is right – the idea is to engage with the specialist – and they probably will be *specialist* – contractors who are able to do this and put over to them the final fine points of the design so long as it fits the general point, and the construction method and ask them to come forward with the most cost-effective method.

1400 So I cannot tell Deputy Vermeulen whether it would be pre-cast, or Deputy Inder whether it would be on site, because those options will be there. We will try to get the best possible value for money and the expert contractors will be the ones feeding into that. It would have been nice if people had come to speak to us in advance of this rather than taking 40 people's time for the whole of Friday morning, but that is democracy.

1405 Let us turn to some of the individual points, sir. Deputy Vermeulen said the cost was high, yes, but he said the structure had not been maintained properly. I do not know what evidence he has got of that; I do not know, I was not on the board of admin. All I know is that when I turned up at the STSB the state of the bridge, which is now 70 years old and in an extremely exposed marine environment, was already way past the point of really being renovated, although we did look at that idea as a possibility. So if there was a lack of maintenance it was way back. But whether it is a lack of maintenance or just the design of a 70-year old structure which was not ideal with the reinforcing bars too close to the outside of the concrete, I do not know. But it is certainly not something that can be laid at the door of this STSB, the previous STSB. Deputy Gollop has said that, what year I cannot remember he was on, he was being told that this was already an issue. It is not a question of recent maintenance.

1415 He said he was worried about value for money, so I suppose I have got a question for him: does he have any trust in the new P&R that we have just elected? Because, if he has, then it would be their job to make sure that when this detailed business case is put to them we are getting value for money. And Deputy Gollop was wrong in saying that this policy letter was the business case. Yes, it is an outline business case but the detail ... because we have got to come forward and say why we

1425 think it needs to be done, but the detail is still to be done and P&R will be the policeman in that respect.

And as for it coming back to the States, I have forgotten who asked for that, you will be asked to authorise P&R to be able to use their delegated powers up to £7 million. If they want to bring it back when it is less than £7 million they can but, frankly, if it comes in at £7.5 million it would have to be brought back because they would not have that delegated authority.

1430 Deputy Gollop said that we did not really expand enough in the policy letter about the importance of Castle Cornet. I think we did not really want to patronise. I think we thought that every Member of this Assembly knew as well as the STSB did what a central part it plays in the life of the Island and the psyche of Islanders as well, to some extent. Therefore we thought it went without saying.

1435 Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, she says she felt in some way for the STSB for taking on a controversial project that did not necessarily have to sit with us. Maybe I am feeling a persecution complex but I feel for the project, that it has come from the STSB, because sometimes I think maybe it is open to greater scrutiny and greater criticism as a result of who the messenger may be.

1440 On the question of Castle Cornet, obviously it is not STSB's role to say how it could be maximised. I do not want anything gaudy in there because I think that would detract from its heritage status, but I absolutely agree with every Member that says we should try to maximise the returns. But frankly, even if those returns did not add up to a firm business case for the £7 million, I think we are in danger of knowing the price of everything and the value of nothing. We represent the people of Guernsey and you ask Mrs Le Page in Torteval whether access should be maintained to Castle
1445 Cornet and the castle breakwater and I know what she will say, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) even if the money we are generating at Castle Cornet does not quite stack up with a financial return.

But yes, she is saying to maximise from all our heritage buildings; she is right. She is saying in Jersey and Alderney people can stay in heritage buildings. I can tell her I did live briefly in Castle Cornet; it was an interesting experience, in the Sutler's house. Rona Cole, who was the Director of
1450 Museums at the time, was really worried that we had lost one keeper. I was on the Ancient Monuments Committee and the new keeper was not going to arrive for another few weeks and she needed somebody in there, and I said, 'Rona, why?' And she said, 'Well, for security.' And I said, 'Do you really think that Castle Cornet is that easy to break into?' (*Laughter*) If it is then, frankly, it was never much cop at doing its job in the first place. But there we go, she wanted somebody there and
1455 I spent an idyllic winter-time sojourn inside Castle Cornet for a while.

Deputy Queripel is right, we need to do a proper job. Havelet slipway, there was a defective repair. I have to say the more recent repair done by STSB appears to be holding up incredibly well despite having some of the worst storms that we have ever had. So we are pretty confident but
1460 pride comes before a fall so I will be careful. Will the work be examined for quality? Well, yes, of course it would. He was slightly confused about we are specifying the design and then we are saying it will be design and build. No, we are specifying the type of design, but exactly for the reasons put forward by Deputy Leadbeater and others, we want the final design and construction method to be open enough to allow innovation and value engineering from the firms coming forward.

I could keep going, I am not going through. It is noon. I think even those, with a few exceptions,
1465 who are not convinced over the cost realise that this is an absolute – *absolute* – must-do project. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

I tell you what. Don't do this! We already do not have vehicular access; before not very long at all we will not be allowed pedestrian access. And in fact one of the reasons that the professional costs are so high is that we are capitalising in it, the monitoring that we have had to do. We have
1470 only been able to maintain pedestrian access by actually monitoring carefully the structure on an ongoing basis, so those costs are being absorbed in here. And, yes, Deputy Queripel, the cost of the expert that he refers to is part of the up to £7 million.

But Guernsey wants this done. We will try to do it. We are not going to throw money for the sake of it, excessively. We will do it as cost-effectively as we can. All we are asking is to give some
1475 delegated powers to P&R with a ceiling of £7 million. If we can get it done for less than that we will,

but Guernsey will not forgive us if we do not allow access to continue to this crucial part of our heritage.

1480 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, there are two Propositions, and as far as I can see they are interlinked, but is there any Member who wishes to vote differently on the two Propositions? No. On that basis I will ask the Greffier to open the voting on both Propositions taken together.

There was a recorded vote.

1485 *Carried – Pour 31, Contre 5, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 4*

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

1490 **The Bailiff:** In respect of both Propositions there voted in favour 31 Members, 5 Members voted against, no Member abstained, 4 Members were absent and therefore I will declare both Propositions duly carried.

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**15. Schedule for Future States' Business –
Proposition carried**

Article 15.

The States are asked to decide:-

Whether, after consideration of the attached Schedule for Future States' Business, which sets out items for consideration at the Ordinary States Meeting on 21st February 2024, they are of the opinion to approve the Schedule.

1495 **The States' Greffier:** Article 15, Policy & Resources Committee – Schedule for Future States' Business.

The Bailiff: Deputy Trott, is there anything to say on this?

1500 **Deputy Trott:** We have nothing to add, sir, thank you.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much. We have not received any amendments so I will simply invite the Greffier to open the voting on this Proposition, please.

There was a recorded vote.

1505 *Carried – Pour 36, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 4*

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

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Queripel, Lester				
Roffey, Peter				
Soulsby, Heidi				
St Pier, Gavin				
Taylor, Andrew				
Trott, Lyndon				
Vermeulen, Simon				

1510 **The Bailiff:** In respect of that Proposition there voted in favour 36 Members, no Member voted against, no Member abstained, 4 Members were absent at the vote or did not participate and therefore I will declare the Proposition duly carried.

Can I congratulate Members on the fact that you have caught up for the first time in quite a few months, so it is a clean start next month, and I will invite the Greffier to close this Meeting, please.

The Assembly adjourned at 12.07 p.m.