



**OFFICIAL REPORT**  
OF THE  
**STATES OF DELIBERATION**  
OF THE  
**ISLAND OF GUERNSEY**

**HANSARD**

**Royal Court House, Guernsey, Wednesday, 26th November 2025**

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N. R. Inder	L. C. Van Katwyk
B. R. Kay-Mouat	S. P. J. Vermeulen
A. Kazantseva-Miller	S. Williams
M. S. Laine	

**Representatives of the Island of Alderney**

Alderney Representatives E. Hill and E. A. J. Snowdon

**The Clerk to the States of Deliberation**

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

**Absent at the Evocation**

Deputy T. L. Bury (*relevée à 2h 39*) ; Deputy H. L. de Sausmarez (*relevée à 10h 27*);

Deputy J. P. Le Tocq

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# States of Deliberation

*The States met at 10.19 a.m.*

[THE DEPUTY BAILIFF *in the Chair*]

## PRAYERS

*The States' Greffier*

## EVOCATION

## CONVOCATION

**The States' Greffier:** To the Members of the States of the Island of Guernsey, I hereby give notice that a Meeting of the States of Deliberation will be held at the Royal Court House on 5 Wednesday, 26th November 2025, to consider the items listed in this Billet d'État which have been submitted for debate and that Billet d'État XXX also be convened.

### **Tribute to former Deputy Geoff Norman**

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Members of the States of Deliberation, on 15th November former Castel Deputy Geoff Norman died. Geoffrey John Norman was born in Guernsey during the Occupation 10 on 1st September 1941. He was part of the wider Norman family which started and was heavily involved in various Guernsey businesses. Usually known as Geoff, he was educated at Elizabeth College and followed that by Brixton School of Building. He said he was sent there because his father, Jack Norman, told him he should learn about the building industry.

15 On completing his diploma in 1964, he joined the family firm of J&D Norman, becoming a Director in 1967. In 1973 he became the first Managing Director of Norman Piette, moving to be its Chairman in 1991. He did not retire from the board until 2021, after 54 years on the board. His entrepreneurial drive helped transform Norman Piette. Under his leadership, the business relocated 20 to Bulwer Avenue, modernised its operations and set the course for what would later become the NP group, now a pan-Channel Island business. He was Chairman of Commodore Shipping, which his father set up, and he was also the Chairman of NP Holdings Group of Companies. In 1985, he followed his father as the President of the Guernsey Tomato Marketing Board. Geoff entered the States in a by-election in December 1985, held to fill the Castel Deputy seat, which had become vacant when the late Nigel Jee was elected as Conseiller. He retired at the 2004 General Election having served 19 and a half years as a States' Member.

25 During his near 20-year time in the States, which began in a period when there was as many States' Committees as there were Members, he sat on a variety of Committees, including several major ones. Within months he had been elected to sit on the Tourist Board and served as its President from April 1994 until his retirement. He pioneered 20 years ahead of time a concept of a Victor Hugo Centre. He served on the Electricity Board for five years, the last three of which as its 30 President. He did a term on the Recreation Committee and served on the Liberation Day Committee, including as its President. He was a member of the Housing Authority, which he joined in 1987,

becoming Vice-President in 1991 and not leaving it until 2002. In addition to his roles in the States, he served on the Board of Directors of Elizabeth College from 1991 for six years, and he was also a member of the Island Reception Committee.

35 In recognition of his 32 years of service as the Honorary Dutch Consul, on his retirement from that office in 2016 he was appointed by His Majesty the King of the Netherlands as a Knight of the Dutch Order of Orange-Nassau. He was an active and dedicated member of the Rotary Club for many years, including a year as its President.

40 Geoff was a great ambassador for Guernsey. Among his many qualities, he was known for his compassion, his business acumen and for being a gentleman. Geoff is survived by his wife, Heather, children Kathryn, Judi and Ben, three grandchildren and his wider family. To all of them and his many friends, we extend our sincere condolences.

Members of the States, will you now please join me in rising for a period of silence to honour the memory of the former Deputy Geoff Norman.

45 *Members stood in silence.*

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Deputy de Sausmarez, do you wish to be relevée?

50 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Yes, please, madam.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** I will now invite the Vice-President of the P&R Committee, who has asked for a Statement under Rule 10(3).

## Statements

### Rule 10(3) – Statement by the Vice-President of the Policy & Resources Committee

55 **Deputy St Pier:** Madam Presiding Officer, when I updated the States of Deliberation at the end of September on the financial position, I briefly addressed the challenges being faced by the Revenue Service. At that time I committed to give a further update before the end of the year, so thank you, madam, for allowing me to do so today.

60 I will start with an operational update on the Revenue Service, especially customers waiting for assessments and repayments. The frontline team are working under enormous pressure to bring assessments up to date. When I spoke in September, I said that over 30,000 assessments had been issued between April and July of this year, generating more than 6,000 credit balances, most of which require repayment. At that time just over 1,000 repayments had been processed. As of last week, the number has risen to 3,625. Repayments are being processed manually while the new automated system is being finalised, tested and implemented. Clearing this backlog remains their top priority.

70 However, while processing of repayments has been the highest priority, this has slowed the issuing of new assessments. Since my last Statement only 3,162 assessments have been finalised. As a result of intermittent issues with public online access to the Revenue Service system over recent weeks, the Director of Revenue Service has taken the decision to extend the deadline for 2024 tax submissions to 31st January 2026. The key reason for extending the deadline is that online returns are strongly encouraged as they should reduce errors and accelerate processing through automated risk assessment. Providing additional time will help ensure the online service is stable and accessible for customers who wish to file digitally.

While the deadline has been extended, customers are still encouraged to file as early as possible and not to leave it until the last minute, to help reduce pressure on the system and support a smoother flow of processing assistance. To help taxpayers, the Revenue Service will continue to conduct drop-in sessions in the new year to assist with online registration and submission.

80 The Revenue Service recognises many taxpayers still prefer paper, so this year paper forms are more readily available. In addition to the usual locations for picking up these paper returns, they have also now been made available for collection from the reception area at Edward T Wheaton House, so customers can call at the office and collect a blank return without needing to queue, which I know has been a frustration for many previously.

85 Madam, in the intervening two months since my last Statement it has become clear to the Policy & Resources Committee, working closely with the Chief Executive, that the transition to a new IT system developed for the Revenue Service, which has clearly been so challenging and far from smooth, is unfortunately the symptom of a much wider set of problems. So I now wish to speak more broadly about these. I will set out at a high level the issues and what we are doing to rectify them.

90 The Chief Executive has identified serious concerns about the way major projects have been run in recent years, with their repeated failing to deliver what was promised. The Revenue Service has cost £24 million, most of which has been incurred in the last five years. Given the ongoing problems for reasons I do not understand as a programme, it was formally closed earlier this year. We have a system that is clearly not yet complete, appears to have reduced functionality for Revenue Service staff compared to its predecessor, provides poor service levels for customers, and apparently is a system with a limited lifespan. How on earth did this happen?

95 Now, it is important to be clear these failures do not sit with frontline staff. They have worked tirelessly to keep services running, despite poor systems, unclear responsibilities and inefficient processes. They have shown professionalism and commitment under pressure. The Policy & Resources Committee wishes to put on record again all of our thanks to each of them, many of whom we recently met when visiting at their offices. We intend to continue being visible and transparent in what we find as we continue to lift the lid. Like the public, they deserve better.

100 However, it gets worse. Depressingly, it seems that the issues with major programmes are not isolated to the Revenue Service transformation programme. They appear to reflect structural and cultural problems that have undermined the effectiveness of other major programmes. In recent weeks, the Policy & Resources Committee has learnt for the first time that the original MyGov programme for digital Government in Guernsey, which apparently in the four years to 2023 cost £80 million, has delivered very little of what was promised. These failures represent an unconscionable waste of public money. They have damaged trust and confidence in Government's ability to deliver change effectively and that is totally unacceptable.

105 To this we can add the electronic patient record system, which is running behind schedule and budget, despite reassurances being given in response to Rule 14 questions which I laid as recently as May 2024. While it is very true that poor IT project delivery is a challenge experienced in many jurisdictions in both the public and private sectors, that cannot and must not be used as a shield for the States' shortcomings. We should not benchmark ourselves against mediocrity. Our community rightly expect and deserve a public service that performs better than the norm. I stress again the problems are not with the frontline teams but with the way major change has been managed and overseen. Ineffective governance and unclear accountability seems to have allowed projects to 110 continue without clear evidence of progress or value for money. Let me be very clear. We understand the importance of accountability and ensuring accountability must also be a core focus of the work we are now starting to address the issues.

115 A programme of work in response is now being led by the Chief Executive, who is here in the States with us today. He is fully supported by the Policy & Resources Committee. This is not a paper exercise. It will be a structured, focused programme that needs to deliver results effectively and transparently. His handpicked team must work quickly to forensically examine how money was spent on major transformation programme initiatives; set out a clear and factual account of what

130 was done, how decisions were made and why agreed objectives were not achieved; assess the strength of financial controls; identify any structural, cultural, competence or technical issues that repeatedly undermine effective change management; map governance failures and weak decision-making routes that contributed to waste or poor performance; ascertain what the politicians were being told as these projects went along: were they asleep at the wheel or were they being kept in the dark; define the actions needed to fix failures and strengthen future performance; and ensure routine reporting to the Policy & Resources Committee and to the States of Deliberation.

135 I am not going to mince my words. This is a major exercise in lifting the drains to get a grip on things that were clearly allowed to drift with inadequate oversight or action for too long. The first phase of work will concentrate on the areas where the biggest problems and risks have been identified; in other words, the Revenue Service transformation and the original MyGov projects. Also, to strengthen governance, the Policy & Resources Committee has agreed yesterday to establish an independent IT Advisory Panel as recommended by the Scrutiny Management Committee review last term, a recommendation the previous Committee did not act on. It will be chaired by Deputy Marc Laine, who we would like to take this opportunity to thank for all of his work and advice so far and his determination and commitment to help out.

140 The panel must provide expert challenge on our Digital Strategy, major IT contracts and the resilience and security of our systems. It will support the Policy & Resources Committee, the Chief Executive and the Chief Digital and Information Officer to ensure value for money and proper management of IT risks. Reporting directly to the Committee, it will bring additional transparency and scrutiny to the way we manage technology and technology decisions across the public service. This is a necessary step, given the sheer extent of the challenges we face.

145 150 However, to be clear, the IT Advisory Panel is not the silver bullet, it is just one part of the response. Its real value is more likely to be in the medium and longer term and there is much work to do in the short term, as Deputy Laine told the Committee yesterday. The issues affect frontline services, internal operations and public confidence. The Committee is reassured by the direction now being set. Under the leadership of the Chief Executive and the Chief Digital and Information Officer, and with active involvement of Deputy Laine, critical stabilisation work has begun and improvements are already being made. It is important to recognise that there remains a very substantial programme of work ahead to rebuild a reliable, secure and modern digital foundation for the organisation, and we do not yet know what the cost will be.

155 160 Crucially, frontline staff know where inefficient processes are wasted in time and money and we must now listen to them. Part of this work must remove the barriers that stop them doing their jobs more easily and more efficiently and we have to unlock their ideas and make sure improvements actually happen. The public deserve to know how their money has been spent and wasted and what we are going to do to put things right. We will report quarterly, publicly and without spin. Transparency is the only way to rebuild trust. I must stress that this is not just about fixing old problems. It must be about putting in place the discipline and culture that means that we do not end up here again. We must meet the bar which the public rightly expect from their public service, not unreasonably. The community needs to see action, not excuses. By being honest about what went wrong and taking firm steps to fix it, we can start to restore the trust that has been damaged over many years.

165 170 175 Madam, it brings me and the Policy & Resources Committee no pleasure to say this, but we and this States have inherited this mess but it is now this States' job to sort it out. It has been a depressing find in the in-tray on top of the other challenges we already knew we had this term. As we get more information the Committee, working with Deputy Laine, will give consideration to whether and how best to utilise the other skills available from among colleagues in the States of Deliberation. This work will not be completed overnight but it must and will now be relentless and focused on outcomes. Our ambition is simple: a public service that is accountable, efficient and worthy of the trust placed on it. To deliver that will require sustained commitment, strong oversight and a willingness to confront uncomfortable truths, but it is essential if we are to deliver the public service our community deserves. The Chief Executive is committed to this reform and the

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180 Policy & Resources Committee is committed to the openness and transparency needed to rebuild trust. We are committed to ensuring accountability. We are committed to not shying away from the inevitable difficult decisions that will result. We are committed to keeping the States of Deliberation informed through our General Statements and as necessary additional Statements such as this one.

185 In the meantime, I will attempt to answer the very many questions Members will no doubt have - I see Deputy Helyar is about to be first on his feet, madam – although I must warn Members that at this point I may well have frustratingly few clear or satisfactory answers.

Thank you, madam.

190 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Helyar.

195 **Deputy Helyar:** Thank you, madam.

Can I echo Deputy St Pier's support for frontline services and, indeed, for the CEO who is here today. We really do need to get behind them, I think. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

200 My question would be I feel Deputy St Pier's pain. I have had to deal with a lot of these issues myself when I was in his current role. I have to say that we cannot afford to stop and conduct a post-mortem. We are running a football match here. We need to consider substituting some of the players and I think we need to do that urgently. Will he assure me that he will work with the CEO to consider whether there are any urgent management changes which need to be made?

205 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

210 **Deputy St Pier:** Madam, inevitably I do not want to prejudge the outcome of the work which is just beginning. I absolutely understand Deputy Helyar's point. As I have said, the Committee is committed to ensuring accountability. I have made that very clear in the Statement and the consequences of that, but I cannot predict what that actually means in practice. Absolutely – and Deputy Laine made this point very clear with us yesterday – we need to deal with the here and now but at the same time we also need to get a grip and understand what went wrong before we have any chance at all of it not happening again.

215 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

220 **Deputy Gollop:** Thank you very much, Madam Deputy President.

225 Deputy St Pier made the assertion that too many Deputies may be either asleep at the wheel or are like mushrooms, perhaps, sitting in the dark. I do know that already the new CEO and the new P&R are consulting with Members and Committees about project management reforms, which is very encouraging. My question is: will the future perhaps involve more of a sub-committee approach of P&R, where there is political oversight and where there is training given to States' Members to monitor and regulate projects, and also on occasions States' Members being more proactive in being involved with projects, rather than delegating them and then finding they do not know what has gone on?

230 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** Thank you, madam; thank you, Deputy Gollop.

To be clear, I was not asserting that previous politicians were asleep at the wheel but we need to establish whether that was the case or whether they were being kept in the dark. We are aware of previous projects where that appears to have been the case, where the information was not passed on. So we need to establish whether that was the case or not.

In relation to the matter of sub-committees, we certainly are giving consideration to the overall governance of capital projects, exactly as we have said. The Chief Executive is consulting on that and the Policy & Resources Committee will be giving further consideration to that in due course.

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We are also giving consideration to, as I indicated in my Statement, how we can utilise the skills within this Assembly and whether that forms some kind of sub-committee specifically related to this project is another issue.

235 In relation to training, we also recognise the need for training and, in fact, in a meeting with Deputy Rochester this week we have identified that in relation to the ongoing financial management of Committees there may well be a piece of work which would be of assistance to the Committees. Again, there will be further information coming from the Policy & Resources Committee on that imminently. That, to be frank, is a slightly separate issue, but I think it links in to the need for training  
240 when we look at these issues.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Rochester.

245 **Deputy Rochester:** I would like to thank Deputy St Pier for his frank honesty, and I find his speech to be heartbreakingly frank. That said, thank you to Deputy Laine and to Boley for their hard work on this topic and bringing it to our attention.

250 Obviously, temporary panels have a role to play in advising and scrutinising, but I think it is fair to say that we are missing a piece of the puzzle in the way that we go about ensuring public funds are spent sensibly, change is managed well and risk is managed well. Would Deputy St Pier accept that there is a need for a more permanent and professional resource in the form of an Auditor General, as is in place in the Isle of Man and Jersey, to ensure that there is sufficient scrutiny of the way we spend public funds over time?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

255 **Deputy St Pier:** Madam, I admire Deputy Rochester's pursuit of her agenda on the question of the Auditor General.

260 I certainly agree that the temporary panel that we refer to as the IT Advisory Panel has been set up as temporary and it is certainly the intention to review it in 12 months and determine its longevity. The question of the governance of capital projects I have already referred to in my answer to the previous question with Deputy Gollop.

265 Again, I do not wish to leap to the conclusion that Deputy Rochester has. However, I think we can certainly see the value of these Audit Committees and, indeed, auditor general-type approaches in other jurisdictions. I certainly think it is an issue that ought to be given consideration as part of this process. However, there are more immediate challenges, which I think was implicit in Deputy Rochester's question. With limited resources which the Chief Executive has available to him, we have to focus on the immediate.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

270 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Madam, during the Budget debate I made the point that the second Committee by spend is no longer a Committee that is delivering frontline services but it is P&R together with the corporate services budget line. Since the financial transformation project 10 years ago, there has been a massive drive of centralisation of services into the centre, but it seems this is fundamentally where the failures are coming from. We talk about IT. We talk about the Revenue Service. We talk about capital project delivery. Would the Vice-President perhaps agree with me that there has to be a fundamental rethink about the delivery of corporate services and the governance around it and this has to be nothing short of something transformational because the failures are fundamentally coming from that centre?

280 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

285 **Deputy St Pier:** Again, I would not wish to prejudge the outcome of the work. We obviously cannot prove the counterfactual with what would have happened if some of the centralisation had not taken place. Also, of course, that centralisation is largely around the delivery of ongoing services, whether that is HR or finance support or IT services or property, indeed. Actually, primarily what has brought us to this place today and to the Statement today has been projects and project management. That is where our immediate focus is, but I absolutely do take the point.

290 We are not prejudging that. We will follow the evidence. We will follow the work that has now been initiated by the Chief Executive. As we have said, we will be open and transparent and we will bring recommendations to this Assembly as necessary. Whether that includes the reforms that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has suggested I cannot say at this stage, but I also do not rule them out.

295 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

300 305 **Deputy Inder:** Would the Treasury Minister agree with me that the States of Guernsey is largely a dysfunctional client, and is ripe pickings for unscrupulous suppliers? In my experience, and this [inaudible] has it right from the Future Digital Services, straight after that it was fairly clear to me, who has been in IT for a while, that we have literally no skilled contract managers at all. A former States, under its leadership, had approved an FDS that effectively had no chance of success, no chance of success given the structure. I would encourage him – I could make it a political moment but I will not because it is so serious. Might he agree that he will consider that when we do look at these contracts we have specific people with the specific skills to manage these contracts properly, with real accountability and no Policy Letter [inaudible] which we got in the 2019 FDS Policy Letter?

310 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** Madam, thank you to Deputy Inder for his question.

315 I think the question or the observation that perhaps the States has been a dysfunctional client, I think that probably came through quite strongly in the work of the Scrutiny Management Committee and their review of the contract under Deputy Burford's leadership in the previous term and their report. Clearly, at the time that the FDS programme was approved and the contracts were approved, it was always intended that the States would have described itself as needing to have an intelligent plant functioning. Now, that appears not to have happened and no doubt that is one of the root causes not only of the loss of the contract potentially for Agilisys, which may have many reasons, of course, but also for some of the project issues that we are now talking about.

320 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Sloane.

**Deputy Sloane:** Madam, thank you.

325 I will set aside my curiosity about the governance arrangements of the work until the terms of references are published, which I assume they will be for another day. I thank Deputy St Pier for his Statement, although very sadly to hear such a shocking catalogue of waste of public funds running into tens of millions of pounds. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) I welcome his commitment to transparency and accountability for without accountability you cannot improve. In that guise, may I ask Deputy St Pier, does he believe in the principle that the buck must stop somewhere and that the objective of the review must be to determine that?

330 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** Yes.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

335      **Deputy Gabriel:** Thank you, ma'am.

I would like to focus on the Revenue Service part of the update, which I thank Deputy St Pier for. Many people are experiencing the effects of the cost-of-living crisis and are due funds back from the Revenue Service. Just when will they expect them? When will the Revenue Service be fit for purpose and at what cost?

340      **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

345      **Deputy St Pier:** I absolutely understand the question, and Deputy Gabriel is right to focus on it. People who have submitted their returns and received an assessment that shows they are entitled to a tax refund are entitled to receive it in a timely manner and that has not been delivered. That is a service which is unacceptably below standard. It is, as I indicated, the highest priority at the moment for the frontline staff to process those repayments.

350      As to the second part of Deputy Gabriel's questions as to the timing and how much it will cost, I regret that I am not in a position today because I do not have the information to be able to say how long this is going to take to enable all those repayments to be made or, indeed, the cost of ensuring that the system does become *[inaudible]*.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Cameron.

355      **Deputy Cameron:** Thank you, ma'am.

360      Given that all major IT projects are over budget and not delivering, why are we still opting for bespoke systems like the electronic patient record (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) instead of proven, cloud-based options already used in other jurisdictions? We have partnered successfully with Google in education and seen the benefits of using established platforms. Can I have assurance that similar partnerships and opportunities will be fully explored before progressing bespoke solutions?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

365      **Deputy St Pier:** Yes, once again at the risk of repeating myself – but it probably does no harm - I am grateful to Deputy Cameron for his question, which I think is an entirely valid one. Again, I do not wish to prejudge the outcome of the work, but I think his observation that bespoke systems are often extremely difficult to implement, certainly on time and on budget, may well be, I would suggest, one of the issues in relation to the Revenue Service transformation programme, which has been very much a bespoke project. So the observation is valid. Again, I am not going to prejudge the outcome of the work other than to acknowledge the development.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Blin.

375      **Deputy Blin:** Thank you, ma'am.

380      It pains us to hear the list of cost overruns, the electronic patient record (EPR), the MyGov failures, but it is a strong action to actually now state what we are going to try to do, including identifying causes and taking action now. So what I would like to ask of Deputy St Pier is would he consider, to avoid the situation as Deputy Gollop said of mushrooms, to have some form of reporting system for all Deputies at an interim agreed within reason to ensure that we are kept aware and therefore we can as a whole be able to communicate and follow up?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

385      **Deputy St. Pier:** Yes, absolutely, madam. The Committee is committed, as I said in my Statement on behalf of the Committee, to as much openness and transparency as is possible, not only with Members of the States of Deliberation but with the public.

Clearly everyone has different communication needs in terms of the quantum and how they receive information, so we would need to take that on board. But we are determined to certainly keep Members as fully informed as we can, and we will welcome input as to how that can best be achieved.

390 I am grateful to Deputy Blin for his question.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Given the importance of the subject and the relatively small amount of business in today's meeting, I will extend the period of questioning.

395 Deputy Matthews.

**Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, ma'am.

It has been a constant source of frustration – certainly me in my role on the Committee for Health & Social Care – that it is often the case that updates that have been provided to politicians and 400 Committees have subsequently shown to be inaccurate or missing key information.

Given the very welcome commitment to a greater degree of openness and transparency, what additional steps can be taken to ensure that due candour is applied for the information that politicians are proved with?

405 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** I am not sure quite how to answer Deputy Matthews on that here this morning, other than his observation, as with others this morning, is spot on; that the free flow of information 410 at a political level has clearly not enabled governance to operate politically as it should, as we would wish.

Again, we really do need to understand what information was being relayed when and what people knew and what they were doing with it. I am not in a position, because the Committee have 415 simply not yet seen that, and I do not think that work has yet been extracted as a result of the initiative begun by the Chief Executive already. But we clearly need to understand that to get to the point where there is, as Deputy Matthews described it, a duty of candour on behalf of those who are advising Committees.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen.

420 **Deputy Vermeulen:** Thank you ma'am; I thank the Vice-President for his update.

What he has described is a legacy of systemic failure. I can remember Deputy St Pier giving an update at the Chamber of Commerce some five years ago about the appointment of Agilisys and that was going to save the States £100 million.

The buck keeps rolling. I just wonder, at end of it, who is responsible? There are various names 425 of previous people by the bucket, but where does the buck stop? Who is responsible for this?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** I do not know, but as I said in response to the previous question to 430 Deputy Sloan, we are committed to the accountability. The buck clearly must stop somewhere, but until we have lifted the drains to see where the failures have been, it is difficult to give a definitive response into where the accountability therefore lies.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

435 **Deputy Inder:** While we have Deputy St Pier and the Chief Officer in the room, I am having another Cassandra moment. I did not vote for the system because I knew this day would come.

440 At the time, there were options on the table to look for off-the-shelf packages and there was work ongoing with some of the doctors' groups to look at other solutions which would not have been this expensive.

441 Could I ask, either by scrutiny or while we have the ear of the Chief Officer in the room, if he could give particular focus on that and find out how on earth we got to this point of £18 million and an undelivered project.

445 It is a scandal, Deputy St Pier, I hope you understand. I am here to help but this is entirely a scandal. Headlines are going to be awful tomorrow and for many days.

450 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Before you answer, Deputy St Pier, can I just remind Members that it is important – particularly on a day like today, when the meeting we have – that everybody addresses their questions and responses through me. It is important that it is done with appropriate etiquette.

451 Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** Thank you, madam.

I think Deputy Inder began his question by directing the question to the Chief Executive to ensure that he considered that. As he is in the room, I am sure he has taken that on board.

455 To be clear, Deputy Inder was conflating a number of projects. The electronic patient record system has started to deliver, but I do take the point that he was making that, as indeed Deputy Cameron said, there may have been off-the-peg, out-of-the-box alternatives to it. It is possible that Deputy Oswald may have more to say on that in her opening statement with questions afterwards.

460 The £18 million is in relation to the MyGov project, but certainly the electronic patient record system is late and is now costing more than was originally estimated. Understanding that, while it is not in the top two priorities identified in my Statement – mainly Revenue Services and MyGov – we clearly need to take that on board as well, because this is all about project management and goes back to Deputy Matthew's question about governance earlier.

465 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne.

**Deputy Ozanne:** Thank you, ma'am.

470 First question. I do want to thank Deputy St Pier for his transparency and honesty and his pragmatism in deciding to extend the revenue deadline to 31st January. I would also like to thank the Chief Executive and his staff because I know they are working often with their hands, as you have said, tied behind their back to very tight deadlines on other IT problems, not just the ones that he has listed. There is, it seems, a plethora of problems.

475 For me, the big concern is our tone of communication with the public. Deputy St Pier has set a tone today, but that is not always shown through the communication of the Revenue Service with our Islanders. I want to back up what Deputy Gabriel has said about the concern people have and the timelines in the money coming back.

480 So, will the Revenue Service look at the tone of its correspondence with Islanders, and the demands that threaten that if people have not done their returns in time, they will seek legal action? Will they look at a different way of communicating with the public so that we can build trust longer term?

485 Thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** I think the tone of communication coming out of what was Income Tax and then the Revenue Service has been raised over a number of years. It perhaps reflects in many cases nearer in terms of the relationship between the taxpayer and the taxing authority.

490 Of course, we have got a new head, who literally arrived this week or last week, with – I would hope – a background that would be more sensitive to the issues that Deputy Ozanne has raised.

Again, with the benefit of the Chief Executive in the room and no doubt others listening, I think the comment which Deputy Ozanne has made is a valid one. It is certainly one that has been observed before, and certainly the Committee will be raising this.

495 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Curgenven.

**Deputy Curgenven:** Thank you, madam; and I thank Deputy St Pier for his statement.

500 Firstly, I think the P&R should be commended for admitting that things are not going well and for its ongoing commitment to an open, transparent and accountable Government. I would also like to place on record my recognition of the Chief Executive's efforts.

In a similar vein to Deputy Ozanne, I am aware of local businesses that have been erroneously summonsed to court by the state for not paying either both Income Tax or Social Tax. Will Policy & Resources consider putting a halt on all summons in respect of alleged non-payment of these taxes?

505 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** I thank Deputy Curgenven for the question.

510 He is right; clearly if people have received either what appears to be threatening correspondence or indeed action for recovering sums that are not due, that is extremely stressful for those individuals and businesses. But also, it is a waste of resources and time and we are creating more demand in the system, which is preventing those at the front line actually getting on with their job.

515 Having said that, of course, there will be demands that do need to be pursued. So, I think that putting a blanket halt on all claims would not necessarily be the right approach. But certainly, again, I would hope that the observation that has been made is one that the officers will take away and consider how they can properly ensure that they are pursuing, if you like, the 'right people' that they need to be pursuing.

That is clearly going to be a real challenge if the system is producing erroneous information as to who is owing what. The need for us to get on top of the system and ensure it is functional is one of the urgencies which, again, has been identified by we involved in it.

520 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Niles.

525 **Deputy Niles:** I thank Deputy St Pier for giving us this honest update, but it seems to me that we are often and regularly taken by surprise by these things, and we are taken by surprise at the same time as the general public are.

530 Would he agree with me that it might be time to consider how we carry out and scrutinise both our internal projects and our arm's length bodies? For some time now, we have thought that we could fulfil this by simply having political representation sitting on boards or arm's length bodies, without necessarily having the technical expertise to be able to deliver the results that we want, and then we are suddenly taken by surprise again.

With Scrutiny in its current function spread very thinly, do you think it is an opportunity to marry your work that you were doing together with a review of how we scrutinise this?

535 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** I am grateful to Deputy Niles for his question.

I can absolutely assure him that, even before we were aware of this, that question of reviewing the governance of projects in particular and ensuring that it can be done effectively – and it comes back also to the question not only of who does it, but have they got the right skills and training,

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540 and have they been trained sufficiently to do it – was already in train. It has obviously been given added urgency as a result of this.

545 In terms of everyone being surprised by this, I think it is probably worth putting a bit of colour and detail on the Policy & Resources knowledge of this. The President and I were briefed on this two weeks ago, following which, within a matter of days, the entire Committee was briefed, from which the determination was made to bring this matter to the States at the earliest opportunity.

I can hopefully reassure Deputy Niles that, while it is unacceptable – the level of surprise which we all have – Policy & Resources has been determined to ensure that this is surfaced as quickly as possible and that every Member of this States of Deliberation has the same information that we currently have. We are not keeping anything from this Government.

550 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Camp.

**Deputy Camp:** Thank you, madam.

555 Clearly this is going to cost a lot of money to put right. In the Budget debate we heard this general idea that when we put money into fixing things, i.e. Moneyval and other projects, they just basically get passed into the BAU and there is an implication that this becomes the cost of the public service. Can you please give an undertaking to the taxpayers that they will not be expected to carry the pain of this cost forever and a day?

Thank you.

560 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Can I remind Members again that it is important to address your questions through me. It is not a direct question to the Deputy.

Deputy St Pier.

565 **Deputy St Pier:** I am grateful to Deputy Camp for the question.

It is clearly unacceptable that the taxpayer has to bear the cost of what is inexcusable waste. In terms of the taxpayer having to carry it 'forever and a day' I think will be the question. Clearly that has to be avoided, but the only way we can avoid that is by ensuring that this does not happen again, which obviously requires this work to be undertaken in terms of understanding where the problems are and what changes need to be made.

570 I regret, again – simply because we do not yet know how much this is going to cost, because we do not really know the entire scale of the problem. All we have been able to do is surface the things that we told Members of the States of Deliberation today.

575 As soon as we have a better indication of cost, I can assure Deputy Camp that we will keep Members of the States of Deliberation informed.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Strachan.

**Deputy Strachan:** Thank you, ma'am.

580 I would like to thank Deputy St Pier for the update. I share Deputy Sloan's shock about the situation that we are currently in; I also share Deputy Gollop's concern about the need for better training and expertise in monitoring these large projects. I am pleased to see that this is going to be addressed.

585 I wanted to explore the role of our local IT experts. These experts were keen to be involved in the initial tender, but they were not selected. I am pleased that some local businesses are now being offered that role – and successfully so – post the Agilisys era. Could the Treasury Minister please ensure that these experts will be involved (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) with the IT Panel?

I also wanted a supplementary question, if possible, with reference to Deputy Camp's comment.

590 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Strachan, you are not limited to the number of questions, so it would be appropriate for Deputy St Pier to answer this question and then you can ask another question.

Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** Thank you to Deputy Strachan for the question.

595 In relation to the use of local IT experts, absolutely that is the purpose of the IT Advisory Panel; to enable that expertise to be brought to the table, as was recommended by the Scrutiny Management Committee.

600 Deputy Laine will be working to bring people into that Panel, so I would certainly suggest that if Deputy Strachan has anyone in mind that perhaps she might wish to liaise with Deputy Laine in order that that be taken on board.

605 But absolutely, the Committee recognised – not only in this area, but also in the area of financial management and governance, and indeed more generally project management and governance – that there is a lot of experience in this Island, which we need to find better ways of tapping into. At the moment our processes are very good at excluding that talent, and that has to be one of the things which we must have a determination to change, to exploit the very generous offers that we often have.

610 Indeed, the Policy & Resources Committee are seeking to do that in other ways. For example, in our meeting yesterday we took advantage of input from one of our insurance experts in advising us on our uninsured packages and so on. We are determined to use that.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Goy.

**Deputy Goy:** Thank you, madam.

615 Before I speak, just a disclosure. I have worked in States' IT for many years, from the time before it was privatised and during when it was privatised too.

I can say categorically as a fact that the biggest reason we have a £135 million IT debacle is because we have non-technical people in management making technical decisions. That has always been the case before it was privatised and after it was privatised.

620 My question to Deputy St Pier is, when are we going to finally get engineers to be on the management team? Because, you know what, anybody can claim to be an expert. They could be running some local business but that does not mean they are an expert.

A real expert is an expert in the technical areas of IT, and that person must be an IT engineer to qualify as an expert to be able to make the technical decisions required in IT.

625 This is my question: when are we going to have that panel? When are we going to have a real panel of engineers?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Goy, you have gone well over your minute.

**Deputy Goy:** Thank you.

630 **Deputy St Pier:** I am grateful to Deputy Goy for his question; I think it builds on comments which others have made.

635 I think the reality is – not only for us as politicians but, as Deputy Goy suggests, for the States more generally – we are often reliant on those who are less expert in a particular area, they are more generalist.

Again, without wishing to prejudge the work that is being undertaken, all I can do really is acknowledge and recognise the comment which Deputy Goy has made. Certainly, one of the comments which Deputy Laine has given to us is the absence of having good system architects in building and designing and running our systems.

640 These are all issues and we, as a Committee, recognise that we do not have the expertise. We need to ensure that we do get the appropriate advice, as I have said, not just in this area; it may well apply in other areas as well. I have already indicated, for example, insurance.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

645 We will carry on until 11.20.

**Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** Thank you, ma'am.

650 This follows on from Deputy Kazantseva-Miller's point about the centralisation. Would the Policy & Resources Committee agree to support SACC in examining the centralisation in terms of how the Committee system was envisaged to operate and how the civil servant structure now sits around the Committees? This is potentially why we are sitting with the problem that we are having now; that the Committee structure was envisaged in a different era of corporate governance around it and, by centralising so many services in the way that we have, we have lost the accountability and the way that the Committees are now operating is not as envisaged.

655 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

660 **Deputy St Pier:** Again, without wishing to prejudge any of the work that is being done, it is not immediately obvious that the challenges around project management have resulted from the change in the Committee structure and the centralisation that Deputy Hansmann Rouxel has referred to.

665 Having said that, nothing is off the table. I think all of these issues certainly need to be considered but, as ever, I am really emphasising the point again about priorities. We need to support the Chief Executive and give him the time and space to work out where the real priorities are for him to allow this work to progress, rather than us trying to do everything all at once.

670 I absolutely do not rule out the kind of work that Deputy Hansmann Rouxel has referred to, but I think we do have more immediate priorities. These are, as Deputy Laine has indicated, to fix some of the immediate problems and also get to the root – do the root cause analysis before we start trying to fix things without knowing how they have been broken.

675 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Helyar.

**Deputy Helyar:** Thank you, ma'am.

680 I would like to ask a question about confidence, because when I was the Treasury lead, there was an incident involving IT where several million pounds worth of servers were melted and nobody was held responsible for it. It is very difficult when you are asking the same management – who in the private sector would have been held responsible for these failings and already exited (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) – why things went wrong.

685 How are we going to build confidence when we are asking the people who are responsible for this problem why it happened?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

685 **Deputy St Pier:** I think all I can safely do at this point, madam, is just give Deputy Helyar the reassurance again that we are determined to ensure accountability. The Chief Executive is determined to ensure accountability and understands that he has this full support of the Policy & Resources Committee in doing that. What that looks like is not for today, but no doubt will be.

690 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Last question from Deputy van Katwyk.

**Deputy van Katwyk:** Thank you, ma'am; and I thank Policy & Resources for beginning to conduct this drain-lifting exercise.

My question comes off the back of Deputy Gabriel's. I think shock and surprise will soon give way to frustration and anger, so can we please give the public some light at the end of the tunnel

695 and commit to having a timeline of if you are told in X month that you are due a return, then in Y month that return should be coming to you. Does that make sense?

Thank you.

700 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** Deputy van Katwyk is right to refer to the shock and also, quite rightly, that will quickly be replaced by frustration and anger. We understand that and the Committee feels that as much as anyone else.

705 As I said in my response to Deputy Gabriel, I am not in a position at this point to give timelines. Not only on the Revenue Service, but on the bigger piece of work that the Chief Executive has begun.

All I can do is reiterate that the Committee brought this to the Assembly as quickly as possible. We will continue to keep the Members of the States of Deliberation informed as quickly as we can and to keep everybody updated, both in and outside and publicly as well.

710 No doubt, Members of this Assembly will hold us to account for the commitments which we have now given publicly today.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you. That brings to the end the questioning in relation to the Vice-President's Statement under Rule 10(3).

#### **General Update –**

#### **Statement by the President of the Committee for Health & Social Care**

715 **The Deputy Bailiff:** We therefore turn to the President of the Committee for Health & Social Care to give his General Update under Rule 10(4).

**Deputy Oswald:** Madam, fellow Deputies, it is with pride that I stand before the Assembly today as President of the Committee for Health & Social Care, which employs over 2,000 staff and provides a very wide range of health and care services to our community. I am not standing in front of you as a lone voice, but as that of a Committee which is fully committed to collegiate working.

720 In anticipation of our considerable workload, delegated roles have been established or are being developed for Committee members. Members' interests will continue to be nurtured, including the use of new technology in the health sphere, both helpful and potentially harmful, as in the influence of social media on young people's mental health.

725 There is much to celebrate about our health and care system. Most Islanders can access same-day GP appointments. We do not have long waiting times in the Emergency Department. We have a consultant-led secondary healthcare service that offers very high-quality care. We have a dedicated workforce of health and social care professionals who work tirelessly to support, treat and care for Islanders, often at their time of greatest need.

730 Demographic change inevitably influences the demand for and funding of health and care services. One of the Committee's key priorities for this political term will be to develop a sustainable health and care system. Our work will include a fundamental review of the whole system of the delivery and funding of health and care, including a review of those services that might be most effectively delivered by primary care, a review of medicines and the role of community pharmacies, a review of a secondary health care contract, and consideration of which services can be delivered most effectively by commissioning from the third sector. The Committee is committed to submit for consideration a bespoke programme suitable in scale and size for our Island by the end of our term of office.

To the States, and particularly to our Treasury colleagues, the burgeoning cost of health and care dominates discussion. The Committee acknowledges the need to make savings. Indeed, some savings were factored into our Budget submission.

745 In association with our colleagues at the Medical Specialist Group, we continue to repatriate work previously done off-Island to reduce expenditure. It is to the benefit of our service users that, where possible, major operations are carried out closer to home and family. The Revision Joint Replacement Scheme, a complex area surgery that used to be handled in Exeter, is now managed locally.

750 Nevertheless, the Committee recognises significant challenges facing us. We have forecast a net rise in health and social care budget year on year if we do not change the way that we deliver services. The figure that needs to be mitigated varies between £6 million and £8 million of extra resources required per annum.

755 Inevitably, the discussion will be around who pays for what, how much should the user contribute, and the means for doing this. Approximately 60% of the net healthcare budget is spent on staffing costs. Attention has been focused on the use of expensive agency staff. I am pleased to say that the use of agency staff has substantially declined in recent years, from approximately £16 million in 2023 to £12 million in 2024, with a further reduction of nearly £3 million forecast for this year. Albeit some service areas remain hard to recruit to and continue to be major users of agency staff.

760 The Committee is committed to prioritising prevention and early intervention. This essentially refers to the long-term aim to reduce the burden of acute and expensive interventions further down the line. Examples of effective upstream prevention can be seen in the newly funded roll-out of a pilot study of weight loss drugs for those with health conditions related to defined levels of obesity, provided alongside dietary and lifestyle advice.

765 No healthcare reform can be achieved without reform of social care, and our Committee is fully supportive of the work being progressed to deliver the Supported Living and Ageing Well Strategy, known as SLAWS. We will work with Policy & Resources and the Committee for Employment & Social Security to ensure a financially sustainable model of long-term care is created that is both still in existence when the present generation of funders have access to the scheme in their years of need, and to provide increasing community support for those requiring domiciliary care.

770 At the same time, we must not forget the 'ageing well' part of the SLAW Strategy. Supporting this part of a community to have active, healthy and happy lives, free from loneliness, will prolong active and independent living and reduce the burden of support placed upon the States.

775 We will also work with other Committees to focus on children and families for family-friendly policies and to support early years programmes in young people's mental health services. Demand continues to rise for young people's services. Referrals to the Multi-Agency Support Hub, known as MASH, have grown significantly in recent years and are running at between 150 and 250 every month. Furthermore, a failure to address the mental health needs of an increasing proportion of our young population will have significant consequences to the States in forthcoming years, with an inevitable rise in the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training.

780 The Committee is planning to co-locate a range of community health and care services for children and their families on the Raymond Falla House site. These services are currently dispersed across eight separate sites. This has led to inefficiencies, poor user experience and operational challenges, as well as difficulties in recruitment and retention due to substandard working environments. The project will release a number of sites owned by the States that could be better used for housing or other purposes. The Committee will bring an outline business case and policy letter to the Assembly for consideration during 2026.

790 A year ago, almost to the day, my predecessor, Deputy Al Brouard, stood up to present his penultimate Presidential address. Specific mention was made of the hospital modernisation and electronic patient record programmes. A commitment was made to keep the States informed on the timelines which, with respect to the opening phase one, was anticipated as bringing this project into clinical use as soon as reasonably practical in 2025.

795 Members of the States and the public will know that this target has not been achieved. This delay, while deeply regrettable, is unavoidable and stems from the remedial issues that must be addressed by the contractor before the new units can safely operate. While we hope we will be able to open the units in 2026, this is dependent on the contractor rectifying the identified defects. I am pleased to announce that we have recently agreed that the contractor will take back responsibility for the site, which should speed up the process.

800 The news is positive for phase two of the hospital modernisation project. Phase two was originally envisaged to provide additional theatre capacity alongside a new-build rehousing of multiple clinical areas. In October 2023, the States agreed to fund phase two at a total cost of £120 million.

805 Following an increase in the estimated cost, a value engineering report was completed, bringing the project's expected costings closer to the £120 million approved, but with the split of the project into phases 2A, which is predominantly new-build, including maternity and theatres, and 2B, which is predominantly refurbishment, notably of the Emergency Department, subject to clinical reappraisals.

810 I am pleased to say that with the input of a healthcare planner, the healthcare construction project management company, our local teams and the Committee itself, such reappraisal is approaching completion. Further appreciable design changes to reflect our falling birth rate and the modern provision of maternity care have been realised. An outline business case and Policy Letter will be brought to the States during 2026.

815 I can also provide an update on the electronic patient record programme. After some historic challenges, as previously reported and referred to by Deputy St Pier in his statement, I am pleased to say that we have some news. The initial release of the EPR for Child Health, Children's Services and Community Services successfully went live in August.

820 The next and main release of the programme to replace TrakCare with the new EPR is expected to go live in the first quarter of 2026. While this is later than originally planned, it is a very important step forward in building a strong digital foundation for continued improvements in service delivery and care. We have already involved – and I thank Deputy Marc Laine for his advice on and support of the EPR programme to date – a role which is being developed further.

825 I am very conscious of the adage, 'Promise little and deliver much'. Very relevant when I consider the considerable task awaiting us at HSC. I have every confidence in the new Committee in achieving much of what we set out to do, recognising that progression of this work may continue into the next term.

830 Finally, a public health plug both to Members of the Assembly and the wider public. We are potentially facing a very difficult flu season. Please protect yourselves and others by getting a flu jab, and do not forget to renew or take out a St John's ambulance subscription. As I myself found out recently, you never know when you may need it.

835 I thank you, madam and Members for your time and patience in listening to the Statement and I await your questions with interest.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen.

835 **Deputy Vermeulen:** Thank you, ma'am.

There have been great strides made in medicine that can treat age-related macular degeneration. Would the President be able to tell me, is Vabysmo prescribed to Guernsey residents? And if not, what other drugs are prescribed?

840 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

**Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, madam. Thank you, Deputy Vermeulen, for that very interesting question.

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845 I am aware of correspondence related to the use of Vabysmo, and I have asked the Chief Pharmacist for her view on the role of drugs related to macular degeneration. As you point out, this is an important advance in medical therapy, which was not available until relatively recently.

I am told that there is an ongoing review in place for agents such as the Vabysmo in the treatment of this process. But it must be understood, of course, that the prevailing treatments, which are available at the present time, continue to be available.

850 I understand the reason why the use of Vabysmo has been questioned, but I cannot answer any further on that point at this moment.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Falla.

855 **Deputy Falla:** Could the President please give an update on action in response to the 2024 Misuse of Drugs Advisory Group (MDAG) report into the reduction of the diversion of controlled drugs in the Bailiwick of Guernsey. Such controlled drugs include opioids and medicinal cannabis.

860 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

**Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, Deputy Falla, for that very important question.

I share my Committee's view that this is a major area of concern. I believe that Home Affairs also considers this a major area of concern. It is a joint work in progress between the two Committees.

865 I am aware of Deputy Falla's interest in this area; just yesterday we discussed the wider broadcasting of the MDAG report. I can report to you that the Committee has approved the update on the MDAG Implementation Plan being shared with members of the Committee for Home Affairs and the Policy & Resources Committee, and we envisage discussions jointly with Home Affairs as to how we progress that Implementation Plan.

870 We have also approved the sharing of the whole of the MDAG report with the Policy & Resources Committee for their perusal.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Falla.

875 **Deputy Falla:** A supplementary please, madam.

Specifically, will a regulatory framework for unregulated medicinal cannabis prescribing clinics be in scope?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

880 **Deputy Oswald:** Absolutely.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez.

885 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Thank you, madam; and I thank Deputy Oswald for his comprehensive statement, which included much that I welcome.

I was heartened to hear of the Committee's focus on early intervention and prevention. Deputy Oswald made specific reference to weight loss drugs. I do understand very promising potential, but I am also a little bit wary of perhaps a tendency to reach for a prescription as an easier option than some other forms of early intervention and prevention. I am just seeking some reassurance from the Committee that they will keep an eye on the cost-benefit analysis, given that we do not have very much longitudinal data at the moment about how long people might need to be on weight-loss drugs and also other concerns around people who are not necessarily problematically overweight using them and the role that they may be playing in eating disorders.

895 I just wondered whether I could have some assurance that the Committee will be keeping a broad enough focus to examine those issues as well.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

900 **Deputy Oswald:** Madam, I thank Deputy de Saumarez for her very interesting question. The reason for the interest in the weight loss drugs in terms of prevention is data coming out from longitudinal services carried out mainly in Europe of an impact which happens very quickly with the use of those drugs in people at risk.

905 The problem with most preventive interventions is that the actual long-term tail of that is some 20 years in the future. The use of the weight loss drugs has shown a significant benefit in most of the issues related to obesity in the short term. The medical problems related to obesity extend from the standard things of heart disease, stroke, cancer, dementia, and obviously orthopaedic and joint problems. That is the reason why I have pushed this usage. If the Deputy wishes to have more information on this, the Tony Blair Foundation has done a very interesting report on this, which we 910 used.

915 If you look at the river of intervention, you have got the bridge at the bottom end – this is an analogy that is used a lot, where we are trying to pick up the pieces – and at the top end you have interventions. You are quite right; we do not want to have to medicalise prevention. So there is an area above that intervention where we could perhaps avoid that. We will certainly not be ignoring that factor, but we have to recognise that if we want quick bangs for our bucks, we have to possibly resort to medication as appropriate.

You are quite right; this is a pilot study. By the time the pilot study is supported, and for instance I am particularly interested in –

920 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald, I am terribly sorry, even though it is really interesting, I am afraid you are going over your one minute and 30 seconds, so I am going to —

**Deputy Oswald:** Sorry. There was a second question from Deputy de Saumarez as well.

925 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne.

**Deputy Ozanne:** Thank you, ma'am.

I wonder if the President could say whether our complaints and whistleblowing processes across HSC, but particularly within our secondary care sector, are fit for purpose.

930 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

**Deputy Oswald:** Thank you for that question.

935 This is a question the current Committee want to challenge again. We have a joint governance process between ourselves and the Medical Specialist Group which was set up in line with similar services and similar programmes based in the NHS. Recent events have shown us that maybe this needs to be looked at again.

940 We are very interested in similar issues faced by our colleagues in Home Affairs who have also faced questioning on their complaints processes. We look with interest at the way they are going through that process, so this is a work in progress.

Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Deputy Leadbeater.

945 **Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, madam.

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950 Off the back of Deputy Falla's question about prescription medication diversion, can the President tell me – and I look forward to the joint meeting that we are going to have because this is an important piece of work – but Deputy Falla mentioned medicinal cannabis. There is a States' direction for HSC to examine the legal status of cannabis from last term, which was quite right from WPS; I want to know how much progress HSC has made on that piece of work.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

955 **Deputy Oswald:** To be fair, we have not actually looked at that yet. We have been in our post for about four months. We are aware of that commitment made by the States, and we look forward to further discussions with the Committee for Home Affairs on this particular aspect.

960 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you, Deputy Oswald.

Deputy Sloan.

**Deputy Sloan:** Thank you, madam; thank you very much to Deputy Oswald for his statement.

965 I very much welcome the commitment to a review of expenditures. I am sure he is aware that the Institute for Fiscal Studies points to healthcare spending in the UK being 10% of total public expenditure in the 1950s and is now 30% today. It crowds out other public expenditures.

I also welcome his commitment to bringing forward two Policy Letters regarding projects next year. In that vein, is he aware that Scrutiny is in the middle of a review of property services? We recently had our public hearing, within which we were interested to hear about KPIs and measurement of efficiencies, or the lack thereof.

970 Will he give a commitment that in the Policy Letters that he brings next year, in terms of operational efficiencies there will be quantifiable targets provided and operational KPIs included for gains in those reports, please?

975 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

**Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, madam.

This is a complex question, as one could expect from Deputy Sloan. I take his points and I will raise those issues with officers prior to our submission of the appropriate business cases.

Thank you.

980 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Alderney Representative Snowdon.

**Alderney Representative Snowdon:** Thank you very much; and thank you for the statement.

985 It is just a quick question, really. Could you confirm how you are getting on with the Alderney Care Board with HSC and an integrated healthcare policy with Alderney that can potentially allow for Guernsey as well?

Thank you.

990 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

**Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, Deputy Snowdon.

I was only looking at all the literature and the letters from the Alderney Care Board just the other day. This is an area which we have not tackled yet, but I am conscious that this is a major work plan.

995 I am conscious that the staff of the Alderney Care Board was full of enthusiasm for setting out a model that actually could apply here, and that process stalled. I think much of that related to that make-up of the Alderney Care Board itself, which I wish to review with members of my Committee.

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We will be meeting with our colleagues in Alderney in due course, once we have worked out a plan of how we are going to go and who is going to run it.

1000

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Deputy Cameron.

**Deputy Cameron:** Thank you, madam; I thank the President of HSC for the update.

1005

The Committee for Health & Social Care previously indicated that enabling pharmacists to prescribe repeat medications and treat minor ailments would be progressed within this political term.

Can the President confirm whether this work is still on target and when can we expect it to be implemented?

1010

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

**Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, madam.

1015

Thank you, Deputy Cameron, for that important question. Yes, it is definitely in our sights. No, we cannot give you a target date yet; we are only just starting this work plan as part of the Sustainable Health and Care Delivery Programme.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

1020

**Deputy Gollop:** Thank you.

My question is one question in two parts. Bearing in mind the comments made about the importance of releasing property sites but also overseeing the financial transformation and the 60% of employees, will you not be trying as a board to work even more closely politically with Policy & Resources to ensure that your Board has input on the human resources element of your budget and the most appropriate use of properties to benefit the whole Island?

1025

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

**Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, madam; thank you, Deputy Gollop, for that important question.

1030

As you know, P&R has set up a system whereby we have a linked Member into P&R who I meet on a monthly basis. This has proved to be a most useful format for discussion, so yes, we will be associating with P&R more closely in the future on the issues that you have raised.

Thank you.

1035

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Burford.

**Deputy Burford:** Thank you, madam.

1040

The hospital modernisation programme had its genesis not in the last term, but in the one before. At the time of inception – obviously, things have changed but – the entire project, phases one, two and three as it was then, could have been done for less than 2A is going to cost us now. This project has escalated, as the President has said, and is now at £129 million, as I understand, for just part of phase two.

My question to the President is this: how confident are he and his Committee that this project will now be delivered within that latest revised figure, and what action are they taking to ensure that is the case?

Thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

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1050                   **Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, Deputy Burford, for that interesting and relevant question.  
I can be no more confident in that answer as any other Committee President coming to this Assembly to present a major capital budget. We obviously endeavour to stay within budget.  
Clearly, when we bring the case to the Assembly later on this year or next year, we envisage a vigorous debate on these matters.

1055                   **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

1060                   **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Madam, we know the importance of investing into early years for children and parents. When I was expecting my children in Guernsey, we were able to attend prenatal hospital classes and visits to the hospital with other expectant parents. It has come to my attention that the hospital is no longer providing such services to expectant parents and that such services are only available via one external provider.

1065                   Could the President confirm whether that is indeed the case and whether the Committee considers perhaps that this is an important area to invest in to provide services to expectant parents?

Thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

1070                   **Deputy Oswald:** Madam, I thank Deputy Kazantseva-Miller – I have spelled it out on my piece of paper to make sure I get it correct – for her question. I am afraid I have no knowledge of this. I will raise it with the appropriate officers and come back to her in due course.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne.

1075                   **Deputy Ozanne:** Thank you, ma'am.  
I very much welcome the commitment to a review by the end of the term, which sounds very far-ranging and across primary, secondary, medicines and third sector.

1080                   Could the President assure us whether he will be looking at the use of nurse practitioners as are used in other jurisdictions, and whether the reluctance to introduce them here is in fact due to the business models that some of our primary care providers have that seek to maximise profits rather than looking at what is most affordable to Islanders?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

1085                   **Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, madam; and thank you, Deputy Ozanne, for that very interesting question.

1090                   I have worked with nurse practitioners in the past. The rollout in the hospital of extended scope practitioners, which are mainly nursing staff, has progressed and is now incorporating very important members of staff in the Intensive Care Unit and the Emergency Department, and potentially in the future in other departments as well. This is the way forward.

1095                   Extending that into primary care is an interesting question, which I have considered and wish to consider again in the future. It could offer an alternative to a general practitioner consultation, albeit that we must not throw out the baby with the bathwater. We have a good system of primary care at the moment, which is easily accessible and provides a good service.

But I do welcome that point and we will be working on it.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater.

1100                   **Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, madam.

Can the President give me an update on the progress with regards to OHM1 and also La Vieille Plage?

1105 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

**Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, madam.

In terms of the progress update of OHM1, I think I have already referred to that in my statement and because of commercial sensitivities I can say no more.

1110 In terms of La Vieille Plage, there is a delay. As probably Deputy Leadbeater is aware, the responsibility for building that building, as it were, actually lies with the Housing Authority. We are just tenants, so any issues which you need to raise about the actual completion date for La Vieille Plage would need to be redirected.

Thank you.

1115 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

**Deputy Gollop:** Perhaps a bit more high profile in Jersey and Guernsey recently, but what does emerge, particularly at election times, is the drawback, perhaps, that many couples, women in particular, suffer from infertility.

1120 Will the new Board of Health & Social Care be considering a possible increase of services and funding, advice and care for those couples who increasingly, in today's world for professional and housing reasons, put off having children until more mature times?

1125 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

**Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, madam; thank you, Deputy Gollop, for that very pertinent question.

1130 We have had a brief, informal discussion at Committee level about this. Regrettably, we are on a tight budget which has already been criticised in this Assembly not so long ago. We have to have priorities. Unfortunately, at the present time, the provision of IVF on the States is some way down that list.

It does not mean to say that we will not readdress this point at some stage in the political cycle, but at the moment, you have already seen the huge amount of work we have to do. In terms of provision of IVF, that is not on our priority list at the current time.

1135 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Are there any more questions to Deputy Oswald as President of Health & Social Care?

Deputy Collins.

1140 **Deputy Collins:** Thank you, madam.

My question to the President: he mentioned the ambulance service, of which we fund about 60%.

1145 My understanding is that we signed a contract in 2018, so in theory that is going to be up in this term. Has any work started on this? Because in theory, with notice period, it could be the year 2027 notice would have to be given to discontinue.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

**Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, madam; I thank Deputy Collins for his very important question.

1150 I have worked closely with Mark Mapp over many years as the Chief Officer of St John's and we had a very important meeting within both the Committee level and individually together.

I think the prospects of St John's are good in terms of rolling out services and increasing the level of service that they supply, but that comes at a cost.

1155 I accept your point that their contract will come to a close during this political term; of course, we do not want to see that happen. There must be an ambulance service on the Island. In fact, there must be an enhanced ambulance service on the Island.

I have various ideas of how we could pay for that, but that again comes into the sustainable health and care delivery model, which we will be coming back to the States on in due course.

1160 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Are there any more questions? No.

Before I turn to Deputy Williams, can I give another reminder to Members about some of the parliamentary conventions. I say this because I am aware we are going to be having a particularly difficult debate coming up. It is parliamentary convention not to mention particular people's names. I know sometimes that is because we want to celebrate them and one wants to mention their name in order to do that, but actually parliamentary convention is not to name individuals, so I will just mention that in passing.

### **General Update – Statement by the President of the Committee for Housing**

**The Deputy Bailiff:** I turn now to the President of the Committee for Housing to give his first General Update Statement.

1170 **Deputy Williams:** Thank you, madam; good morning, everybody.

I am pleased to be able to update the Assembly on the work of the Committee for Housing. As the Assembly will be aware, the Committee was newly created this July. We have been busy getting to grips with our role and responsibilities and understanding how it connects with other Committees and third sector organisations, in addition to the usual and expected learning curve that opens all new political terms.

1180 However, I am pleased to say that this has progressed well and I now have several updates to share with you today. The first is an update on the Guernsey Housing Plan. This plan was created in 2023 by the Committee for Environment & Infrastructure, and a number of actions have already been completed. Many more are underway and other workstreams have been earmarked to commence at a later date.

1185 Having reviewed progress on the plan, the Committee for Housing has completed an initial reprioritisation. We still have several people to consult with before a formal document can be published, so I am somewhat limited in what I could say publicly, but I do not believe I am going to surprise anyone when I tell you that delivery of new homes is this Committee's number one priority.

To be clear, when I say 'new homes', I mean every kind. Not just social housing, not just rented accommodation, not just specialised housing. We want the States to help to deliver all it can, and we also want to support the private sector to deliver all it can.

1190 The focus of the revised Guernsey Housing Plan is intended to be a reprioritisation and will build on work done so far. The most recent Island Development Plan Monitoring Report, publicised last week, showed that the number of homes under construction sits at the highest level since 2020, with currently more than 350 homes being built. We are not taking credit for that; obviously that was in train. The Committee wants this to increase. Indeed, we need it to increase to meet the housing needs of the public desperately seeking homes they can afford. The latest statistics show a positive trend that we intend – excuse the pun – to build on.

1195 The recent changes to part A of the Open Market are a good example of how we can do this. As a reminder to the Assembly, those changes included means for properties to be inscribed on part

A of the Register in circumstances where it could be shown that inscription would make the development of Local Market housing financially viable.

1200 It is our expectation that delivering new homes will be one of the work streams prioritised in the forthcoming Government Work Plan and it is our hope that significant major capital can be allocated to allow the States to facilitate the development of as much affordable housing as possible.

1205 Capital funding earmarked for housing from last term has been spent or pledged to known projects in progress, such as the 69 new homes that are to be built at the Charroterie Tyres site. Therefore, any further Government-backed housing development will need fresh funding allocated to it.

1210 Another matter that I wish to update the Assembly on is that the Committee has resolved for each Member to focus on specific areas that we wish to drive forward. For my own part, I will be leading on housing delivery. We have deliberately chosen not to divide private housing and affordable housing. While affordable housing is important and we intend to work in collaboration with the GHA and Policy & Resources Committee on the development of more homes, the Island needs housing of all kinds, and this focus reflects that. It also signals opportunities for multiple types of housing to co-exist in shared communities.

1215 As part of this role, I am sitting with Deputy de Saumarez and Deputy Gabriel on a political oversight group reviewing the progress on the Leale's Yard site. This site and the other nearby sites in the north will, by nature of their size, take time to develop, but it is very important to the Committee that these large projects progress as swiftly as possible this term.

1220 Deputy Kazantseva-Miller will lead on our engagement with the construction industry. Given our stated priority of development, we need to ensure that the industry is supported and functioning smoothly, specifically in relation to housing. Supply chains, labour supply and skills all come into play. It is important the Committee taps into this and understands pinch points before they occur, so we can work to resolve issues in collaboration with other stakeholder Committees.

1225 Deputy Dorrity will be leading in respect of the private rental market. As you will know, earlier this year new housing standards legislation was brought into force. This is a great platform to ensure our housing stock is of fair quality and will protect the health and wellbeing of Islanders. Equally the Committee understands the significant value of the private rental sector, and the need to ensure rental property delivers reasonable returns. Which is why the Committee was pleased to see the removal of the additional Document Duty rate in the recent Budget. The Committee are currently looking at further work that can be done to protect the interests of both tenants and landlords and intend to bring proposals to the States in 2026.

1230 Deputy Collins is our lead on homelessness, and shares responsibility for finance with Deputy Humphreys. In respect of homelessness, we are currently engaging with the third sector on the development of a Homelessness Strategy. One of the earliest identified issues is a lack of data about the scale of the issue. We know there have been an increasing number of people who have found themselves homeless or in a precarious housing situation, but this is principally anecdotal. We have very little data about the demographics of the need, and the solution must fit the need; things like gender, household composition, health factors, and indeed the root causes of their situation will all help target a response.

1235 1240 We do not want to find ourselves just collecting statistics and would rather be taking action, but by working with At Home in Guernsey to build this dataset as a first action, we can use it to help inform the development of the strategy and ensure efforts and resources are targeted where they are most needed. Deputies will have also seen that the Committee for Housing has this week assumed responsibility for the services delivered at St Julian's House. This in turn will have a role to play in the Homelessness Strategy.

1245 In addition, Action for Children, are opening six new flats this week for young people, funded privately with generous support from the charity Maison Saint Pierre.

Deputy Humphreys will act as our lead for first-time buyers and share responsibility for finance, as previously mentioned. The recent Budget debate brought an amendment on the subject of first-time buyers and we are keen to work with the Policy & Resources Committee to deliver on that

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1250 for the 2027 Budget. The finance focus will also link to other workstreams. For instance, there are workstreams in place to explore how modern methods of construction can be deployed on Island. Understanding the financing that can be accessed will be important in shaping development plans.

1255 Returning if I may to housing delivery, I would like to update you on an important piece of work that has progressed significantly early in this term. In direct response to proposals raised by construction and development industry representatives, the Committee is finalising a Housing Site Availability Framework.

1260 The framework brings together information about all housing sites in one place. This includes those allocated for housing in the IDP, sites which have applied for or received planning permission for housing and sites that are under construction. It sets out the key steps in the development process and shows where each site currently sits on that journey. This will give both the States of Guernsey and the housing industry the same, shared view of expected progress over a five-year period.

1265 The tool has been designed to be jointly owned and will operate as a live document, updated regularly by both Government and industry stakeholders. It is designed to support better planning, earlier identification of delays, and clearer understanding of how we will move from land identified in the IDP to the delivery of homes that meet our housing needs.

1270 We have already met with industry representatives to gather initial feedback, and I am pleased to report that the framework has been received very positively. It has now been circulated for final comments ahead of a formal rollout, and we are encouraged by the strong collaborative spirit behind this work.

1275 Another example of a pragmatic, though perhaps not glamourous area that the Committee has been exploring, is the ability to make better use of empty dower units. At present there are restrictions on renting out these units to non-family members. As such, existing habitable properties are being underused. The Development & Planning Authority and our Committee are very keen to see this work progressed to make this accommodation lettable. A step that would unlock potential unused accommodation already in place and provide a much-needed roof in the short term. Data is limited on the number of those units, and we cannot be sure what the uptake will be if approved. But these shorter simple measures are one way we can relieve some pressure while work develops on longer term, more impactful solutions. The DPA are consulting various parties before anything can formally change on the use of empty dower units, but it is so far looking positive.

1280 In this early part of the term, the Committee has been laying the foundations of what I hope will be measures to ease the housing pressures in Guernsey, with a significant increase in new homes and a path toward development programmes that go some way to meeting the Island's needs.

1285 There is no overnight quick fix to our housing shortage, but this Committee will be doing everything feasible to help Islanders as swiftly as we are able.

That concludes my speech, madam.

Thank you.

1290 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you very much, Deputy Williams.  
Deputy Leadbeater.

**Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, madam.

Can the President give me an update on the La Vieille Plage and the delays that are occurring on that project, please?

1295 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for that question.

1300 We were referred to as the Housing Authority. It is not with the Housing Committee, it is obviously under the remit of GHA, as the client, and I am aware that there are some quality control issues in terms of the final finish of the building. For the very vulnerable client group that move into

that building everything needs to be finished, and I understand there are some requirements. GHA are checking it all through very thoroughly and, at the moment, it was not, when I last spoke to their Chief Executive, in a position yet to be handed over.

1305

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Goy.

**Deputy Goy:** Thank you, madam.

As we know, there are hundreds of vacant properties on the Island, and goodness knows how much land underneath these properties, and that does not include the hundreds more possibly of properties that are used as holiday homes, that are lived in less than 30 days a year. In an Island of the size of Guernsey, 25 square miles, we cannot allow property hoarding of that nature. As a disclosure, I have spoken to the President of Housing about the idea of a monthly levy and vacant properties. Has the President given any thoughts to the idea?

1315

Thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for the question from Deputy Goy.

1320

We are interested in making sure that as many properties are used in the Island as possible. The statistics that were produced from the States' data at the moment is that at the end of December last year there were 102 empty Local Market properties and nine Open Market properties that were empty. That is 0.4% of the stock of the Island. There may be additional ones; that is based on electric consumption.

1325

That is not such a big issue. We have got a lot of other issues to try and resolve but it is certainly an area that I think we need to have a look at, and I know that TRP has been going up and it is an area that I think probably we will have a conversation with P&R on, in terms of whether we can ramp up TRP on vacant properties to incentivise people to bring them back into use.

1330

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Deputy Gabriel.

**Deputy Gabriel:** Thank you, ma'am.

1335

I thank Deputy Williams for his first inaugural statement on the state of the nation as regards to housing.

We know that the third sector are delivering emergency housing and again that addresses a very immediate need, but would the President also agree with me that a pipeline is needed for interim properties, training flats, before a permanent solution is found, and will he pledge to address that?

1340

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for the question from Deputy Gabriel.

1345

I agree entirely we need more solutions to the homeless problem. We are in discussion with At Home in Guernsey. They have got some ideas themselves. It is good to be able to work with the third sector because they can work a little quicker than us, and if we can avoid the bureaucracy and also taxpayers' money involved and work closer with the third sector then that is great.

There are plans afoot and I think we will be coming back with more next year; certainly I do agree we need to do a lot more to try and resolve the problem.

1350

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

**Deputy Gollop:** I was surprised but gratified to hear from the President, Deputy Williams, that we appear to be building more houses on the Island at any time since the COVID era. But my

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1355 question is, surely the biggest issue housing have to look at – Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is involved with this of course – is the capacity of the construction industry and whether on the larger sites, that may or may not be controlled by the GHA, a mixed-use would be better of smaller developers building smaller amounts of housing in order to mix up the community in order to get something going, because the projects can appear too daunting if they are too large.

1360 My question is: are you sorting out the capacity of the industry to cope, especially with larger projects?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Thank you very much for the question from Deputy Gollop.

1365 He is correct, I think since COVID it has had a major impact on the construction industry capacity and for various reasons I do not have time for [*inaudible*]. However, yes, we are talking to the Guernsey Building Trades Employers Association (GBTEA) who are the representative group of the construction industry about capacity. We are keen to use as much and we are keen that work stays on Island in terms of local employers but inevitably, for some of the large projects, other off-Island contractors have been brought in principally because we have lost obviously RG Falla and that has left a hole in the capacity in the Island for large contracts, in particular.

1370 It is an area that we are definitely focused on and we have been in conversation with Economic Development on. Yes, we are talking to the industry and seeing what we can possibly do and looking at apprenticeships to try and train our own people.

1375 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

**Deputy Inder:** Thank you for the statement, Deputy Williams.

1380 Leale's Yard, and moving sites; a big piece of work. Could you give the Members an indicator of the timeline for how these two sites are being developed?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Thank you very much for the question, Deputy Inder

1385 As regards Leale's Yard, as I mentioned earlier, Deputy de Saumarez and Deputy Gabriel and I are on a political oversight board. A fortnight ago we had a meeting involving the SPU about progress. It is out to tender as a pre-qualification questionnaire at the moment. Hopefully, having gone through the demolition, the tender process and the estate process, we should be seeing demolition starting.

1390 I do realise I think it was meant to be about quarter two next year to clear the site. In the meantime, there is design work ongoing on the changes to the layout now that the States own it, and also the road infrastructure to improve the whole situation of the Bridge. So there is quite a bit of work going on in the background.

1395 We do not have anything concrete yet to move forward, but we are very keen to see Leale's Yard progress as fast as possible, and we are all applying political pressure to make sure that is a top priority with the staff involved.

Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Sloan.

1400 **Deputy Sloan:** Thank you, madam.

Deputy Williams [*inaudible*] my question is also about Leale's Yard. He might be aware because this came up in the Scrutiny hearing.

1405 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Sorry, could you turn your microphone on, Deputy Sloan?

**Deputy Sloan:** Apologies, madam.

Can I start again?

1410 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Yes, you may.

**Deputy Sloan:** Many thanks for the statement, Deputy Williams.

Yes, my question is also about Leale's Yard and he might be aware that this also came up in the Scrutiny hearing, which the review itself is still ongoing.

1415 I was concerned that there had not been a five case business model put forward for the purchase of Leale's Yard, or its development, and that only high-level assessments have been taking place.

1420 Obviously, with your membership of the Political Oversight Group, and I appreciate these things are complicated, having been a board member of an urban regeneration company in the UK some 20 years ago. What I think would help is clarity on objectives. Can he confirm that the Political Oversight Group intends in time to publish some terms of reference of its constitution and/or objectives of the oversight group so that they can guide and inform the expenditure of public funds in the development of Leale's Yard going forward.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

1425

**Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for the question from Deputy Sloan.

It is not something we have actually discussed yet, so I do not think I am in a position to be able to unilaterally specifically say that, but I would imagine it is an area that we can be open about in due course. Certainly it is a very important site and a very large project and will be a big investment.

1430 So far we have had one meeting, which was a fortnight ago, but I certainly think it will be something that we will be reporting back to everyone in due course. We will try to keep you as in the loop as possible within the realms of the [inaudible].

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne, who just beat the race.

1435

**Deputy Ozanne:** Thank you, madam.

1440 The President will be aware, and I am sure his Committee are, of the latest Guernsey Residential Property Price Bulletin, which showed that mixed-adjusted average rental prices for Local Market properties was £2,112 a month. That was 53.5% higher than five years ago; 53.5% higher. So an extraordinary increase in that rental market. Will the Committee be looking at rent caps as a potential way of trying to control the market?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

1445

**Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for the question from Deputy Ozanne.

We are extremely concerned about the rental inflation that has occurred. Obviously that is being driven by the demand and the lack of supply in the Island. It is an interestingly complicated and sensitive area – rent capping and the like – and there are lots of examples around the world I think where it is not going terribly well.

1450 However, it is something we want to have a look at. We have been talking to Jersey. We had a meeting with the Jersey Housing Minister recently to talk about they got something through after about six years of progressing it. They finally got a rent cap system per annum. So it is something that we will have a look at. We do not want to scare the rental market in terms of scaring lenders away, however we are concerned about the affordability.

1455 So it is something we will certainly look to address and see what possibly we can do while trying to tread as carefully as we can within the market and not have what are really potentially [inaudible] circumstances. So it is certainly on our radar and we are addressing it.

1460 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

1465 **Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, ma'am.

On the subject of the private rental market, I welcome the President's emphasis on first-time buyers, but in terms of rent, is the Committee engaged with the Committee for Policy & Resources to look at the issue of rent and relocation subsidies that are provided in the Island in the private sector and in the States?

1470 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for the question from Deputy Matthews.

As regards what was classed as key worker accommodation, it does not fall under the remit of the Housing Committee but the long-term strategy does, and so P&R are the employers of key workers coming into the Island. It has certainly been a debate we have been having about the inequality element to it in terms of cost. It is something that we are in discussion with, we will be in discussion with P&R and have been discussing so far in the Budget process, and again it is part of our work following through next year in terms of trying to come up with something that is more equitable all round. It is a major concern and it is a hot topic for us, to be honest with you.

1475 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Cameron.

1480 **Deputy Cameron:** Thank you, ma'am.

Given the current bottleneck in local construction capacity, what work is being done to use modular or off-Island builds to speed up housing delivery and what other skills have been identified?

1485 Thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Thank you, madam, for Deputy Cameron's question.

1490 We are very keen on trying to do something in the short term, if we can, with modular construction. It is all well and good. We really want permanent block built housing. It takes a long time to build. It is years and years and so to try and get some impact in this term I think the only way potentially is going to be to have a site with some modular housing.

1495 It is a matter of where because we cannot just keep shifting it every couple of years. But we have been in discussion with SPU because they are looking at a pilot project themselves and they have been doing some research already on costs and specification and the like. We have got more work to do with them in terms of assessing the viability in the business plan and then bring something forward. We are also canvassing around for suitable locations where we might provide something like that.

1500 Yes, I personally think it is the only way we are going to make some sort of hit on the market in terms of trying to ease the pressure in the market and release the logjams there where people just cannot move around in all sectors of the market.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater.

1505 **Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, madam.

In Jersey social housing is provided mainly by Andium Homes, which is a States' backed housing association, but they also have social housing provided by parishes as well and other housing associations. I want to know if the President would support the creation of another housing association locally to assist the GHA with the provision of social housing?

1510

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for the question from Deputy Leadbeater.

1515 I think it is a good question. Obviously GHA have got their own limitations in terms of what they can build and fund business plan-wise. So we are discussing what we do. I resist the idea – well, there is an issue about creating another housing association with the economies of scale and the set-up costs and the admin of it all. We do have States' Housing, who are currently managing 1,600 homes themselves as well. It is an area that we are looking at as a potential development vehicle, potentially for mixed tenure-type sites, and then any management that might come out of that could either be by GHA or States' Housing staff itself.

1520 We are addressing and looking very carefully at how we produce another development vehicle to produce what could be affordable housing in the Island to supplement the work that GHA do.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

1525

**Deputy Gollop:** I will ask Deputy Williams, through you, Madam Deputy President: I would like to ask the President of Housing a similar question to an issue that Deputy Oswald raised, which is will his Committee prioritise and give resources to utilising redundant or future redundant health sites like, for the sake of argument, Câtel Hospital, King Edward, the Perruche, for mixed tenure of housing as soon as possible in order to fast track those sites for use by the community in other ways?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

1535

**Deputy Williams:** Thank you very much for the question from Deputy Gollop.

1540 Yes, I would very much like to be able to do what we can on those sites. It depends obviously on what the decision is made on their use, whether it is to be sold to people with revenue or to be used internally. Obviously it depends on the ramification of what we need and do not need as well. Some sites like Câtel have got quite a number of staff working there at the moment. I heard the other day 300. Obviously they would need relocating, and that is not going to be simple.

I know there has been a domino effect the Property Unit have been looking at in terms of where the Health Service might move and then throw up sites like Swissvale, etc. Yes it is an area we would be very interested in, and if we can utilise that land to produce homes and we can provide what is affordable accommodation, then we would definitely be interested.

1545

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen.

**Deputy Vermeulen:** Thank you, ma'am.

1550 I have listened very carefully to the update on the Leale's Yard and I have had assurances from the President from P&R that we are going to build lots of houses on that site. My concern at the time was that there was a previous scheme, which was just about to provide houses in the States. It was rushed along and bought the site and it seems like no business plan. Can I ask when am I likely to see those houses starting or being completed – there must be a plan, a timeframe, for Leale's Yard. Could he give me some factual information please?

1555

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for the question from Deputy Vermeulen.

1560 I would like to say it is tomorrow, but obviously there are a few practicalities. The demolition hopefully will start in quarter two; I would imagine that is going to be a three to six-month job of

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building the site up, while there is work going on on the planning side because it has new planning permission.

1565 I think probably realistically spades in the ground on the actual housing is probably going to be in 2027, I would hope. There is quite a lot to do on the infrastructure in terms of the roads and obviously the electrical drainage water mains, all the rest of it, so work will start on all that but hopefully it will be on a phased basis and we will work our way into the site, so at least we get some homes produced.

1570 Very difficult to put a date on when those are going to be actually finished properties, to be fair at the moment. But more work is going to be going on in the meantime so hopefully we will be able to meet some of those in future.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Rylatt.

**Deputy Rylatt:** Thank you, madam.

1575 I know both myself and Deputy Williams have previously supported the use of covenants on land to lock in discounts on their market value as a means of creating more affordable housing. Can the President indicate whether such a policy is being or will be pursued by the Committee?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

1580 **Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for your question from Deputy Rylatt.

Yes, I am very keen for that. It provides more affordable accommodation for first-time buyers. If we can ideally sell the properties at 75% of market value, it makes it a lot more affordable for people.

1585 One of the key things for me was about doing it through the Island Development Plan. It is under partial review at the moment. There are a number of sites in there – seven of them – that are allocated for affordable housing. It would be a matter of securing those pieces of land at the right price to lock in a subsidy that we can then pass on to the buyers rather than being taxpayers, so to speak, it is effectively a reduction on that land value because it can only be zoned for affordable housing. That would be my ideal scenario in order that we can produce that first-hand buyer accommodation with a lot of covenanting, and we could start a new tenure for the Island to try and look generally more [inaudible].

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Burford.

1595 **Deputy Burford:** Thank you.

I was not going to ask a question, but I would like to follow up on what Deputy Rylatt just asked about the covenants. Certainly in 2014 when the new IDP was being prepared, covenants was something that I was very keen on. GP11 was some way of reducing land value, but that failed due to being amended in 2016 when the Policy Letter came to the States.

1600 Could I just ask the President, please: how confident is he that in this particular review that he feels that the affordable housing sites could be subject to some kind of covenant to effectively reduce the land value and therefore the resulting house price on affordable housing?

Thank you.

1605 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for the question from the Deputy.

At the moment, it is a bit early days and one of the crucial things that would have been good to have tied into the IDP is the land price deal, as in the price that was set. As it is, I think, once they are allocated for affordable housing, as it will do now, we will then have negotiations open. So I cannot be 100% confident that we will land that and it will work. But I am hopeful in terms of the process that it is still to go through, the Island Development Plan with the DPA, that we can instil a

1615 greater certainty in the land price paid, which will create the subsidy and then go into [*inaudible*], if that makes sense. So I think there is a bit more work to do in the detail to make sure we actually understand and actually achieve what we want to achieve.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** We have actually used our 20 minutes but I will allow the questions to continue until 12.30, if there are sufficient questions to do that.

I will therefore turn to Deputy Curgenven for his question.

1620 **Deputy Curgenven:** Thank you, madam; and my thanks to Deputy Williams for his Statement and of course the Committee's ongoing efforts.

1625 Does the Committee have any plans to immediately – and by immediately I mean next week, next month, or sooner – to address ongoing homelessness issues, especially with Christmas around the corner, and rates of homelessness allegedly rising?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for the question from Deputy Curgenven.

1630 It is a really good question and actually it crossed my mind specifically when I saw an advert for the crisis of Christmas on the TV the other night. It is not something actually we have discussed yet and we will have it, I think – following this conversation in particular, we will need to have a chat with particularly the charities involved. As I mentioned in my speech, we have taken over St Julian's House responsibility and obviously we are talking to At Home in Guernsey and other charities as well and are going to have a look at those pod bedrooms with an eye to – for Caritas to set up in the Vale Douzaine car park, which they are opening on 1st December, officially.

I think it is a topic we need to get involved in pretty pronto, and I will pick this up following this discussion today, and see what we have in place, and what flexibility we have got for where the capacity might lie around the Island. So, thank you very much for raising it.

1640 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

**Deputy Inder:** I have got potentially the last question.

1645 Would the President agree that there is oversimplification of land value? What is a significant factor on certain sites is the cost of the land price. That is including some sites being brought forward because the cost of dumping for site clearance and contamination. And maybe also agree with me, it is something that as President of the DPA and as also a member of the DPA, [*inaudible*] housing, maybe a conversation we may have to have with the Environment & Infrastructure Committee to see how far we [*inaudible*].

1650 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for the question from Deputy Inder.

1655 It was something that was actually in my manifesto and a number of people have obviously raised it as well, is that the problem is that brownfield sites, which we would like to see developed, cost a lot more to develop than greenfield sites. Given the choice, any developer who is trying to make a return on something, bearing in mind building costs have gone up quite dramatically in the Island over the last few years, and there is a squeeze – I am not going to get my violin out for the developers here – but there is a squeeze on margins and some people are reticent about developing sites now. But given the choice, they will go for the greenfield rather than the brownfield site.

1660 We need to try to level that playing field and therefore we do need to look very closely at the contaminated land costs, tipping, to try to reduce the brownfield cost site and get those cleared up as a priority over the greenfield. I would welcome the conversation with the President of the DPA

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1665 about that, and obviously E&I. I think it obviously has an impact on P&R from a revenue point of view as well.

There is a bit of a cross-Committee issue here but I think it is something we need to address.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez.

1670 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Thank you, madam; and I thank Deputy Williams for his update, which included lots of very encouraging news.

1675 I was particularly encouraged to learn that the Committee has allocated one of its members, Deputy Dorrity I think it is, to the private rental sector because I agree with the sentence expressed by Deputy Ozanne, that this is where some of the greatest pressure in our housing market is currently being felt.

1680 I appreciate also that the Committee cannot, at this point in time, confirm its prioritisation, but I wonder if Deputy Williams is able to give us an indication of whether the Committee is minded to prioritise the work on the rights and obligations of both landlords and tenants, because we know this is an area where a lot of the blockages are occurring. I know that there are lots of people that still contact me, as constituents, looking for help for issues that cannot be resolved until that work is completed. I just wondered whether he might be able to give us a sneak preview on how that is doing in the reprioritisation process.

Thank you.

1685 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Williams.

**Deputy Williams:** Madam, thank you very much for the question from Deputy de Sausmarez

1690 Spoiler alert, yes, it is one of our priorities and it is something Deputy Dorrity is going to lead on. There is an issue both for landlords and tenants in terms of the rights and obligations and trying to set something down a bit clearer. It is also the fact that if you have got an issue you have to go through the courts; it is an expensive process. A lot of people do not want to do it on both sides of the equation. You have got landlords saying that tenants think, 'Oh well, the deposit is there' so they do not pay their last month's rent and then just skedaddle. There are issues on both sides and we would be interested in looking at some sort of tribunal system that takes it out of the courts and tries to provide a cheaper, faster, speedier process all around. We have been having conversations with Jersey about how they do it.

1700 There is a view at the moment that there might be a mechanism that is going to be set up, which would private landlords association within their group have set up something of a tribunal independently, which we are monitoring and we are in discussion with them as well, which will be great to get set up as soon as possible.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

That brings us to the end of the questions to the President of the Committee for Housing and we will now adjourn for our lunch break, and we will all convene again at 2.30.

1705 Thank you very much.

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

## Questions for Oral Answer

**STATES' ASSEMBLY AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE**

**Live stream broadcasting –  
Audio quality**

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne, your question to the President of the States' Assembly and Constitution Committee.

1710 **Deputy Ozanne:** Thank you, ma'am.

Given the importance of transparency and accountability to the Island's electorate, could the President of SACC please explain why the audio feed for the live-stream broadcasting of our States' meetings has deteriorated considerably of late, making it hard to hear various Deputies, and why the speakers' names are no longer shown on the screen to the public?

1715 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

**Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** Thank you.

1720 The Committee is fully aware of the recent audio issues, and I am pleased to reassure Members that measures are being taken to improve the situation. Broadcasting of the States is carried out via formal agreement with the BBC. Microsoft Teams was introduced as an emergency measure during the COVID pandemic, however, it was decided to retain the Microsoft Teams broadcast as there were a number of listeners, including media outlets, who find the service useful.

1725 The practice of displaying the speaker's name on screen stopped just over a year ago because of resource constraints. Previously this was managed by one of the parliamentary team, but owing to increasing pressures on core duties, this has become unsustainable. If Members wish to reinstate this, it would require additional resources.

The Committee plans to review the arrangements for the broadcasting of States' meetings and investigating the feasibility of introducing visual broadcasting is also on the agenda.

1730 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Your supplementary question, Deputy Ozanne.

**Deputy Ozanne:** Thank you.

1735 I am very grateful to the President of SACC for her full answer, although I am quite surprised by her comment that it requires more resource. Typing even a longer name such as the President of SACC or the President of ED takes about three seconds, and I have been assured that it is not actually a matter of resource, it has been a policy decision. I would be grateful to understand what resource is needed in order to ensure that a name can appear on screen because when people are listening to playback it is almost impossible to work out where one is in the proceedings, and indeed anybody joining the debate does not know unless they recognise people's voices who are speaking.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

**Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** Thank you for that supplementary question, Deputy Ozanne.

1745 It is not merely typing in name, I assure you. It is managing the Teams system, which cannot take place from inside the Chamber. Therefore an entire resource, i.e. a person, needs to monitor that process as it is happening in order to update the names as they are happening, because it is one live feed. It is not the same as a Teams meeting.

1750 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Can I just remind Members once more that in order to comply with the convention that one does not name people, perhaps if you are using the word 'you', that is not the way to address one's colleagues. It is through me as the Presiding Officer, and it is very important, particularly when dealing with issues that are highly emotive, that that convention is honoured.

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1755 Deputy Ozanne, your supplementary question.

**Deputy Ozanne:** Apologies, ma'am, for my mistake earlier.

Again I thank the President for her response. I do wonder, if I could ask through you, whether there are things we as Members could do to help the audio feed. It has been pointed out to me that those who are further from their microphones, be that because they are vertically further or horizontally further (*Laughter*), are less able to be heard. So I am asking openly if there are things we can do to help matters.

1760 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

1765 **Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** For those who are vertically blessed, it might appear that that would be a solution, however it is actually the microphones themselves. They are designed to pick up audio from a standing individual. Unfortunately, the quality of the microphones is speculative at best.

1770 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez, your first supplementary question.

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Thank you, madam.

I hope I am not too vertically or horizontally challenged to be heard.

1775 Deputy Hansmann Rouxel mentioned in her answer to the original question that resource constraints were part of the issue in terms of getting people's names up on the visual element of the audio feed, if that makes sense. Obviously what has changed, I have not gone back to look at the timing, but one of the things that has changed probably around the same time was the change to the rules, which meant we now have timed speeches and I wonder whether if we were no longer having to time speeches, which requires a person sitting in this Chamber, whether we would be able to use them in the way – sorry I do not mean to say 'use' them, but whether they would be able to do the work that they used to be able to do in terms of that Teams feed. I just wonder whether that is a way that the resource issue may be managed.

1780 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

1785 **Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** Thank you.

To reassure Members, this is something that does form part of the resource issue, having a member monitor and time the speeches. However, that is not the only resource constraint, but it has been a factor in making the decision to stop managing Teams with an extra member.

1790 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop, your first supplementary question.

1795 **Deputy Gollop:** I am member of SACC, of course, so I support the answers, and I am a bit vertically challenged. But my question is: is the BBC responsible for the sound quality in any way or does that fall on the Royal Court?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

1800 **Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** The sound equipment in the Chamber is actually part of the infrastructure of the Royal Court. There is a feed down to the media room, but the actual broadcast equipment is owned by the BBC, and they are responsible for it once it gets there. But the quality itself, getting to that feed, is part of our responsibility, or at least of the Royal Court services.

1805 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel, your first supplementary question.

**Deputy Gabriel:** Thank you, ma'am.

I will try and get as close as I can so that people can hear me. I take advantage of the in-house audio enhancement.

1810 As Chairman of the local Commonwealth Parliamentary Association branch, it will be remiss of me not to mention and to remind Members and members of SACC certainly that the Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities, the CPWD, has a capital investment fund which is available to all branches for a small fund primarily for raising accessibility of CPA member parliaments to persons with disabilities, and the priority of that fund is to improve physical accessibility, or the procurement of assistive technology.

1815 So if we wanted to improve our technology, there is a global fund available which we could apply for and, if that is successful, could implement a better service than we have now.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel, what is your question?

1820 **Deputy Gabriel:** Is she aware of the fund? *(Laughter)*

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

1825 **Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** I thank Deputy Gabriel for his question.

I was not aware of the fund's specific details but will be in touch to see what we can do.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

1830 **Deputy Inder:** Through you, ma'am. I wonder if the President would agree with me that as each speaker is introduced by name it should not be too difficult for listeners to understand who is actually speaking at the time.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

1835 **Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** I agree with Deputy Inder of that.

But, putting the names on the feed made it easier to reverse back and see who was speaking and stop at that point, seeing the person's name and face.

1840 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Any more questions?

Thank you.

Deputy Bury, do you wish to be relevée?

**Deputy Bury:** Yes, please, ma'am.

## Billet d'État XXIX

### ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

1845

### PRESIDING OFFICER

**1. Election of a member of The Ladies' College Board of Governors –  
Mrs Nicola Paul elected**

*Article 1.*

*The States are asked:*

*To elect Mrs Nicola Paul as a member of The Ladies' College Board of Governors, who has been nominated in that behalf by the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture, to replace Mr Peter Miller whose term of office expired on 30th June 2025 when he resigned from the Board of Governors*

**The Deputy Bailiff:** States' Greffier.

1850

**The States' Greffier:** Article 1, Election of a member of The Ladies' College Board of Governors.

1855 **The Deputy Bailiff:** This is actually a Presiding Officer's Proposition, which is to elect Mrs Nicola Paul as a member of The Ladies' College Board of Governors, but I will invite Deputy Montague on behalf of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture to make any speech he wishes to make in relation to this Proposition.

**Deputy Montague:** Thank you very much, madam.

1860 I would just like to take this opportunity to ask the Assembly to support the election of Mrs Nicola Paul to the Board of Governors of The Ladies' College. She is formerly an associate partner at Deloittes. She has over 30 years' experience working in the finance industry in the Channel Islands. She is also an alumna of Ladies' College.

1865 She graduated from the University of Kent at Canterbury, achieving an honours degree in mathematics and accounting. She is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, and she has had several directorships.

She is undoubtedly a very appropriate person to sit on the board of The Ladies' College, and on behalf of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture, I would like, through you, madam, to ask the Assembly to support this nomination.

1870

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Does anybody wish to speak? In that case, we will go straight to the vote, which should be on your SEV. I hope you are all signed in. States' Greffier, would you open the voting?

*There was a recorded vote.*

1875

*Carried – Pour 36, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 1, Absent 3*

<b>Pour</b>	<b>Contre</b>	<b>Ne vote pas</b>	<b>Did not vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Blin, Chris			Curgenven, Rob	
Burford, Yvonne				Bury, Tina
Cameron, Andy				Dorrit, David
Camp, Haley				Le Tocq, Jonathan
Collins, Garry				
de Sausmarez, Lindsay				
Falla, Steve				
Gabriel, Adrian				
Gollop, John				
Goy, David				
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah				
Helyar, Mark				
Hill, Edward				
Humphreys, Rhona				

Inder, Neil  
Kay-Mouat, Bruno  
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha  
Laine, Marc  
Leadbeater, Marc  
Malik, Munazza  
Matthews, Aidan  
McKenna, Liam  
Montague, Paul  
Niles, Andrew  
Oswald, George  
Ozanne, Jayne  
Parkinson, Charles  
Rochester, Sally  
Rylatt, Tom  
Sloan, Andy  
Snowdon, Alexander  
St Pier, Gavin  
Strachan, Jennifer  
Van Katwyk, Lee  
Vermeulen, Simon  
Williams, Steve

1880 **The Deputy Bailiff:** There voted in relation to the election of the member for The Ladies' College Board of Governors, pour 36, there was 1 Member who was not in the Chamber at the time of voting and there were 3 absences. I therefore declare the vote as pour.

The fact that there are absences suggests to me that not everybody has yet signed into the SEV. Because I believe now that Deputy Bury has joined us, every Member who should be here is here. So who has not managed to sign in?

#### COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1885

##### **2. Appointment of an Ordinary Member to the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority – Mr Michael Byrne elected**

###### *Article 2.*

*In accordance with paragraph 1(4A) of Schedule 1 to the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority Ordinance, 2012, as amended, the following re-appointment by the Committee for Economic Development, to the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority (GCRA), is laid before the States of Deliberation:*

*Mr Michael Byrne as an Ordinary Member from the 16th September 2025 to the 25th July 2026.*

*Mr Byrne is the Chief Executive Officer of the GCRA and recently completed a four-year term as an Ordinary Member of the GCRA Board.*

*Mr Byrne has extensive experience in the UK and Channel Islands of utility regulation in the energy, ports and telecoms sectors. He also has over 25 years of experience in the field of competition law in a range of industries in the UK and the Channel Islands, having worked as Head of Economic Assessment at the Office for National Statistics and Head of Retail Energy Markets at the UK's energy regulator, Ofgem.*

*The Committee for Economic Development concluded that Mr Byrne is suitable to be re-appointed as an Ordinary Member of the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority for a further term of ten months.*

*The States of Deliberation have the power to annul this appointment*

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**The Deputy Bailiff:** States' Greffier, next matter please.

1890      **The States' Greffier:** Article 2, Committee for Economic Development, Appointment of an ordinary member to the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority?

**The Deputy Bailiff:** I should declare an interest; my husband is Chair of the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority.

1895      Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Thank you, madam.

1900      The Committee seeks the reappointments of the current CEO, Michael Byrne, to the board of the GCRA. I think it is important to note that this reappointment is not in relation to his executive capacity as the CEO; this is just the appointment to the board.

The eagle-eyed Deputies may notice that the appointment period is shorter than the current standard term of four years, and this is for the purposes of taking into account the timeframe that the Committee is undertaking the review of the competition and regulation legislation, which will also include the future model and structure of the authority.

1905      **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Does anybody wish to speak in debate on this matter? No? In that case we will go to the vote. But before I ask the States' Greffier to vote, has anybody not signed in who needs to sign in? I think Deputy Dorritt is now signed in. Is that everybody apart from Deputy Bury now? He is not signed in. Would you open the voting, please, States' Greffier?

*There was a recorded vote.*

*Carried – Pour 38, Contre 1, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 1*

1915

<b>Pour</b>	<b>Contre</b>	<b>Ne vote pas</b>	<b>Did not vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Blin, Chris				
Burford, Yvonne	Inder, Neil			
Bury, Tina				
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
Curgenvin, Rob				
de Saumarez, Lindsay				
Dorritt, David				
Falla, Steve				
Gabriel, Adrian				
Gollop, John				
Goy, David				
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah				
Helyar, Mark				
Hill, Edward				
Humphreys, Rhona				
Kay-Mouat, Bruno				
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha				
Laine, Marc				
Leadbeater, Marc				
Malik, Munazza				
Matthews, Aidan				
McKenna, Liam				
Montague, Paul				
Niles, Andrew				
Oswald, George				
Ozanne, Jayne				
Parkinson, Charles				

Rochester, Sally  
Rylatt, Tom  
Sloan, Andy  
Snowdon, Alexander  
St Pier, Gavin  
Strachan, Jennifer  
Van Katwyk, Lee  
Vermeulen, Simon  
Williams, Steve

**The Deputy Bailiff:** There voted pour 38, and 1 contre, with 1 absentee. I therefore declare the outcome is pour.

## Billet d'Etat XXX

### ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

#### PRESIDING OFFICER

##### 1. Election of a member of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture – Election commenced

*Article 1.*

*The States are asked:*

*To elect a member of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture to complete the unexpired term of office (that is to the 30th June 2029) of Deputy J. Ozanne who has resigned that office, and the text of whose notice of resignation is appended hereto, in accordance with Rule 16 of The Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees, as set out in Section 1 thereof.*

*(N.B. Pursuant to the Mandate of the Committee for Education Sport & Culture, a member of the Committee shall not be the President or a member of the Policy & Resources Committee or the President of the Scrutiny Management Committee.)*

1920 **The Deputy Bailiff:** States' Greffier.

**The States' Greffier:** Billet d'Etat XXX, Article 1, Election of a member of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture.

1925 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Montague, on behalf of Education, would you like to put forward a member to be the replacement for Deputy Ozanne?

**Deputy Montague:** Thank you, madam.

On behalf of the Committee I would like to nominate Deputy Rob Curgenven.

1930 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.  
Who seconds that?

**Deputy Cameron:** Yes, I do, ma'am.

1935 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Seconded by Deputy Cameron.  
Does anybody else wish to put forward a nomination?

Yes, Deputy Helyar.

1940 **Deputy Helyar.** Yes, ma'am,  
I wish to nominate Alderney Representative Hill.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Who wishes to second that? Seconded by Deputy Gollop.

1945 As we have two Members who are fighting for this role, I will therefore ask the proposer and the candidate to each speak for three minutes. I will start with Deputy Montague, then ask Deputy Curgenven to speak, and then Deputy Helyar, and then Alderney Representative Hill.

Deputy Montague.

1950 **Deputy Montague:** Madam, I am pleased to nominate Deputy Curgenven for the seat on the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture. Since July, this Committee has benefited from the energy, enthusiasm and drive of Deputy Ozanne, and we think that Deputy Curgenven can begin to replace some of those qualities, but also bring his own unique strengths to further enhance the delivery of our mandate.

1955 Since the election, Deputy Curgenven has already demonstrated that he is a committed and passionate campaigner. These are essential attributes for any Committee in this Assembly, but they are especially vital when championing our schools, our sports clubs and our cultural organisations. He has also proven himself to be an effective communicator with the public, a skill that will serve this Committee well as we engage with our community.

1960 As we prepare to scrutinise next year's budgets, his accountancy skills will be invaluable. The forensic analysis of expenditure in Education, Sport & Culture requires both technical skill and attention to detail, qualities Deputy Curgenven possesses in abundance.

1965 The Committee's work extends far beyond the reading and preparation for meetings. It involves countless evening engagements with schools, sports organisations and arts associations. We are confident that Deputy Curgenven will not only shoulder his fair share of the burden, but will embrace the breadth of these activities. He is always keen to learn new things. After all, madam, every day is a learning day.

1970 Deputy Curgenven's personal experience of one of Guernsey's finest squash players – admittedly, in his day, not now (*Laughter*) – he was at one time ranked sixth in Britain. It gives him a deep understanding of the commitment required of our young sports people. He knows first-hand the challenges of training, competing, and traveling off Island to represent Guernsey. This perspective will be a tremendous asset in shaping policy that supports all our athletes.

1975 We are determined to ensure that the sport and culture aspects of our mandate receive the focus they deserve. With a sporting background and genuine interest in cultural life, Deputy Curgenven is ideally placed to contribute meaningfully to this mission.

1980 Madam, one of our top priorities is to work with other key Committees on an early year strategy, where housing is affordable, childcare is accessible, where young families can thrive, and where we develop an early diagnosis of any developmental needs, and it becomes some of the best in the world. Deputy Curgenven understands these pressures personally and will bring empathy and insight to this crucial area of our work.

1985 He is a keen listener, madam, genuinely interested in understanding the problems faced by our constituents. He combines this with a focused determination to find practical solutions, qualities that will strengthen the Committee's work and benefit our Island community. Focusing Deputy Curgenven's undoubted energy on the wide mandate of this Committee will surely bring benefits.

Madam, I commend his nomination to you and urge colleagues to support his appointment to the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture.

Thank you.

- 1990      **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.  
Deputy Curgenven .
- 1995      **Deputy Curgenven:** Thank you, madam.  
I am grateful to Deputy Montague for nominating me, and to Deputy Cameron for kindly seconding.
- 2000      Having been educated in both the private sector and in States'-run schools, I have a clear understanding of the strength, the challenges and expectations within our system and across sectors. Like many parents, I am acutely aware of the uncertainty surrounding the future of our sixth form. Delivering a stable, long-term solution for post-16 education is, in my view, essential.
- 2005      My stepson attended Le Rondin School, and I would like to place on record my admiration for the staff there. Their commitment to children with additional needs has profoundly shaped my perspective. Their tireless efforts only strengthening my determination to ensure that these children and the staff who support them receive the resources and respect they deserve.
- 2010      As godfather to a young boy and girl, and in recent years working closely with vulnerable children and their families, I have seen first-hand how crucial early years support is for long-term outcomes educationally, socially, and in terms of workforce participation. Improving access to early years provision and primary school provision so that they are fit for the future is not merely desirable, it is essential.
- 2015      Madam, you and Members may also know of my long involvement in sport. When I was younger, many of us would while away the hours at Beau Sejour. Our parents felt safe leaving us there, and we felt safe being left there. I am saddened that such environments have diminished.
- 2020      As a member of ESC, I will work hard to restore accessible, safe and supportive spaces where young people can play, learn and run.
- 2025      Beyond sport, I have a deep appreciation for culture. My travels to nearly 50 countries have taught me that small places with strong identities stand out in the world. Guernsey's culture, history and heritage are some of our most valuable assets. We must continue to guard them.
- 2030      The work of ESC touches every family in Guernsey. It shapes opportunities, it shapes wellbeing, it shapes identity. As a member of the Committee, I will work tirelessly to promote stability in our educational system, opportunity for sport and pride in our culture.
- 2035      Madam, through you, and to Members, I would be honoured to serve, and I respectfully ask for your support.
- 2040      Thank you.
- 2025      **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.  
Deputy Helyar.
- 2030      **Deputy Helyar:** Thank you, ma'am.
- 2035      It is a pleasure to nominate Alderney Representative Hill for election as a member of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture. Edward would bring to the Committee a rare combination of practical teaching experience, proven sports leadership and cultural engagement, alongside an international outlook and a strong solutions-driven approach to politics.
- 2040      He has already demonstrated in Alderney that education policy cannot be treated in isolation from economic development and community life. He has been instrumental in forming an education working group on the Island, looking particularly at early years' provision and the suite of 6th form and technical options, including the use of private partnerships and digital learning to widen subject choice for all Bailiwick students.
- 2040      He does not merely talk about education in the abstract. He teaches music, modern languages, tennis, and padel on an extracurricular basis, giving him the direct understanding of what works on the ground for teachers and for learners of all ages.
- 2040      In sport, his credentials are exceptional and directly relevant to the Committee's responsibilities. A former professional tennis player in Spain, he now chairs the Alderney Tennis and Padel Club,

which he has helped transform from a moribund body with only a handful of members into one of Alderney's most popular and thriving clubs, with membership running into the hundred, driven in part by the successful introduction of padel. That growth has made the club a genuine community hub, cutting across age and background, and stands as clear evidence of his ability to turn policy objectives about participation and wellbeing into concrete outcomes on the ground.

Culturally, Edward is equally engaged. He holds a degree in Spanish and European history, has studied at the Sorbonne and in Granada, is a grade 8 pianist and church organist, and has long contributed classical music reviews to the *Guernsey Press*. He has organised significant events in Alderney, including the Island's first tennis and padel open, and a range of performing arts programmes, always with an eye to involving Guernsey performers and audiences, and building stronger Bailiwick-wide cultural links.

His professional background in advertising, marketing, public relations, and international resort development means he also understands how education, culture and sport can support a distinctive boutique visitor economy for the whole of our Bailiwick.

Having known him for several years now, I can attest to his collaborative approach, his energy, his courtesy in debate, his willingness to listen, and his determination to find workable, evidence-based solutions rather than easy headlines. For all these reasons, Ed would be an excellent addition to the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture, bringing a genuinely Bailiwick-wide perspective and practical experience across each part of the Committee's mandate.

The Assembly is therefore invited, and indeed encouraged, to support his nomination.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Alderney Representative Hill.

**Alderney Representative Hill:** Thank you, Madam Bailiff. Thank you to all.

It gives me great pleasure to formally request to be considered to join the ESC Committee after the resignation of my colleague here, Jane Ozanne.

While some might argue that an Alderney representative might not have sufficient local Guernsey experience for such a post, I feel that I can make up for this in many other ways and actually bring a unique set of experience and skills to the full brief of this Committee in both sports and culture, not just education.

While admitting that education takes up the lion's share of the time, budget and public attention, scrutiny of the Committee, it would seem that the main guidance with the new Local Governorship Ordinance is already well underway. However, there is still considerable work to be done for the early learning preschool sector, which in my view sits holistically not only with Education, but it is also an essential requisite for Economic Development.

On Alderney, we are in the process of forming an education working group to cover this very area with collaboration with our EDC as well as a suite of 6th form options, which might well include a technical and tutorial educational hub using private partnership. I am active in the area as I actually extracurricular teach music, modern languages, tennis and padel. So practising what I preach is always quite useful in taking an objective view on education.

I am a solutions-driven politician. I have no interest in spending my time on anything that is pouring cold water or blocking other initiatives just for the sake of a few headlines, or to sound loud in the Assembly. I do believe, however, that education is not an aisle under itself, and that in the past certain factions have been too prescriptive and isolationist in forcing down a dogmatic approach.

In early learning, there have to be consultations not only with the providers, but also with employers, parental requirements, and financial limitations. There should be a good look at what is popular already in the private sector or successful. Montessori, for example; just because it is private does not necessarily make it bad.

Guernsey is a small, comparatively rich community; where and how can private ideas actually be embraced in a cost-effective manner in the public sector? Where can we source semi-voluntary help

2095 from the wealthy resources of such a community who might have willing time on their hands? How can we make it easier for them to get involved within the regulatory framework?

2100 For those of you who do not know much about me – I am, after all, a comparatively recent addition to the Assembly– I have a degree in Spanish and additional European history from Exeter University. I also attended the Cours de civilisation in langue at the Sorbonne in Paris, and I did a course in Islamic Spain at Granada University. I am a grade 8 performance pianist and church organist. I also played tennis professionally in Spain, and I am the Chairman of Alderney Tennis and Padel, which we have already discussed.

2105 Some of you might have read some of my classical music reviews in the *Guernsey Press*. Over the years, I have done 14 events and [*inaudible*] have already been mentioned, but I have always sought to include Guernsey in all our programmes, both as guests and participants and believe there is still a huge area of untapped co-operation that can be developed for the greater Bailiwick good and to make the area a first-in-class for culture and sport, with its obviously boutique financial touristic opportunities as well as educational.

2110 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Alderney Representative Hill, you have run out of your three minutes, I am afraid.

**Alderney Representative Hill:** Okay, thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

2115 The Sheriff will now circulate the envelope. Please put your votes in the envelope. Has everybody cast their vote? Thank you.

2120 While we are waiting for the results, can I just take an opportunity to thank Deputies Gollop and Deputies Parkinson for accepting their nomination, or rather the nomination of the Bailiff to act as Acting Presiding Officers, should the Bailiff or I be unable to be the Presiding Officers of this States?

Also to thank Deputy Gollop, who has also been nominated by the Bailiff, and has accepted that nomination, to be an Acting Presiding Officer of the States of Election, should it be necessary if the Bailiff and I are not able to preside. Thank you very much for that.

## LEGISLATION LAID BEFORE THE STATES

**The Vaping Products (Guernsey) Ordinance (Commencement and Transitional) Order, 2025;**

**The Vaping Products (Licences and Approvals) (Guernsey) Regulations;**

**The Tobacco Products (Licences and Approvals) (Guernsey) (Amendment) Regulations, 2025;**

**The Vaping Products (Exceptions, Exemptions and Defences) (Guernsey) Regulations, 2025**

2125 **The Deputy Bailiff:** States' Greffier, shall we move on with the legislation so we do not let time slip?

2130 **The States' Greffier:** The following legislation are laid before the States. The Vaping Products (Guernsey) Ordinance (Commencement and Transitional) Order, 2025; The Vaping Products (Licences and Approvals) (Guernsey) Regulations, 2025; The Tobacco Products (Licences and Approvals) (Guernsey) (Amendment) Regulations, 2025; The Vaping Products (Exceptions, Exemptions and Defences) (Guernsey) Regulations, 2025.

2135 **The Deputy Bailiff:** I have received no notice or motion to annul, so therefore that legislation is duly noted.

## Billet d'Etat XXIX

### LEGISLATION

#### COMMITTEE FOR EMPLOYMENT & SOCIAL SECURITY

**2-6. The Social Insurance (Rates of Contributions and Benefits etc.) Ordinance, 2025;**  
**The Severe Disability and Carer's Allowance Ordinance, 2025;**  
**The Long-term Care Insurance (Guernsey) (Rates) (No.2) Ordinance, 2025;**  
**The Income Support (Implementation) (Amendment) (No.2) Ordinance, 2025;**  
**The Family Allowance Ordinance, 2025 –**  
**Propositions carried**

*Article 2.*

*The States are asked to decide:-*

*Whether they are of the opinion to approve the draft Ordinance entitled "The Social Insurance (Rates of Contributions and Benefits etc.) Ordinance, 2025" and to direct that the same shall have effect as an Ordinance of the States.*

*Article 3.*

*The States are asked to decide:-*

*Whether they are of the opinion to approve the draft Ordinance entitled "The Severe Disability and Carer's Allowance Ordinance, 2025" and to direct that the same shall have effect as an Ordinance of the States.*

*Article 4.*

*The States are asked to decide:-*

*Whether they are of the opinion to approve the draft Ordinance entitled "The Long-term Care Insurance (Guernsey) (Rates) (No. 2) Ordinance, 2025" and to direct that the same shall have effect as an Ordinance of the States.*

*Article 5.*

*The States are asked to decide:-*

*Whether they are of the opinion to approve the draft Ordinance entitled "The Income Support (Implementation) (Amendment) (No. 2) Ordinance, 2025" and to direct that the same shall have effect as an Ordinance of the States.*

*Article 6.*

*The States are asked to decide:-*

*Whether they are of the opinion to approve the draft Ordinance entitled "The Family Allowances Ordinance, 2025" and to direct that the same shall have effect as an Ordinance of the States.*

2140      **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Bury, can we proceed with your matter? Are you ready to go ahead rather than waiting for the vote? I will ask then the States' Greffier to introduce the matter.

**The States' Greffier:** Billet d'Etat XXIX, Committee for Employment & Social Security, the Social Insurance (Rates of Contributions and Benefits etc.) Ordinance, 2025.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Bury.

**Deputy Bury:** Thank you, ma'am.

2150 The following five Ordinances brought by the Committee for Employment & Social Security simply make the necessary changes to the Law, to make the changes as agreed by the Assembly over the course of the last couple of meetings, the uprating letters that we have approved. These are simply the Law changes that will enable the rates and contribution rates to change at the start of next year. I probably will not repeat that the next four times round.

Thank you.

2155

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Does anybody wish to debate either this one or, following Deputy Bury's lead, any of the following Propositions in relation to those Propositions brought by the Employment & Social Security?

2160 Deputy Leadbeater.

2160

**Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Bailiff.

I would just like to state that my son is in receipt of severe disability and carers' allowance and I am in receipt of half a carer's allowance, so I would just like to raise that.

2165

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Does anybody else wish to declare an interest? We will start from the left.

Deputy Montague.

2170

**Deputy Montague:** Family allowance.

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Same.

2170

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Curgenven.

2175

**Deputy Curgenven:** My wife has.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Collins.

2180

**Deputy Collins:** Family allowance.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

**Deputy Matthews:** Family allowance.

2185

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Goy.

**Deputy Goy:** Family allowance.

2190

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Anybody else? No. In that case we will go – we do need to vote for them individually, so I will ask the States' Greffier to put up the first of the Propositions, presuming that Deputy Bury does not wish to reply on the basis of those declarations of interest.

States' Greffier, would you open the voting on the first of those Propositions, please. As the Sheriff is not here, I am going to have to call out the names. Deputy Inder and Deputy Burford, you still need to vote.

2195

*There was a recorded vote.*

## STATES OF DELIBERATION, WEDNESDAY, 26th NOVEMBER 2025

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*Carried – Pour 39, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 1*

<b>Pour</b>	<b>Contre</b>	<b>Ne vote pas</b>	<b>Did not vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Blin, Chris	None	None	None	Le Tocq, Jonathan
Burford, Yvonne				
Bury, Tina				
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
Curgenven, Rob				
de Sausmarez, Lindsay				
Dorrity, David				
Falla, Steve				
Gabriel, Adrian				
Gollop, John				
Goy, David				
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah				
Helyar, Mark				
Hill, Edward				
Humphreys, Rhona				
Inder, Neil				
Kay-Mouat, Bruno				
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha				
Laine, Marc				
Leadbeater, Marc				
Malik, Munazza				
Matthews, Aidan				
McKenna, Liam				
Montague, Paul				
Niles, Andrew				
Oswald, George				
Ozanne, Jayne				
Parkinson, Charles				
Rochester, Sally				
Rylatt, Tom				
Sloan, Andy				
Snowdon, Alexander				
St Pier, Gavin				
Strachan, Jennifer				
Van Katwyk, Lee				
Vermeulen, Simon				
Williams, Steve				

2200

**The Deputy Bailiff:** There voted pour 39, therefore there is the unanimous confirmation that Proposition is passed.

States' Greffier, would you put the next Proposition up and immediately open the voting on the Severe Disability and Carer's Allowance Ordinance? Deputy Blin, you still need to vote.

2205

*There was a recorded vote.*

2210

*Carried – Pour 39, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 1*

<b>Pour</b>	<b>Contre</b>	<b>Ne vote pas</b>	<b>Did not vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Blin, Chris	None	None	None	Le Tocq, Jonathan
Burford, Yvonne				
Bury, Tina				
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				

## STATES OF DELIBERATION, WEDNESDAY, 26th NOVEMBER 2025

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Collins, Garry  
Curgenven, Rob  
de Saumarez, Lindsay  
Dorrity, David  
Falla, Steve  
Gabriel, Adrian  
Gollop, John  
Goy, David  
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah  
Helyar, Mark  
Hill, Edward  
Humphreys, Rhona  
Inder, Neil  
Kay-Mouat, Bruno  
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha  
Laine, Marc  
Leadbeater, Marc  
Malik, Munazza  
Matthews, Aidan  
McKenna, Liam  
Montague, Paul  
Niles, Andrew  
Oswald, George  
Ozanne, Jayne  
Parkinson, Charles  
Rochester, Sally  
Rylatt, Tom  
Sloan, Andy  
Snowdon, Alexander  
St Pier, Gavin  
Strachan, Jennifer  
Van Katwyk, Lee  
Vermeulen, Simon  
Williams, Steve

2215 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Again, this was unanimously passed. I therefore declare the Proposition was passed unanimously. I do it twice.

The next Proposition, please. This is in relation to Long-Term Care Insurance (Guernsey) (Rates). Would you open the voting please?

*There was a recorded vote.*

2220

*Carried – Pour 39, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 1*

<b>Pour</b>	<b>Contre</b>	<b>Ne vote pas</b>	<b>Did not vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Blin, Chris	None	None	None	Le Tocq, Jonathan
Burford, Yvonne				
Bury, Tina				
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
Curgenven, Rob				
de Saumarez, Lindsay				
Dorrity, David				
Falla, Steve				
Gabriel, Adrian				
Gollop, John				
Goy, David				
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah				
Helyar, Mark				
Hill, Edward				
Humphreys, Rhona				
Inder, Neil				

## STATES OF DELIBERATION, WEDNESDAY, 26th NOVEMBER 2025

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Kay-Mouat, Bruno  
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha  
Laine, Marc  
Leadbeater, Marc  
Malik, Munazza  
Matthews, Aidan  
McKenna, Liam  
Montague, Paul  
Niles, Andrew  
Oswald, George  
Ozanne, Jayne  
Parkinson, Charles  
Rochester, Sally  
Rylatt, Tom  
Sloan, Andy  
Snowdon, Alexander  
St Pier, Gavin  
Strachan, Jennifer  
Van Katwyk, Lee  
Vermeulen, Simon  
Williams, Steve

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Again this Proposition has been unanimously passed.

2225 States' Members, would you see on your screen now we have the Income Support (Implementation) (Amendment) (No.2) Ordinance. States' Greffier, would you open the voting on this?

*There was a recorded vote.*

2230

*Carried – Pour 39, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 1*

<b>Pour</b>	<b>Contre</b>	<b>Ne vote pas</b>	<b>Did not vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Blin, Chris	None	None	None	Le Tocq, Jonathan
Burford, Yvonne				
Bury, Tina				
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
Curgenven, Rob				
de Sausmarez, Lindsay				
Dorrity, David				
Falla, Steve				
Gabriel, Adrian				
Gollop, John				
Goy, David				
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah				
Helyar, Mark				
Hill, Edward				
Humphreys, Rhona				
Inder, Neil				
Kay-Mouat, Bruno				
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha				
Laine, Marc				
Leadbeater, Marc				
Malik, Munazza				
Matthews, Aidan				
McKenna, Liam				
Montague, Paul				
Niles, Andrew				
Oswald, George				
Ozanne, Jayne				
Parkinson, Charles				
Rochester, Sally				

## STATES OF DELIBERATION, WEDNESDAY, 26th NOVEMBER 2025

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Rylatt, Tom  
Sloan, Andy  
Snowdon, Alexander  
St Pier, Gavin  
Strachan, Jennifer  
Van Katwyk, Lee  
Vermeulen, Simon  
Williams, Steve

**The Deputy Bailiff:** This Proposition was again passed unanimously.

2235 The final Proposition brought by the Committee for Employment & Social Security in relation to the Family Allowance Ordinance. States' Greffier, would you open the voting on this, please?

*There was a recorded vote.*

2240 *Carried – Pour 39, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 1*

<b>Pour</b>	<b>Contre</b>	<b>Ne vote pas</b>	<b>Did not vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Blin, Chris	None	None	None	Le Tocq, Jonathan
Burford, Yvonne				
Bury, Tina				
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
Curgenven, Rob				
de Sausmarez, Lindsay				
Dorrity, David				
Falla, Steve				
Gabriel, Adrian				
Gollop, John				
Goy, David				
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah				
Helyar, Mark				
Hill, Edward				
Humphreys, Rhona				
Inder, Neil				
Kay-Mouat, Bruno				
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha				
Laine, Marc				
Leadbeater, Marc				
Malik, Munazza				
Matthews, Aidan				
McKenna, Liam				
Montague, Paul				
Niles, Andrew				
Oswald, George				
Ozanne, Jayne				
Parkinson, Charles				
Rochester, Sally				
Rylatt, Tom				
Sloan, Andy				
Snowdon, Alexander				
St Pier, Gavin				
Strachan, Jennifer				
Van Katwyk, Lee				
Vermeulen, Simon				
Williams, Steve				

**The Deputy Bailiff:** This Proposition was also passed unanimously.

Thank you.

**Election of a member of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture –  
Deputy Robert Curgenven elected**

2245 **The Deputy Bailiff:** In relation to the appointment of the member of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture, in relation to Deputy Robert Curgenven there voted 21 Members; for Alderney Representative Hill, 17. I therefore declare that Deputy Robert Curgenven is the new member of Education, Sport & Culture. Congratulations. (Applause)

**COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**7. The Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority Annual Report and  
Audited Accounts for the Year Ending 31st December, 2025 –  
Noted**

2250

*Article 7.*

*The States were asked to decide:-*

*Whether, after consideration of the policy letter entitled 'The Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority Annual Report and Audited Accounts for the Year Ending 31st December, 2024' dated 18th September 2025, they are of the opinion:-*

*To note the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority for the year ending 31st December, 2024.*

**The States' Greffier:** Article 7, Committee for Economic Development, the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority Annual Report and Audit Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2025.

2255

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Again, although I do not think it is strictly necessary for me to announce any conflict of interest, my husband is still the Chairman of the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

2260

**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Thank you, madam.

I am pleased to present the 2024 Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority submitted in accordance with section 13.5 of the GCRA Ordinance, 2012 and following consideration by the Committee for Economic Development.

2265

The Authority was set up in 2012 to play a dual role as a competition and utilities regulator, on the one hand to safeguard fair competition in the context of Guernsey's small market and, on the other hand, to regulate economic sectors within its scope, which mainly include the telephone sector and elements of regulation over post and electricity.

2270

Prior to 2020, the Authority operated as a joint Channel Islands regulator. In presenting the 2024 Accounts, it is important for me to note that the previous Committee initiated a review of the GCRA following industry and political representations, including its scope as well as the competition and regulation Laws. This review is being actively progressed by the new Committee.

2275

For 2024, this GCRA notes its key deliverables as the following: modernising how telecom spectrum is allocated and managed, and this led to the development of the policy that the Committee brought forward earlier this year on next generation mobile technology and spectrum mutual technology allocation approach; strengthening Guernsey's emergency response network and the subsequent establishment of the Emergency Response Liaison Group; enhancing transparency of broadband quality of service through implementation of surveys and the

2280 publication of broadband speed information; investigating dark fibre access; taking action against non-compete clauses in the medical industry; undertaking the merger reviews, taking on average 15 days to complete the approvals ahead of the 25-day targets; resolving complaints and providing guidance to businesses; handling 14 regulatory and 10 competition complaints; gathering evidence to support the need for a market review of aggregates.

2285 Financially, the Authority reported income of £998,000 against expenditure of £1,140,000. This points to the current setup of the Authority's funding model, where the GCRA requires taxpayer funding for litigation fees, which is requested from the Policy & Resources Committee on a case-by-case basis.

2290 The cost of the taxpayer-funded legal fees in 2024 was £120,000, and a similar amount in 2023. The current competition grant provided by our Committee of £156,000 is not considered to be adequate. The Committee's request for additional budget for the competition element of the GCRA work as part of the Budget process was not approved, and the Committee has been engaging with the Authority to try to find alternative ways to secure additional income while the review is being undertaken.

2295 We are also waiting for the completion of the Aggregates Market Review, which was commissioned by the Committee last year, with funding secured through this year's Budget. The independent auditors concluded that their accounts give a true and fair view, with no concerns regarding growing concern.

Members, I commend the Report and Accounts to the Assembly.

2300 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Does anybody wish to debate?

Deputy Gollop.

2305 **Deputy Gollop:** It was interesting to hear just a few minutes ago the newish President of Economic Development, Deputy Kazanseva-Miller, reappoint a director to our senior regulator but mentioned that maybe there is a review ongoing that will update the historic report we have before me.

2310 On a technical matter, in our Order Papers, it actually says that what we are currently debating, funnily enough, is the Annual Audited Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2025, but in fact it is 2024 because we have not come to the end of the year and we do not necessarily know the accounts in that sense. This therefore is historic.

2315 Several times in the past year I have, either as a Deputy or candidate, met representatives from GCRA and have been impressed with their knowledge and perspectives. Some of the issues in the Report about their achievements are still relatively untransparent to me, even though they rightly emphasise that they work with openness, integrity, and transparency with a forward-looking approach. Because they talk, for example, about technology-neutral licences, a way in which they have improved speed, broadband. Possibly not everyone would agree with that all the time. and they have talked about improved market outcomes. Generally they have talked about a significant increase in competition. But they are not just talking about mobiles, they are talking about lowering entry barriers with strong industry engagement.

2325 But it is not necessarily clear for all of this on how this has benefited. For example, they talk about a massive number of market players, but in fact we really nowadays only have two phone companies. So I wanted to know more about how that can be developed. Because they talk about multiple providers using the same core infrastructure when you have regulated network access that improves market outcomes, greater choice and accelerated technological achievements. They talk about the option to purchase calling packages from different suppliers. But I do not know how widespread that is for the non-commercial customers.

2330 They also mention that a complaint was upheld against MSG about non-compete clauses, and as a result, in their words:

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We issued a firm decision requiring the removal of these clauses from all agreements between the organisation and the complainant given the unreasonable restrictions applied.

2335 So they have a role in regulating because of competition legislation. Healthcare providers, whether that leads to an increase in cost and a decline in service division remains to be seen, because I think the regulatory model is an information-based model, but it is also a model that, as we have already heard, spends money on litigation, is not particularly politically driven, that was its whole point really, not to be, and perhaps it represents the consumer on a high strategic level that does not within itself integrate the needs of small consumers necessarily.

While I support the Report, I think we do need to see a report as soon as possible on whether to continue supporting this type of model or whether it needs some reform.

2340

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Does anybody else wish to speak in debate? No. In that case I will ask Deputy Kazantseva-Miller if she wishes to reply.

2345

**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Madam, I just wanted to thank Deputy Gollop for raising the very pertinent issues I think that go to the fore of the review that we are undertaking, because I think in establishing authorities such as the GCRA, we always need to be cognisant about the benefits that are being delivered to the economy within the context of our very small market. So those are very important questions that I think will be hopefully addressed as part of the review, but also maybe on the Government's requirements to report back on delivery against the strategic [inaudible].

2350

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Members, you will see on your screens that you are asked to note the Annual Report. I will therefore ask the States' Greffier to open the voting on that.

2355

*There was a recorded vote.*

*Carried – Pour 39, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 1*

<b>Pour</b>	<b>Contre</b>	<b>Ne vote pas</b>	<b>Did not vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Blin, Chris	None	None	None	Le Tocq, Jonathan
Burford, Yvonne				
Bury, Tina				
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
Curgenven, Rob				
de Sausmarez, Lindsay				
Dorrity, David				
Falla, Steve				
Gabriel, Adrian				
Gollop, John				
Goy, David				
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah				
Helyar, Mark				
Hill, Edward				
Humphreys, Rhona				
Inder, Neil				
Kay-Mouat, Bruno				
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha				
Laine, Marc				
Leadbeater, Marc				
Malik, Munazza				
Matthews, Aidan				
McKenna, Liam				
Montague, Paul				
Niles, Andrew				

Oswald, George  
Ozanne, Jayne  
Parkinson, Charles  
Rochester, Sally  
Rylatt, Tom  
Sloan, Andy  
Snowdon, Alexander  
St Pier, Gavin  
Strachan, Jennifer  
Van Katwyk, Lee  
Vermeulen, Simon  
Williams, Steve

2360

**The Deputy Bailiff:** In relation to the noting of the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority Annual Report and Audited Accounts, there voted pour 39, so I therefore declare that has been passed unanimously.

## Billet d'État XXX

### STATES' ASSEMBLY AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

#### 2. Appeals Commissioner Report on a complaint under the Code of Conduct – Debate commenced

*Article 2.*

*The States are asked to decide:*

*Whether, after consideration of the findings in the attached Report by the Guernsey Appeals Commissioner regarding Deputy St Pier's appeal against the Commissioner for Standards' conclusions and recommendation dated 7th July 2025, relating to a Code of Conduct Complaint, they are of the opinion:*

*1. That Deputy Gavin St Pier should be suspended from the States for 25 days pursuant to the Code of Conduct for Members of the States of Deliberation.*

2365 **The States' Greffier:** Billet d'État XXX, Article 2, States' Assembly and Constitution Committee, Appeals Commissioner Report on a complaint under the Code of Conduct.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

**Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** Thank you, madam.

2370 Members, in opening this debate I want to lay the groundwork for a civil, open and transparent discussion. This is the final stage of a long process and it is not an easy one. It is uncomfortable for everyone involved. It is uncomfortable for the complainant, for the Deputy concerned and for the families whose painful experiences first brought this matter into the public sphere.

2375 It is also uncomfortable for us, as an Assembly, because whichever decision we will take will be watched closely and will be felt beyond this Chamber. But discomfort is not a reason to avoid our responsibility, it is a reason to approach it carefully. What matters today is not only the decision we reached, but the way in which we carry out our responsibility. Our duty is to uphold the Code of Conduct, and fulfilling that duty requires us to play our part in the process with care, transparency and respect.

2380 The fairness of the system does not rest solely on what has happened before today. It rests equally on how we conduct ourselves in this debate. A calm and reasoned discussion within the midst of our constitutional role will reassure the public that Members have approached this matter properly, whatever view we ultimately take.

2385 But if our debate is shaped by personal grievances, speculation about motives, or pressure drawn from fears about wider consequences, then we risk creating the very instability we wish to avoid. I do not pretend this balance is easy, but it is a balance the law asks us to hold and the public expects us to uphold.

2390 To discharge our responsibility properly, we need to be clear about what today's debate is and what it is not. It is, at its heart, a debate about process, about proportionality and about fairness. By process, I mean the pathway set out in the Reform Law and in the Code of Conduct, the Commissioners' Independent investigation, the separation of her role from that of the Appeals Commissioner, the standard each applies, the independence built into their functions, and the point at which responsibility transfers to this Assembly.

2395 Examining process does not mean revisiting evidence. It means asking whether each stage has operated as intended, whether the safeguards in the system have been respected, and whether the Assembly can have confidence in the steps that have led to the recommendation before us. This is the first application of the reformed system.

2400 So it is right that Members satisfy themselves that the process functions as the law envisaged. We must also consider proportionality. The Commissioner assesses proportionality within the Code, judging the seriousness of the breach and identifying what sanction would ordinarily follow, but here the Assembly must consider proportionality in the wider democratic sense. How the recommended sanctions sits within parliamentary norms, how it affects the functioning of an elected Member, what precedent it may set, and how it aligns with the responsibilities entrusted to us. That does not involve substituting our own findings of fact. It involves applying constitutional judgement to the consequences of the recommendation. Then there is fairness. Fairness to the complainant, that their concerns have been taken seriously and investigated independently. Fairness to the Member that the process has been impartial, the reasoning transparent, and any consequences justified and proportionate. Also, fairness to the public, who must be able to have confidence not only in the independence of the earlier stages, but also in the accountability that comes through open debate in this Assembly.

2415 There are also clear boundaries on what this debate is not. It is not an opportunity to revisit medical evidence. It is not a forum for personal attacks on the complainant, the Deputy concerned or the Commissioner. It is not a space to litigate disputes from the previous term or speculate about motives or loyalties. Members may well draw on the wider context where that genuinely helps them in considering proportionality and the broader democratic impact.

2420 There is a fine line between looking at context to understand the implications of a sanction and beginning to revisit facts or substitute our own conclusions for those reached through the investigatory process. As long as we remain mindful of that distinction, we can ensure our debate stays focused on our proper role.

2425 This is also the moment to reflect on how findings of fact sit within the structure of our Code of Conduct system, and to be clear about who makes them, how they are reached, and how the Assembly should approach them at this stage. The Commissioner describes her approach as inquisitorial rather than adversarial. She gathers the information she considers relevant, determines the lines of inquiry, and reaches her findings on the balance of probabilities. That is the design of the system.

2430 It is different from an adversarial process, where opposing accounts are tested, and a tribunal resolves factual disputes. Here, the Commissioner determines the facts for the purposes of her investigation. These findings come to the Assembly as she has made them. We are not asked to reinvestigate or revisit the underlying evidence. It would take us beyond our constitutional role to attempt to do so. But the Assembly is not a mere formality. Our role is not passive. Our responsibility is to consider whether the findings as presented and the reasoning that leads to them appear fair,

balanced and reasonable within the wider context of the process. That is part of judging proportionality.

2435 It does not require us to substitute our own version of events. It requires us to be satisfied that the conclusions reached can properly support the sanctions we are asked to uphold. Put simply, the independence of the Commissioner protects the process from political influence at the investigatory stage, but it does not predetermine the outcome at this stage. The constitutional safeguard built into the system is that the Assembly must still decide whether the findings and the process that produced them justify the recommendation before us today.

2440 The Appeals Commissioner has confirmed that the Commissioner exercised her discretion reasonably in relation to her investigative choices and that her explanations were fair and logical. We are not here to reopen those decisions, but we are entitled to consider whether the reasoning presented gives us sufficient confidence in the fairness of the process and in the basis for the recommended sanction.

2445 Ultimately, this Assembly is the democratic safeguard that ensures independent investigation and parliamentary accountability sit together within our system. If we conduct this debate responsibly, openly and with restraint, then whatever the outcome, we will have done our part to uphold both independence and accountability, and we will allow this matter to be resolved so that we can return to the wider much more important work that the Island expects us to deliver.

2450 With that framework set out, I will now turn to my assessment of the process followed, the findings presented, the proportionality of the recommended sanction and my own interpretation and deliberations on what I have been asked to decide on today. I want to be very clear about the approach I have taken. I am not here to persuade anyone of an outcome. What I am offering is transparency. How I have read the Commissioner's report, how I have weighed the reasonings put before us, and how that has shaped my own judgement of fairness and proportionality.

2460 As I worked through the material, I found that I had to take this step by step, not starting with outcomes, not starting with sanctions, but starting with the reasons that has been found as fact. How those findings are explained and whether the process and logic set out lead me as a Member to a place where the recommended sanction feels fair and proportionate. Only after doing that did a broader question begin to form for me, and one that sits above the details of the case. I will come to that later, because it belongs at the conclusion, not at the start.

2465 For now, I want to talk through the reasons as I experienced it. The first thing that I had to sit with was the extent to which the findings ultimately rest on a 90-second phone call. Both the Commissioner and –

2470 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Hansmann Rouxel, can I just clarify whether you are talking on behalf of SACC now or whether you are talking on behalf of yourself?

**Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** On behalf of myself.

2475 **The Deputy Bailiff:** All right. Thank you.

**Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** I had to sit with the extent to which the findings ultimately rest on the 90-second phone call. Both the Commissioner and the Appeals Commissioner make clear that this call is the only part of the complaint where findings of fact could be made. Everything else either could not be independently substantiated or did not meet the threshold for a finding of fact.

2480 So a single brief exchange becomes the factual foundation for everything that follows. For me, that raised a question about weight, whether such a narrow, evidential basis feels proportionate for the seriousness of the sanction being recommended. There is also a wider concern that has been raised by others whether this judgement resting so heavily on one short interaction with a journalist can set a precedent for how Members engage with the media in the future.

I do not believe that is the Commissioner's intention. She is very clear that she sees this within the broader pattern of behaviour and she links her reasoning to the previous Code of Conduct case.

2485 But, even so, in a small jurisdiction like ours, where interactions with journalists are frequent, informal, and often necessary to the public interest, I do think it is something that deserves reflection. Not because it changes the facts of the case but because it goes to the constitutional question of reasonableness. Whether the outcome of this particular reasoning process could have wider and perhaps unintended consequences for how Members are expected to operate in practice.

2490 The next area that required reflection was the distinction the Commissioner draws between what she calls formal and informal complaints. She writes:

There is no evidence that these complaints were ever formally examined or held.

2495 She uses that lack of formal status to frame the information confirmed in the call as misleading. The Appeals Commissioner accepts her reasoning, but this distinction does not appear in the Code, in any guidance available to Members, or in the way concerns are typically raised in Guernsey. In a small community, people rarely enter formal complaints routes, they come to us with their lived experiences, distress, service failures, patterns of concern and we treat those complaints in the ordinary sense because that is how they come to us.

2500 So I had to consider whether this is a distinction a Member can reasonably have anticipated at the time and what it means for how we represent and respond to the constituents' experiences more generally. I also had to ask myself whether treating concerns as invalid unless they have passed through a formal process is really the precedent we want to set in this Assembly. Those were serious questions for me.

2505 Another area I had to understand was how the Commissioner's reasoning evolved over the course of the investigation. When I looked at the interview transcript and her earlier correspondence with the Deputy, it was clear from her questioning and from the wording of the initial draft findings that she was working on the basis that he was the source of the information the journalists had set out in the letter. In the draft findings she sent to him, the wording reflected that assumption.

2510 He responded at length, which is entirely right and consistent with natural justice. The Commissioner then altered the findings of that, softening the language and removing the explicit attribution. But when I went back and read the full report, I found that the underlying inference in her reasoning appeared unchanged. She writes:

I cannot accept this account, that the information came from somewhere else. I have received little evidence that these details were in the public domain, making his explanation difficult to accept.

2515 So while the findings were presented differently, the logic still rests on the premise that he must have been the source, because she cannot identify another explanation. For me, this is where information in our small jurisdiction flows, through families, advocates, community networks, in the media in complex and sometimes mysterious ways. That assumption of exclusivity is not something I could take for granted. It made me stop and think. I am not challenging her view but I do need to be certain that an inference of that kind is robust enough for the sanction that is being proposed.

2520 The Commissioner also used the previous Code of Conduct case to frame how she interprets intent and pattern of behaviour. Again, I understand why she felt it was relevant but the earlier case was conducted under a different Code, with different investigatory powers, and under rules that would not allow the same investigation today. That does not invalidate those findings but, for me, it created a question about how much weight I can give them, given how significantly the framework has changed since then.

2530 Finally, I had to reflect on how intention, which is required for a finding of bullying, was assessed. The Commissioner concluded that by confirming information during the call, the Deputy demonstrated a conscious willingness to act in a way that would harm the complainant. She is fully entitled to interpret it that way. But because this is an inference drawn from a single act, rather than an independent evidence of motive, I had to think carefully whether that inference alone feels strong enough to support the finding of intent necessary for bullying.

At this point, the broader constitutional picture came into focus for me. The first thing I had to recognise was this complaint sits across multiple systems. It began under the old Code of Conduct during the panel era. The complaint itself was handled by the final panel. The appeal, however, was handled by the Appeals Commissioner. The current complaint is under the new Independent Commissioner and Appeals Commissioner model. In the middle of all of this, the Code itself has changed, including a very deliberate amendment to exclude parliamentary speech from its remit.

So this matter has not gone through one clean, consistent structure. It has gone through several, all different, all applying different rules. When the Commissioner's report drew on the entire span of this matter in her reasoning, including the earlier case, I felt it was right to ask, given these structural changes, is it fair and reasonable for us to treat all parts of this long history as if they sit in one coherent process?

One of the most important changes we made as an Assembly was to remove speech and conduct in the Chamber from the Code of Conduct. We did that for a reason. We had seen through the previous Code of Conduct complaint how uncomfortable it becomes when external complaints mechanisms are used to scrutinise parliamentary utterances. That is why we revised the Code to bring us closer to the Westminster model, where parliamentary privilege is protected and the Standards Commissioner does not investigate what Members say in the House.

We have seen how the new system operates already. A complaint about another Member's behaviour during the privileges debate was correctly refused by the Commissioner. That is the new guardrail. It is this system we consciously chose. So when I see the Commissioner, entirely appropriately with no mandate, referring back to the previous Code of Conduct case to describe a pattern of behaviour, I have to sit with the fact that the earlier findings were made under a Code that would not have permitted the same investigation today. That does not invalidate those findings. They were legitimate under the Code at the time. But it raises a constitutional question: is it fair and proportionate to use those findings from a jurisdiction that no longer exists and that could not now occur as evidence of intent or pattern? For me, this is not a question about personalities. It is a question about constitutional consistency.

As I reached the end of my thinking and started to look beyond the individual points of reasoning and to the broader constitutional structure, a deeply uncomfortable truth became increasingly evident. The harm described in the report, the distress, the anxiety, the impact on professional life does not arise solely from one moment or one decision in 2022. It arises from a long and complex process that has stretched across multiple codes, multiple standards, different investigative bodies, shifting interpretations of privilege and jurisdiction. In my view, the process has not lessened that harm. It has unintentionally exacerbated it.

That is not the fault of the complainant. It is not the fault of the Appeals Commissioner. Everyone has acted within the system they were given. It is the structure that has let people down, the complainant, the Member, the Assembly. The purpose of the Code is to provide clarity, fairness, and finality. In this matter, the structure itself, evolving midstream, has made those things harder, not easier.

For my own part, the decision I reach today comes down to this. Is the reasoning before us, as presented, sufficiently clear, sufficiently fair, and sufficiently foreseeable for me to be confident in imposing the sanction recommended. More broadly, has the structure of this long-running process been coherent, consistent and constitutionally sound enough to justify a sanction as serious as suspension?

After working through all of this, the Commission's reasonings, the changes in the Code, the evolution of the appeal system, the shift in how we treat parliamentary speech, the way these different mechanisms have interacted over several years, I have come to a difficult but honest conclusion. It is not the individuals who have failed here. It is the structure. It is the structure that has let the complainant down. It is the structure that has let Members down. It is the structure that has created a situation where a matter has been stretched across multiple codes, multiple standards, multiple jurisdictions, and multiple interpretations.

## STATES OF DELIBERATION, WEDNESDAY, 26th NOVEMBER 2025

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2585 When a sanction as serious as suspension is being considered, the structure matters. Fairness matters. Proportionality matters. So my conclusion is not based on who I support or who I believe, or on the rights and wrongs of the underlying events. It is based on whether the system, as it is operating, brings me to a place where I can be confident that the sanction recommended is fair and proportionate. For me, it does not.

2590 So I am in an uncomfortable place. After all my deliberations, I find I can neither support nor reject the Proposition. I cannot oppose the independent process we have put in place, nor can I endorse an outcome that, for me, does not meet the threshold of confidence I need in it; fairness and proportionality. That is simply the reality of where this long and complex matter has led me.

2595 As we turn to the debate as an Assembly, I want to return to the guardrails I set out earlier. How we conduct ourselves today matters. The public needs to see we are capable of handling difficult matters with care, with integrity and with respect for the structures we have built. Reasonableness, proportionality and fairness must be at the core of our deliberations. Whatever view each of us reaches on the Proposition, it is our responsibility to ensure that the way we reach it strengthens trust in this Assembly and in the process by which we hold ourselves to account.

2600 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Let us deal with the first amendment. Deputy Hansmann Rouxel, would you like the States' Greffier to deal with Amendment 1? Would you like him to read it out, rather, sorry?

2605 **Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** Yes.

### Amendment 1

*To insert the words 'without pay' after the words '25 days'.*

**The States' Greffier:** Amendment 1, to insert the words 'without pay' after the words '25 days'.

2610 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

**Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** Members, this is a technical amendment that clarifies in accordance with paragraph 57 of the Code of Conduct that the period of suspension is without pay. The amendment seeks to avoid any doubt regarding the intention of the original Proposition.

2615 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.  
Deputy Burford, do you second that?

**Deputy Burford:** I do, madam.

2620 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

**Deputy Inder:** 26(1), ma'am.

2625 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Inder has asked that this be subject to a guillotine motion. Those who wish to speak in debate on this amendment, please stand in your places. In that case, we will go straight to the vote. States' Greffier, would you open the voting? Sheriff, could you perhaps help Deputy Hansmann Rouxel out here?

2630 *There was a recorded vote.*

*Carried – Pour 34, Contre 1, Ne vote pas 3, Did not vote 1, Absent 1*

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
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Blin, Chris	Ozanne, Jayne	Hill, Edward	Laine, Marc	Le Tocq, Jonathan
Burford, Yvonne		Oswald, George		
Bury, Tina		Snowdon, Alexander		
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
Curgenven, Rob				
De Saumarez, Lindsay				
Dorrity, David				
Falla, Steve				
Gabriel, Adrian				
Gollop, John				
Goy, David				
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah				
Helyar, Mark				
Humphreys, Rhona				
Inder, Neil				
Kay-Mouat, Bruno				
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha				
Leadbeater, Marc				
Malik, Munazza				
Matthews, Aidan				
McKenna, Liam				
Montague, Paul				
Niles, Andrew				
Parkinson, Charles				
Rochester, Sally				
Rylatt, Tom				
Sloan, Andy				
St Pier, Gavin				
Strachan, Jennifer				
Van Katwyk, Lee				
Vermeulen, Simon				
Williams, Steve				

2635      **The Deputy Bailiff:** There voted in relation to Amendment 1: pour 34, contre 1, there were 3 abstentions and 1 Member was not in the Chamber at the time of voting. I therefore declare Amendment 1 is passed.

Deputy McKenna, speaking in main debate.

2640      **Deputy McKenna:** Thank you, madam.

I will not be speaking on any personalities I would just like to refer to the Appeals Commissioner's report. As elected public servants we have a duty to support and advocate for the Guernsey public. The role of Deputy brings us into regular contact with the media and I think we can all agree that information provided to the media should be given truthfully and honestly.

2645      As Deputies, Madam Bailiff, we are afforded many privileges and, as a result, are expected to conduct ourselves with certain standards, including abiding by the seven principles of public life. If Members behave outside these, then quite rightly they should be held accountable for their actions.

2650      Now in March 2023, Madam Bailiff, I was on the States' Assembly and Constitution Committee, it is on the *Hansard 1017*, and we as an Assembly agreed to overhaul the Code of Conduct process as the Code of Conduct Panel resigned. It was agreed we should appoint an independent Commissioner for Standards, that vote passed 37:2, and the Vice-President of Policy & Resources approved the order.

2655      The role of the Commissioner is to investigate complaints to ensure that the standards of behaviour for Deputies are maintained, so subsequently an Appeals Commissioner was also appointed and the key here is both that the Commissioner and the Appeals Commissioner are completely independent. That is the process that we as Deputies signed up to, to ensure that our behaviour is in a manner fitting for a public servant.

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2660 Dr Melissa McCullough was appointed as Commissioner for Standards and she has impressive qualifications and experience. She has just completed five years in the Northern Ireland Assembly. She is the Commissioner for Alderney and she is also the Commissioner for Jersey.

Mr Martin Jelley –

2665 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Sorry, Deputy McKenna, please can you not mention the names of these officers, just their titles.

2670 **Deputy McKenna:** My apologies, Madam Bailiff. The Appeals Commissioner is an ex-Chief Constable of Warwickshire and since 2021 has been the Commissioner for Standards for the House of Lords. Now, Dr McCullough investigated the allegations made in this case and her report, which we have all seen, is both lengthy and detailed. I will not be going into that.

2675 But after investigating, the Commissioner made four findings of fact and they can be seen on paragraph 38 of her report. She concluded that the information confirmed with the journalist by the Vice-President of Policy & Resources was both sensitive and confidential, that the complaint information that was provided to her confirmed that the *Guardian* journalist was misleading. That the Vice-President failed to clarify to the journalist the complaint details that he confirmed had not been formally examined. This comes from over here.

2680 The outcome of the Commission's investigation concluded the Vice-President of Policy & Resources breached sections 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 24 of the Code of Conduct; a total of six breaches. The details can be found in paragraphs 55 to 60 of the Commissioner's report and in paragraph 2.3 of the Appeals Commissioner's report. The Commissioner also found that the breaches involved the following parts of the Code. Section 8 of the Code, the Commissioner said that the Deputy had failed to uphold the seven principles of public life in relation to the following. Integrity, the Deputy had acted with personal bias rather than public interest. Selflessness, the Deputy prioritised personal interest over public duty. Objectivity, the Deputy relied on unsubstantiated claims rather than substantiated evidence. Accountability, the Deputy failed to take responsibility for the accuracy and consequences of his statements. Openness, the Deputy misled the public by conflating informal and formal complaints. Honesty, the Deputy shared inaccurate information without clarifying its status. Leadership, the Deputy undermined public trust rather than setting a positive example. Not my words, Madam Bailiff; from the Commissioner's report.

2690 Section 9 of the Code in the Commissioner's report relates to the public versus private interest. The Commissioner said the Deputy's decision to confirm the details regarding complaints about the named doctor to the journalist was not in the public interest. He was conflicted in relation to the doctor and should have made no comment. His decision to share unsubstantiated and informal complaint details provided to him fell short of the impartiality expected from an elected representative, and he risked misleading the public, undermining trust, and misusing the authority of the office.

2700 The Commissioner went on to section 10 of the Code relating to the reputation of the States. The Commissioner said that by confirming details of complaints with a national media outlet, and without clarifying their unsubstantiated nature, that the Deputy jeopardised the reputation of the States of Guernsey. This undermines confidence in the fairness and professionalism of public office. This comes from the Commissioner under section 10.

2705 The Commissioner under section 11 of the Code relates to the conduct of duties. The Commissioner said elected officials are entrusted with significant privileges and have a duty to act with integrity, honesty and care. This Deputy failed to meet these obligations and his actions misled the public and caused serious harm to the named doctor's reputation.

2710 The Commissioner goes on to section 12 of the Code relating to harassment and unwanted behaviour. The Commissioner said that the Deputy's actions in this case, coupled with similar behaviour, including making 'seriously and fundamentally misleading statements' about the named doctor, in which he was reprimanded in October 2024, suggest a pattern of unacceptable behaviour which she considered to be bullying.

2710 We go to section 24 of the Commissioner's report relating to confidentiality. This was a breach established by the Commissioner and not by the named doctor. The Commissioner said the Deputy breached his duty to protect confidential and sensitive information received in his official capacity. While he claimed to have had the consent of the families, he did not have the named doctor's consent, so this violated the trust placed in him as a senior representative.

2715 The Deputy appealed the Commissioner's findings, and the grounds for his appeal can be found in paragraph 3 of the Appeals Commissioner's report. The Appeals Commissioner carefully considered all points provided by the Deputy, and I think it is important, Madam Bailiff, to review the details of his findings.

2720 The Appeals Commissioner on ground 1 of the Deputy's appeal, the Appeals Commissioner made a number of observations, including that information supporting the Deputy was only provided at a much later date, over three months in fact, which was after the Commissioner's report and her finding of fact had been written. The Commissioner's view, the Deputy and the Appeals Commissioner's view was that the information did not alter the finding of the fact. The Deputy suggested that the Commissioner's findings adversely affected his right to freedom of speech. The Appeals Commissioner could find no substance to this argument or that the Commissioner's decision making on this was unreasonable. The Appeals Commissioner concluded on ground one of the appeal that it was not upheld.

2725 Ground 2 of the appeal, where the Deputy said there were material errors in the relevant investigation by the Commissioner, the effect of her decision, the Appeals Commissioner said, the detail which can be found in paragraph 3.2 of the Appeal Commission's report, he considered all of the headings submitted by the Deputy, concluded the Commissioner properly understood the extent of the Deputy's interaction with the journalist, he goes on to state the evidence of the Commissioner held regarding the number of complaints was an accurate and fair summary and we did not find the Deputy's appeal on this ground compelling.

2730 2735 The Appeals Commissioner then stated by confirming misleading data to the *Guardian* reporter, which included 16 complaints, two of which involved neonatal deaths, he was breaching the Code and opening the door to misleading information being put in the public domain, therefore unfairly damaging the reputation of the named doctor. The Deputy went on to claim there was an error relating to data protection in the Commissioner's decision making and judgement. The Appeals Commissioner was satisfied that this was a personal perspective and the Deputy had had no real substance to the argument. The Appeals Commission's conclusion on ground 2 of the appeal was not upheld.

2740 2745 Ground 3 of the appeal, the process followed by the Commissioner in reaching her decision was flawed. Well, those details can be found in paragraph 3.3 of the Appeals Commissioner's report. The Appeals Commissioner, Madam Bailiff, said he was not persuaded that the evidence provided by the Deputy showed that the Commissioner had not taken into account all the evidence submitted to her. The Appeals Commissioner went on to say that it was the decision of the Commissioner and the Commissioner alone regarding the evidence of which she chose to use.

2750 The Deputy was unhappy that the Commissioner did not interview persons suggested by him. The Commissioner commented on this by stating that she needed to follow evidence and not simply pursue matters because someone else insisted. The Appeals Commissioner felt that not interviewing others was logical, fair and reasonable.

2755 So new documentation, Madam Bailiff, was provided to the Appeals Commissioner by the Deputy who asked for it to be viewed as fresh evidence to support his appeal, and the Appeals Commissioner said that the documentation provided did not go anywhere near enough of a standard that it had any real prospect of affecting the decisions of the Commission.

2760 The Deputy claimed that the previous Code of Conduct investigation should not have been factored into the decision-making process of this complaint, but the Appeals Commissioner disagreed as the behaviour complained of was not only new but having been relatively recently after the conclusion of the previous Code of Conduct in October 2024. He said that these were not simply repeat allegations but new behaviours complained about that could be seen as an ongoing

2765 pattern of behaviour. The Deputy claimed he was not provided all the documentation and the information the Commissioner used to make the decision was wrong, but the Appeals Commissioner said he was satisfied that the Commissioner complied with the responsibilities in this respect. Conclusion of this appeal once again was not upheld.

On ground 4, relating to the sanction recommended by the Commissioner, the Appeals Commissioner partly upheld this. So, Madam Bailiff, it is clear that the Appeals Commissioner did not uphold three out of four grounds of the Deputy's appeal. He agreed with the Commission that the Deputy breached six parts of the Code and he should be sanctioned.

2770 To be clear, Madam Bailiff, despite what has been widely circulated, this was not a 90-second phone call. During that call, numbers and details of so-called complaints against the named doctor were confirmed by the Deputy, yet the Deputy failed to inform the journalist that these were not formal complaints and were completely unsubstantiated. The number of complaints that were confirmed do not tally the numbers officially held, nor was all the information he confirmed in the public domain.

2775 If I may, Madam Bailiff, I would like to quote from the penultimate paragraph on page 3 of the Commissioner's report. Dr McCullough says:

The evidence shows a deliberate and sustained effort to unfairly criticise, to discredit and to cause reputational harm to the named doctor's professional and personal reputation.

2780 In my view, Madam Bailiff, this pattern of behaviour fits squarely within the standard definition of bullying and is entirely inconsistent with the values and respect, fairness, and accountability expected of all of us. Two independent people with impeccable pedigree reviewed this complaint, concluded and agreed that the Deputy breached the Code and should be sanctioned.

2785 Once again, please be reminded, this is not about stifling freedom of speech or preventing us advocating for the people of Guernsey. It is actually about acting with honesty and integrity. If we vote to set a sanction for the Deputy – should I say that if we actually vote not to sanction the Deputy, then we are totally undermining the very independent process that we, as Deputies, agreed to back in 2023. What does it say about us? It tells the Guernsey public and the wider world that Deputies in Guernsey are not accountable for their actions.

2790 By ignoring the recommendations, in my belief, Madam Bailiff, by not only the Commissioner but the Appeals Commissioner, I believe they would resign because they would see us as being lawless. I will be voting for the Appeals Commissioner.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you, Deputy McKenna.

2795 Can I just remind everybody again about not naming names. As much as I am grateful for the promotion I am only the Deputy Bailiff.

Deputy Ozanne.

**Deputy Ozanne:** Thank you, ma'am.

2800 This proposition rightly touches on matters concerning power, accountability, abuse of power and a resulting complaints procedure or, more accurately, what happens when there is a lack of a robust complaints procedure, as I have queried this morning. Perhaps even more importantly, the lack of an open culture of learning that sees complaints procedures as a central part of a healthy organisation, which recognises human errors can occur, and seeks to use that as an opportunity to grow, develop and excel.

2805 Reading through the papers, I felt I was witnessing what I can only call a heavyweight boxing match between individuals with impressive intellects locked in an interminable battle where there appeared to be a reluctance to admit mistakes, where many others sought to throw punches from the sidelines in order to either defend their champion or knock out their assailant. All were understandably trying to protect their reputations but none, I would offer, have come out covering

themselves in glory. Indeed, would that all this intellect, energy, resources and time were focused on solving instead some of our Island's most pressing problems? (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

That said, we must remember that at the heart of this sorry situation are the lives and wellbeing of some of our most vulnerable Islanders, seriously ill young children and their families who have 2815 courageously fought an even bigger battle to be heard, to be noticed and to have their concerns addressed. Some I believe are with us today, ma'am, and I for one want to offer my deep condolences for what they have been through, and to apologise for being part of a system that, as the President of SACC has rightly pointed out, and it appears to me, has seriously let them down. I am truly sorry.

2820 I have spent many years working with victims of various forms of abuse who have been let down by large institutions that have preferred to close ranks rather than face truth, that have sought to protect their own reputations rather than recognise the harm that has been caused, and who have re-traumatised victims time and time again by getting them to relive and recount their horrors.

2825 No institution is immune from getting things catastrophically wrong, as we saw recently with the post office scandal, where it took the UK Parliament to intervene, ultimately to right one of the greatest miscarriages of justice in recent times, and to quash the convictions made and appealed in courts of law. It is important to note that these convictions were all made without taking into account a key piece of vital evidence, that it was system errors that were, in fact, to blame.

2830 You see, ma'am, even law courts and law professionals can, at times, make mistakes and ignore key pieces of evidence. Who then shall those affected appeal to? Well, in the case of the post office, it was their parliamentary representatives who championed their cause at much cost to themselves. I would suggest it is one of our core duties as States' Members to speak up for our constituents and to recognise incidents when complaints, procedures, or institutional cultures fail.

2835 At this point, ma'am, I feel it might be worth pointing out my relevant legal experience, which informs the comments that I am about to make and the decision I myself have come to. It might help Members to know that I am currently a research fellow at Regent's Park College at Oxford University, where I have researched and published in the Oxford Law and Religion Journal. I have also published articles in the European Human Rights Law Review and was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Kent for my work in human rights and equality. I am a member of 2840 Middle Temple and I am currently studying for the bar with the Inns of Court College of Advocacy, having successfully attained a postgraduate diploma in law. I, therefore, do not come to these matters lightly.

We have been encouraged in section 4 of SACC's letters of the presiding office to:

... have regard to the general principles which apply in democratic parliaments across the world when considering disciplinary matters relating to our peers and which emphasise due process, proportionality and accountability. The importance of such proceedings being fair and transparent and conducted in accordance with natural justice.

2845 For Members not familiar with the term 'natural justice', this means both the right to be heard and the rule against bias. Furthermore, we are told that the role of the States is not to re-examine the evidence, but rather to look at the conclusions and decide whether they are proportionate, fair and reasonable. As such, we are encouraged to look at the process that has been followed, and to see whether the conclusions it has led to are fair and reasonable, and whether the recommendation of the amended 25-day suspension is proportionate to the Commissioners', both of them, findings.

2850 I must admit I find myself in quite a bind here, for to do my due diligence and determine whether there has been a fair process I must necessarily look at the evidence that has been supplied by the Commissioners on how they have consequently chosen to deal with it. Like all Deputies, I must also take into account the political context in which this process has occurred and the implications that it will have on each of us as Deputies going forward.

2860 Do I believe the process was fair? We have seen that Deputy St Pier was interviewed and heard at length. We have seen the reams of correspondence shared and we have also seen the responses given to him by both Commissioners. As such, his right to be heard was, I believe, met. However, I find it somewhat questionable as to whether the rule against bias was met. I find it very odd that

the HSC letter recognising that Deputy St Pier was not the source of the information to the *Guardian* was omitted, that his own previous case was revisited, that the Commissioner herself made reference, redacted on page 85, starting, 'I once had a real struggle' recounting her own experiences, and that it would appear to me that only evidence that sought to confirm the complaints against him was taken into account. I therefore do not have confidence that the process was fair.

2865 Is the recommendation reasonable? Well, the reasonableness test is normally to ask the question whether something is so unreasonable that no reasonable authority could ever have come to the same conclusion. Again, I find myself at odds with both the Commissioner for Standards and the Appeals Commissioner for their findings and recommendations relating to the decision to confirm facts to a journalist, especially as they relate to an action that I, too, myself would have taken and indeed have frequently done so. To confirm facts to a journalist is, I believe, clearly in the public interest, as to do otherwise is to either allow misinformation into the public sphere or to be seen to obfuscate. To say 'no comment' to a journalist, particularly one from a high profile national media, is not a neutral act and can lead to far more serious repercussions in the longer term, as it frequently is interpreted as a desire to hide or obfuscate facts.

2870 2875 I personally find it highly unreasonable to be told that I cannot clarify facts relating to my constituents with the media. Indeed, I believe it is my public duty to do so. Even if I do believe it was reasonable, do I believe that the 25-day recommended suspension is proportionate? I find it notable that the Appeals Commissioner himself agreed that the initial proposal of a 30-day suspension without the political context could be reasonably viewed as disproportionate when compared to similar suspensions in other parliaments.

2880 Deputy St Pier has helpfully set out in a table on page 37, which you may want to look at if you have not seen it, which shows the differing suspensions made to UK parliamentarians, and shows how these kinds are akin, 30 days, to suspensions for sexual misconduct, financial lobbying and criminal breaches of lockdown rules. The Appeals Commissioner also notes that the sanction tariff will set a new precedent for Guernsey, which warrants careful thought. However, he then sets out no basis as to why he reduces it to just 25 days. I find this very concerning, given the precedent it will set for future rulings that will impact us all.

2890 2895 If one was to compare it with the only comparable data we have, that of the UK Parliament, then I do not find it a proportionate recommendation and cannot support it. I should also add that our recent decision just now to clarify that this is 25 days without pay will, for some Deputies who may be found guilty under the Code in future, create a make or break situation for them. For me, personally, it would create significant hardship, which more than likely would lead to my inability to continue in my role. It seems an incredibly harsh sentence, especially given that we have a current Member who is being paid over a period of months while awaiting trial in prison.

2900 For all these reasons, I will therefore not be voting to suspend Deputy St Pier. I understand that this may raise further questions about our Code of Conduct process, then so be it. But I, for one, do not want to seemingly rubber stamp a decision that I cannot in all conscience support. Personally, I would hope that lessons would be learned from this new process, which we have adopted, and that we would put down the difficulties that we have with the Appeals Commissioner and the Standards Commissioner's recommendations as teething problems.

As I said upfront, all institutions should have a culture of learning where we seek to learn from our mistakes. I hope that this process itself will not be immune to it.

2905 Thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Before we go on further in debate, Members will note there has been circulated a second amendment. Has everybody got a copy? Does everybody have a copy of the second amendment? I am terribly sorry, I thought everybody had been circulated. I will now ask the Sheriff to circulate it.

2910 All right. Does everybody now have a copy in paper form as well as on your screens of Amendment 2? I am going to interpose that now because, of course, it may impact on how people carry on the debate.

Deputy Dorrity, do you wish to lay this amendment?

2915 **Deputy Dorrity:** Yes, ma'am.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Do you wish to speak on it now?

Amendment 2

For '25' substitute the word 'five'.

2920 **Deputy Dorrity:** Thank you, madam.

After carefully reviewing the investigation and the evidence presented, including the Policy Letter, Deputy St Pier's own podcast in which he presented his case, and the unprecedented coverage in the local media on the subject, including four poll pages in our local paper only yesterday, I find that I am unable to discount the findings of both the Standards Commissioner and the Appeals Lead regarding this matter.

I believe their conclusions for the most part are both thorough and fair. While I have great sympathy for Deputy St Pier on a personal level, and acknowledge the challenges for him that have arisen from this situation, I must be clear in my position. The integrity of our public office and the trust placed in our representatives must always come first.

2930 It is my understanding that the findings of the Standards Commissioner and Appeals Lead were made with that particular principle at heart. To reject their conclusions would undermine not only the credibility of the processes we currently have in place, but also the trust for public places in us to act with accountability and transparency. I do, however, agree with the Appeals Lead's decision to only partially uphold appeal ground 4. I do not agree that a 30-day suspension is proportionate, nor do I find that the Appeals Lead's recommendation of a 25-day suspension to be appropriate. The fact that there has been a suspension is, in and of itself, in my opinion, central enough in this matter.

2940 In this case, I believe a suspension period of no more than five days would have been more appropriate. I understand that this decision is not an easy one for Deputy St Pier, but it is important to remember that no individual is above the standards we expect of those who hold public office. I do not take this decision lightly, but after careful consideration I will not be able to reject the findings of the investigation.

Thank you.

2945 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Deputy Montague, do you second the amendment?

**Deputy Montague:** I do, madam.

2950 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Do you wish to speak on the amendment?

**Deputy Montague:** I do not.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Does anybody wish to speak on the amendment?

2955 Deputy Burford.

**Deputy Burford:** Thank you, madam.

It is within the gift of the States' Assembly and Constitution Committee under the Reform Law to bring forward any recommendation it sees fit as part of its Policy Letter, while at the same time transmitting the report of the Appeals Commissioner to the Assembly. The Committee discussed that at considerable length. We felt quite strongly that we would just bring forward the

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recommendation that the Appeals Commissioner made and also reserve our individual rights to speak, as I am sure we will all do.

2965 So with that in mind, I cannot support this amendment because I believe that we either support what our independent process has recommended or we reject it. That for me is a very binary figure. In many ways just changing the sanction to something slightly different is rejecting the recommendation of the Commissioner as much as voting against it. It was saying, we still think you got it wrong.

2970 On that basis I will not be supporting this amendment and I would urge other Members to do likewise.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

2975 **Deputy Oswald:** Madam, I find myself agreeing with Deputy Dorrity. I went through the same thought process as he did earlier on in the process and considered putting in a very similar amendment.

2980 I was persuaded otherwise on consultation with other Members of this Committee because Deputy St Pier wishes to fight this proposal on principle only, and he also pointed out it is a typical Guernsey fudge to actually review the sanction applied at the end of that process.

2985 I have also listened to Deputy Burford and her view expressed just now. I find myself in a quandary. While actually supporting what Deputy Dorrity says, I also totally support the findings of the Appeals Commissioner and intend to speak to that in general debate. So, regrettably, having already decided I probably would support Deputy Dorrity, I have listened to Deputy Burford and changed my mind.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen.

**Deputy Vermeulen:** Thank you, ma'am.

2990 Ma'am I was in the previous States, before we had appointed this Commission, and I must say that the report is far better than the old system. But, talking about consistency, reducing from 30 days to 25 days to then five, under the old system, a Member was suspended for 365 days without pay. Now, let us just think about that. I am not a commissioner, I am not qualified, I am not a citizen lawyer or whatever, but we have to be sensible about things. I do take the role of being a Deputy very seriously. It is about our integrity. I do not think I can support five days.

3000 I think I will be supporting the Commissioner's recommendations for those reasons. But let us not forget, it was not that long ago that somebody was suspended for 365 days. A different system, I will admit. But the new system is far more thorough, far better and I think the suspension of 25 days is far more proportionate with what went on.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

3005 **Deputy Gollop:** I was a Member for three or so years of the former SACC Committee and I am currently a Member of the new SACC Committee but I am speaking here purely I think as an individual Deputy watching the events.

Recently I believe a member of the Welsh Assembly that some of us meet from time to time in our CPA duties, has finally been suspended for a fortnight for saying something arguably racialistic on WhatsApp. That does seem to me to be not a pleasant thing to do and perhaps of less serious – rather more serious than what Deputy St Pier has been involved with. I will come on to why.

3010 I am minded to support Deputy Dorrity's five-day amendment, because there are very strong arguments to support the Commissioners. I think SACC's position as a corporate body, as Deputy Hansmann Rouxel outlined, is very much to be aware of the process and to support it on that level. But there is also a strong theme, and the Appeals Commissioner brought it out, of what

3015 is the right time proportionality. Deputy Ozanne, indeed, made a strong speech in which she outlined that there was not a specific rationale for the number of days. Indeed, that was a reflection that was said, I think, on the podcast, too.

3020 Deputy Ozanne also made the point, and I do not think it is an irrelevant point, that is why I was a bit peeved when Deputy Inder shut down the amendment debate, but of course I supported the amendment itself. But I wanted to speak at length about the relative unfairness. As soon as you suspend a Member for a period of time, if the Member has a family, or even if they have not, and they are dependent to a degree on their income as a politician, that is a different context than if they have independent means or perhaps are relatively well-heeled and retired. I know we brought the amendment for clarification because of misunderstandings in social media, and that was the correct thing to do.

3025 Deputy Vermeulen is of course right in saying that we did suspend a Member for a year and I regret now – you do have regrets – that I agreed to that. I was a member of SACC, I wanted to respect the process and there was a possibility at one point of the Member being expelled, which was even more extreme, perhaps, of an amendment. But it was excessive, and we look at other parliaments and assemblies, and it was a lot. But actually looking around the world in itself, for what 3030 Jersey do or whatever, is not an argument for how we improve standards here. I would draw a distinction that there is not a lot in common between the case that led to a year's suspension last year and the case we are discussing today. Not only is it under a different system, different issues, but in the first instance, it was a Member who had, at the time, had an anonymous identity and was making somewhat awkward comments. This is an example of the Member who perceives he is doing 3035 the right thing for his constituents. Whether it is or not, it has been debated and discussed by many people but it is very much more in line with what we would expect a Member to do, even if the Member has not impressed everybody in the way he arguably has gone about it.

3040 Bearing in mind that I feel as a Member of SACC ideally I should support the Commissioners and the process, but I also fundamentally feel – and we may get to this in a later debate, on the main debate – that there have been processes used and perhaps evidential issues and misunderstandings of our role as States' Members. I, on the benefit of the doubt, would support this amendment and then support the Proposition if it becomes a Proposition.

3045 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Sloan.

3050 **Deputy Sloan:** Thank you, madam.

Hopefully through you, madam, I will help Deputy Oswald change his mind again. I think the Proposition and amendment is elegant because listening to the debate so far I have a sense that there are two issues here. One is the point of principle about whether the actions were correct and whether the findings against the Deputy were sound, and the second issue is the sentence, as it were, the sanction. I confess, madam, I have no sentencing experience. I have the guidelines to provide me what is proportionate, and I sense from previous speakers, they are at least confident with the proportionality of that because SACC went to that point at length.

3055 I do feel the public will be feeling they require us to make a decision on the point of principle, and on that I think that the amendment is consistent with both the views of the Commissioner and the Appeals Commissioner, who on the first three findings the appeal was not upheld. The only query was about sentencing. So therefore for me I believe that this disassociates the principle of the Code of Conduct complaint as opposed to the sentencing [*inaudible*] sentencing is for me, and I support the debate points of principle, and agree whether or not we can find that the behaviour 3060 breached the Code of Conduct.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater.

**Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Bailiff.

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3065 I can understand why Deputy Dorrity and Deputy Montague brought this amendment. This is one of those amendments that we see quite often trying to strike a balance, trying to find a compromise between those who are speaking in favour of the proposition and those who are speaking against. Mainly for the reasons Deputy Burford outlined, I cannot support this amendment because if you support this amendment, those that are supporting the Commissioner and the  
3070 findings of the appeals process cannot support this either because you are saying that they were wrong. You are saying that the Commissioner was wrong by saying he should be suspended for 30 days and the appeal was wrong in saying it should be reduced by five. You either supported it or not, and from my point of view the narrow fact that we have to hone in on is was there a confidential breach or not. That is what it is going to hang on and that is what I am going to focus  
3075 on in this entire debate. I will outline more of that in general debate, but I think we should move on to general debate, get into the crux of it, and then we can all share our feelings and come to a vote at the end.

So for those reasons and the reasons articulated by Deputy Burford, I would urge Members to reject this amendment.

3080 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

**Deputy Gabriel:** Thank you, ma'am.

3085 For me it is around principle, and again Deputy Sloan touched on it. There are two aspects for me in play, whether the Deputy breached the Code and then the sanction. If I voted for the amendment, which I am likely not to vote for because it then first off endorses the guilty principle, I suppose, and then the sanction involved. This appears to be a good old compromise where actually nobody is happy. As Deputy Leadbeater says, if those that support the Commissioner and the Appeal Commissioner's findings they will too be disappointed if this amendment passes. For those  
3090 that uphold the principle, they again, if they uphold this amendment, will be agreeing the sanction and by default agreeing that the Deputy breached the Code.

3095 Again, there is nothing really to compare, 30 to 25 to five. I do recall, having been in the Magistrate's Court for a traffic offence a long time ago, that the fine meted down to me was X fine or X days. There appears to be no comparison here about what the five days relates to. There is nothing to use as a yardstick in our jurisdiction. Again, we have seen some aspects of measurement in the Bailiwick and also measurement from the UK, but again that does not necessarily come into play in Guernsey and what is relevant and respectful for our jurisdiction.

So with that in mind, and going back to the principle aspect at the start, whether there was a breach or not and then the sanction, I will not be supporting the amendment.

3100 Thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

3105 **Deputy Inder:** Both Deputy Sloan and Deputy Leadbeater are right. I did not think that was actually possible. *(Laughter)* Deputy Gabriel said this is an awful compromise because no one will like it, but actually it could be a good thing.

3110 Where I think this might have some value, and I entirely accept Deputy Leadbeater's [*inaudible*]. Because if those who are struggling, accepting the principle but not liking 25 days, like Deputy Sloan, I do not have a particular view on the level of the small [*inaudible*] Deputy Vermeulen said, he basically touched on that [*inaudible*] largely talking to himself on Twitter. That is basically what we did.

3115 So all I am considering is whether I will aim low. Those who may be considering abstaining because they agree with the principle but do not like the sentence, if this draws them back towards keeping the integrity of our standards and system in place, retaining the public confidence and ensuring it does not look like we are effectively benefiting one of our own, I think this is possibly one of those weird compromises that I do not really agree with, but in this case I may have to vote

for, only in the sense that I know where I am in this generally and I think that is pretty well understood. What I am trying to assist is those who might end up abstaining because they like the principle but do not like the sanction. So to that end, even though I can bite my tongue and beat myself quite hard quite regularly, I think in this instance I can support the amendment.

3120 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Rochester.

3125 **Deputy Rochester:** In thinking about this amendment, I go back to the words of the Commissioner in her conclusion where she says that if we agree with her conclusion that behaviour was incompatible with the duty to act impartially in the public interest, that there was a risk of misleading the public and undermining public institutions and that the behaviour constituted bullying, if we agree with those conclusions, then I struggle to see how we can agree with less than 25 days in the sanction. So I bring that conclusion and the recommendation together and remind 3130 you of the seriousness of those conclusions. So I will not be supporting the amendment.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Falla.

3135 **Deputy Falla:** Thank you, madam.  
We are asked to consider proportionality. This is challenging because there is no benchmark, no comparator, no precedent for this, though our decision will set one. Are we best placed to do that? Do any of us wish to set a tariff for alleged misdemeanours committed by our peers in the future?

3140 On proportionality, the Appeals Commissioner stated that a 30-day suspension was at the very highest level of what could be expected. Then the Appeals Commissioner reduced the recommended suspension by only five days to 25. So if 30 days was the very highest, one assumes that 25 days would fall somewhere around the highest. Is that fair and reasonable?

3145 On the other hand, a last-minute lunchtime amendment, while it may on the surface have some appeal and has opened up the debate, has allowed very little time to consider whether five days is proportionate or the right tariff. We should not be playing tariff bingo and I will not vote for this amendment.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

3150 **Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, ma'am.  
Ma'am, I intend to vote against the Proposition from the Commissioner and the Appeals Commissioner for reasons that I will set out in the general debate.

3155 **The Deputy Bailiff:** The Proposition is from SACC, sorry. I just want to make clear that the Proposition is from SACC.

3160 **Deputy Matthews:** From SACC, my apologies, madam.  
For reasons that I will set out in general debate, but I am minded to support this amendment simply as almost a fallback position because I think that the precedent that would be set by setting such a high tariff, a 25-day suspension, would be a very serious precedent to be set in this Assembly. I hope that I am able to persuade the Assembly of the merits of not supporting the Policy Letter from SACC in general debate, but if I am unsuccessful in that endeavour then I think that at least reducing the tariff is a partly worthwhile outcome.

So for that reason I will reluctantly be supporting the amendment from Deputy Dorrity.

3165 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Camp.

**Deputy Camp:** Thank you, madam.

3170 Deputy Inder spoke about the integrity of the process. My feeling is that if we uncouple the sanction from the rest of the process, in fact, we are creating a lack of integrity in that process ourselves. Further, the amendment put forward does not give an explanation for why five days is more proportionate than the sanction proposed, which was deemed by the proposers to be disproportionate. On those reasons, I will not be voting for this amendment.

3175 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne.

**Deputy Ozanne:** Thank you, ma'am.

3180 I appreciate that the amendment does not give, as Deputy Camp has just set out, a reason but if we turn to page 37 of the report that we have, we have two examples of UK parliamentarians who were given one and two-day suspensions for breaching the Code or breaching confidentiality, which is, in effect, quite similar to what has been charged here. So I do think that five days, which is actually double the breach of confidentiality of the Code, does have some basis.

3185 As Members have heard, I obviously had a problem of both fairness, reasonableness and proportionality, but had I not had a problem with fairness and reasonableness and was looking just at proportionality I would still find that 25 days is too high. Therefore, I will be supporting this because I do think that this will set a precedent, as Deputy Falla has set out, and if we compare ourselves to other jurisdictions that to me should be around the range of what the UK Parliament has done. Five days is, I believe, proportionate.

3190 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** Madam, I suspect that Members are not terribly interested in my views on this amendment. *(Laughter)* Nonetheless, I obviously need to declare an interest in it under the Rules.

3195 Deputy Oswald, when he spoke to the amendment, had referred to a conversation that he and I had. Indeed, as he quite rightly articulated, it is my intention to argue on principle that the States of Deliberation should reject the Proposition. So I will obviously be continuing to do that, irrespective of whether this amendment succeeds or fails. For that reason, I think it is a matter for the Assembly on which I shall play no part and I will abstain on the vote.

3200 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Does anybody else wish to speak before I ask Deputy Hansmann Rouxel to respond on behalf of SACC?

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

**Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** I just want to echo the arguments laid right at the beginning of the day by Deputy Burford that the change in sanction does not necessarily change the outcome.

3205 I just wanted to clarify talking about proportionality in regards to what the Assembly agreed in the Deputy Le Tissier case. I think it is important and it is part of the debate to understand the distinction between the process that happened at that point. Deputy Le Tissier was originally under the panel system. A panel was convened. They found to uphold the complaint and recommended expulsion from the Assembly. It was also the first time that the Code of Conduct process had an appeal because prior to that you could not appeal. So in the interests of natural justice an appeal process was set up but it was also in its infancy and not fully formed. What then happened was a new panel was put in place. Now, the distinction between our appeal process now and the appeal process then is essentially the second panel retried the case and then recommended a slightly reduced – or much reduced, from expulsion to 365 days, which is the limit that a Member can be absent from the States of Deliberation before they can be expelled.

3210 So it is important to understand that the process that we are now going through with the independent Commissioner and Appeals Commissioner, the Appeals Commissioner is very different to the appeal process that happened with the Deputy Le Tissier case. Therefore, this sanction has no precedent. So although you can potentially draw that conclusion that Deputy Vermeulen had,

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3220 and it is his right to have that opinion, I just wanted to make sure that Members understood that this does set a precedent and, therefore, along with Deputy Burford, I will be voting against the Proposition.

3225 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Dorrity, your opportunity to reply as the layer of the amendment.

**Deputy Dorrity:** Thank you, madam.

3230 Thank you, everyone, for your very interesting comments. I suppose the proportionality point is the key point for me. I felt that 25 days just did not seem to be proportional to what we were talking about and that, in fact, the very fact that we were talking about any censure at all was censure in itself, was enough. So anyway, I hope you consider it, but thank you very much for giving my amendment an ear.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you very much, Deputy Dorrity.

3235 Members, you will now see on your screen before you the amendment, Amendment 2. I will ask the States' Greffier to open the voting now.

*There was a recorded vote.*

3240 *Not Carried – Pour 12, Contre 22, Ne vote pas 5, Did not vote 0, Absent 1*

<b>Pour</b>	<b>Contre</b>	<b>Ne vote pas</b>	<b>Did not vote</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Bury, Tina	Blin, Chris	De Sausmarez, Lindsay	None	Le Tocq, Jonathan
Cameron, Andy	Burford, Yvonne	Goy, David		
Dorrity, David	Camp, Haley	Rylatt, Tom		
Gollop, John	Collins, Garry	Snowdon, Alexander		
Hill, Edward	Curgenven, Rob	St Pier, Gavin		
Inder, Neil	Falla, Steve			
Kay-Mouat, Bruno	Gabriel, Adrian			
Matthews, Aidan	Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah			
Montague, Paul	Helyar, Mark			
Ozanne, Jayne	Humphreys, Rhona			
Sloan, Andy	Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha			
Williams, Steve	Laine, Marc			
	Leadbeater, Marc			
	Malik, Munazza			
	McKenna, Liam			
	Niles, Andrew			
	Oswald, George			
	Parkinson, Charles			
	Rochester, Sally			
	Strachan, Jennifer			
	Van Katwyk, Lee			
	Vermeulen, Simon			

3245 **The Deputy Bailiff:** There voted in relation to Amendment 2: pour 12; contre 22; there were 5 abstentions. Therefore, I declare that the amendment has not been passed.

We will now turn to general debate. Deputy Leadbeater.

**Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Bailiff.

As I pointed out just recently in my brief speech on the last amendment, I will focus on the single issue. That is my starting point here. That is: did Deputy St Pier share confidential information with a reporter at the *Guardian* newspaper? During the build-up to this debate there have been reams and reams of supporting information, some extremely emotive correspondence, statements and seemingly endless comments on social media. All of this has focused on whether they support one

side or the other and the reasons why. Very little I have read actually focus on the single issue. That is: did Deputy St Pier leak confidential information to the *Guardian* journalist?

3255 Emotive stories have come from either side, some supporting the medical profession and calling for Deputy St Pier's head on a stick, others supporting Deputy St Pier and his work on supporting families and individuals and speaking up. Madam, I ask Members to forget all of the noise, forget which side of the fence they fall on, forget all of the emotion, accusations and anything other than did he leak confidential information during that 90-second phone call? Because this is the only issue we are here to decide.

3260 I sat on HSC last term when this accusation was made to us. We received a complaint asking us to investigate. The accusation was that Deputy St Pier leaked confidential information that he had received as a member of the HSC Committee to the *Guardian* newspaper. This accusation was looked at by officers and it was found that in his role as a member of HSC Deputy St Pier had not received the information he was accused of leaking and, therefore, could not have been the cause of the leak.

3265 Now, we get loads and loads of papers and loads of things to digest and this was quite some time ago, so I have spent a lot of time this week going back over all the paperwork that HSC – apart from Deputy St Pier who was obviously recused – received and considered in relation to this last term. Much of this remains strictly confidential so I will be extremely careful and not refer specifically to the details but instead to summarise the situation as I experienced it.

3270 The complaint came in to us at HSC. We looked into the substance of the accusation and became aware that evidence had come to light proving that Deputy St Pier was not the source of the leak. So we responded to the complainant accordingly. The complainant refused to drop the complaint, even in light of evidence that Deputy St Pier was not the cause or the source of the leak. HSC did advise the complainant of its disappointment that they had refused to drop the complaint. This was the previous Committee obviously that I was a part of and not Deputy Oswald's Committee this term.

3275 Now, I want to point out now that this was HSC officers and Committee members that conducted the investigation and considered these accusations respectively. These are people that work in and fully support the medical profession, and so there can be no accusations of any bias in favour of Deputy St Pier and against the medical profession. In all honesty, these are people that thought that Deputy St Pier made a grave mistake by naming the doctor during the debate on the responsible officer report and had real concerns about the ramifications for our local medical professionals, certainly not natural supporters of Deputy St Pier. So if there would have been any bias, it would naturally have been against him and not the other way around.

3280 So to summarise the situation from my point of view, my experience, someone that has lived and breathed this issue as Vice-President of HSC last term, someone that has been privy to confidential information that even Deputy St Pier has not and evidence that the Commissioner did not consider, I have seen no evidence that Deputy St Pier leaked the information to the *Guardian* but I have seen evidence that the information was provided to the *Guardian* from elsewhere.

3285 Now, this was a very difficult situation for the previous Health & Social Care Committee. Deputy Oswald and I sat on the Task & Finish Group that also had members of the medical profession, safeguarding experts and representatives of the families, and we co-produced – clearly written by Deputy Oswald and not me – the Code of Conduct. It was a really worthwhile exercise because it brought both sides together. We had an understanding of the experience of the families and an understanding of the challenges in the medical profession, and I think the outcome of that piece of work was quite beneficial.

3290 Here we are today with it all raked up again. So we have gone through this process of bringing everybody together and trying to get – because what we want is an outcome. We want something that is going to be beneficial for the future, and the Code of Conduct was that. It was co-produced by us, by me as a politician, by Deputy Oswald as a non-voting Member with expertise, by the families that had been affected by the situation and by the medical professionals. We all got together and co-produced this document and that was progress. I am really disappointed that we

3305 are stood here today, sat here, raking it all up again, with all this emotive stuff in the media and on social media, 'What about the medical profession? What about the damage you are doing? What about the families that do not have a voice?' Forget about all of that. Even though all that stuff is important, it is not for today. Today is: did he leak that information to the *Guardian* newspaper? That is it. From my point of view, sitting on HSC, we found evidence that he did not. So how can I in 3310 all good faith support the recommendation, support the Proposition that is in front of us today? I cannot because I have seen evidence that Deputy St Pier was not guilty.

3315 So this was my experience. I am closer to it than most people in this room. Deputy Oswald and I sat on the Task & Finish Group. Deputy Matthews and Alderney Representative Snowdon were party to the confidential information as members of HSC last term. So we know a considerable amount about this. So I really hope that you take note of what I have just said and I would urge Members just to forget about the noise, forget about the emotive stuff and focus on that important question: did he leak this information or not? From the evidence I have seen, he did not so I would urge Members not to support the Proposition.

3320 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen.

**Deputy Vermeulen:** Thank you, ma'am.

3325 Reputations take a lifetime to build and a reputation can be lost in seconds. It is very important to me what people believe Guernsey to be as a jurisdiction and as a fair place to live and work. That is really important to me. It is a privilege to be a Deputy and we all sign up to a Code of Conduct and agree how we will behave. I really do uphold that and I know my colleagues uphold that, too.

3330 Now, the Guernsey electorate has voted for all of us Deputies, for us to represent them and to make a decision. They have not elected you to abstain or to be indecisive. Sometimes decisions are hard but our integrity is at stake and our values need to be upheld. Abstaining will not benefit anyone.

3335 Now, I do not see today's debate being about the actions or concerns of the families involved. I wholeheartedly believe that there are always opportunities for us to do better and improve. However, this decision is asking us whether we accept the findings of the independent Commissioner and author of the report. We have an independent Commissioner for Standards for a reason and I do not believe that it is our role to question their findings. We cannot simply pick and choose whether we like the recommendations or not. They have a role for a reason and I believe that it is our duty to respect them. We talked previously about proportionality and I will be upholding and going to the 25-day suspension.

3340 Thank you.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Deputy Falla.

3345 **Deputy Falla:** This is a regrettable debate. This is a debate that this Assembly would rather not have, a thankfully relatively rare occurrence where we need to contemplate whether one of our colleagues in the States has fallen below the standards that we expect from a fellow parliamentarian.

3350 The system in place should mean that we do not have to rely on our own judgement, perception, emotions or bias even to reach a conclusion on whether one of our number deserves to be sanctioned for their behaviour. But here we are today because, after all, the Assembly is the final arbiter. The Commissioner was appointed by the States to do a job, Deputy Vermeulen is right, to follow a due process, which by its own nature has an element of subjectivity. The Commissioner has presented findings and a recommendation. The Appeals Commissioner has similarly made a recommendation, but it is not an affront to the Commissioner or the Appeals Commissioner, nor will it imply any offence towards them, if we as an Assembly consider from our perspective that the 3355 recommendation is disproportionate.

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As Deputy Hansmann Rouxel wrote in the *Guernsey Press*, helpfully in my opinion, independence does not mean that the Assembly simply rubberstamps the Commissioner's view. She went on:

Public decision-making ensures transparency but also requires Members to exercise judgement, guided by the process but not bound by it. The Assembly's job is to weigh the broader constitutional context, assess proportionality and decide.

3360 She wrote about the structural tension surrounding this debate, a tension that we are all feeling right now. While it is tempting to do so, we have been instructed not to re-examine the evidence but to look at the conclusions and decide whether they are proportionate, fair and reasonable. Deputy Leadbeater's speech was very informative. Any previous finding of misconduct against Deputy St Pier has been dealt with and spent. That is a closed matter. One has to question whether 3365 any suspension is proportionate for a Deputy who simply confirmed facts presented to him by a journalist who had gleaned those facts from other sources. Madam, I speak as a former journalist and with a 30-year career of dealing with local, national and international journalists. I understand the rules of engagement. One has to question whether the suspension is proportionate, fair and reasonable when no article was ever published in the *Guardian* newspaper. All of the publicity 3370 around this has not come from a newspaper article, it has come from the parties involved.

3375 Members of this Assembly have to put out of their minds the heat and noise surrounding the wider story involved here. I fear there may be a conflation of the previous complaint, which is dealt with and spent, with the complaint under consideration today. Today we have simply to focus on the proportionality of the recommended sanction in response to a complaint about Deputy St Pier confirming facts to a journalist who ultimately never went to press.

3380 Deputy St Pier trod a careful line here. He did not supply the journalist with information but ultimately, and vitally in this debate, speaking up for fellow citizens is constituency work and sometimes that will involve speaking to the press. It becomes part of our bread and butter from the day we are elected. We are high profile, in the public eye and we were elected to have an opinion, have a conscience, represent the underdog, pursue the truth. We are sometimes called to champion causes, even causes that go where angels fear to tread.

3385 I have had my own brush with a Code of Conduct complaint, which was found to be without grounds. I found the Commissioner to be professional and helpful. Having read the full SACC report and the appendices several times now, I do not see those same characteristics, the same tone of voice reflected in the exchanges documenting the Commissioner's interactions with Deputy St Pier, in particular the off-the-record comments during a formal interview.

In another *Guernsey Press* article Matt Fallaize says he and our Members face a particularly difficult decision:

They can only vote with their conscience and hope for the best.

3390 Well, madam, I am trusting my conscience on this one and it is telling me that the Commissioner has overreached in an arrival at a suspension for a Deputy speaking very briefly to a journalist in a fact-checking context. In my mind, it is not fair and reasonable. My conscience tells me that there were flaws in this process and in good conscience I cannot support the SACC Proposition.

3395 **The Deputy Bailiff:** Can I remind Members once again that even former Deputies who are now journalists should not be mentioned by name during the debate. Thank you.

Deputy Goy.

3400 **Deputy Goy:** Thank you, madam.

Now, first of all, I want to say this. I can sympathise with both Deputy St Pier and Dr Bohin and her family.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Goy, I have said this –

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**Deputy Goy:** Sorry.

3410      **The Deputy Bailiff:** – quite a number of times now. I said it before we reached this debate because I wanted to set the level very clearly. People are not to mention names of people who have no opportunity to reply.

**Deputy Goy:** Thank you. Sorry, madam.

3415      My issue is actually with the Code of Conduct. Now, the Code of Conduct should afford Deputies the same freedom of expression as a member of the general public. Right now that is not the case. While Deputies have privilege to speak freely in the Assembly, outside of this Assembly we actually have less freedom of expression than members of the public. The thing is we already have laws on libel, on defamation, on GDPR. Why do we need the Code of Conduct to put another layer on top of this? If it is okay for a member of the general public to say what Deputy St Pier said, then it is okay for Deputy St Pier to say it. Because if the law permits it, then why should a court forbid it?

3420      The second point is the Code has a lot of broad clauses that can and have been weaponised. You see, we are the people's eyes, ears and voice in Government. If we were to always have to tread on eggshells, how are we supposed to do our jobs properly?

**Deputy Inder:** Point of order.

3425      **The Deputy Bailiff:** Yes, what is your point of order, Deputy Inder?

3430      **Deputy Inder:** I do not want to be unkind but I have noticed Deputy Goy seems to address the gallery rather than the States' Members, but I do not want [*inaudible*].

3435      **The Deputy Bailiff:** Well, to be fair, I think a number of Deputies do that, but it is a fair point that remarks really should be addressed to me rather than the gallery.

**Deputy Goy:** Okay. All right.

3440      **The Deputy Bailiff:** But you are not the only person who does that.

**Deputy Goy:** Okay. Thank you very much.

3445      So let me repeat my point. We are the people's eyes, ears and voice in Government. Therefore, it is important that Deputies are able to speak freely without fear. Now, the Code of Conduct at this point in time does not permit that.

The second point: I believe the Code of Conduct should be limited to being a guideline and advisory. People are confused about the Code of Conduct here. They say the Code of Conduct is to protect the people. No, the Code of Conduct is to protect the States and the Assembly and I will give you the proof. Clause number 10:

Members shall at all times conduct themselves in a manner which will tend to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the States of Deliberation and never undertake any action which would bring the States or its Members generally into disrepute.

3450      So it is there to protect the States, the reputation of the States to be exact. Now, if you hear that clause over there, you can think of 1,001 ways on how you can weaponise it. I will not give you any ideas, but suffice to say the Code of Conduct should not, as some of us here argue, act as a company handbook. It is not a company handbook. We are not employees of the States. We only have one boss and the boss is the people. The Commissioner should not be made to play the role of HR. Basically, what I want to say is we are the agents of the people. We have been put into Government to ensure that the will of the people is done. We may have our own Committees, we may be part of

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3455 a team, but ultimately it is not me and my Committee on one side and people on the other side. We are part of the people. We are an agent of the people.

3460 Some of you might ask, 'What if I get insulted? What if I do not like something that my colleague said?' Put it this way, being able to take insults is part of being a job for politicians. Our job scope is to be able to take all sorts of feedback. Now, some of this feedback may be negative. When you have a Code of Conduct that is so broad that can be considered bullying. This is what I say about weaponisation. The Code is too broad at the moment and it is not fit for purpose.

3465 Lastly, we are grown adults. We do not need the Code of Conduct to make us behave honourably. If we behave dishonourably but still within the law, then let the people judge. Because sometimes what you think is somebody making a dishonourable insult or whatever, something that to you is bullying, it might not be. That person may be just expressing their views. Let the people judge. If it is fine by the law, it should be fine by the Code.

Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

3470 Deputy Oswald.

**Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, madam.

3475 As per para 4.3 of the Policy Letter, it is not for this Assembly to re-examine the evidence considered but rather to look at the conclusions. My view is that the conclusions that the Commissioner for Standards came to, and which were largely upheld on appeal, are correct. I will justify this conclusion. I will also point out that clearly I totally agree with Deputy Marc Leadbeater in his statement, apart from one fact or one issue, which actually is a major issue that he presented. Because I do not think that the process relies purely on the leakage of confidential information in the way specified regarding a newspaper. It covers many other grounds other than this.

3480 A second independent review of matters paediatric was taking place in November of 2024. This was a report from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. Subsequently, I will refer to this as the college review, part of a rolling review of individual departments as specified in the contract between the Medical Specialist Group and the Health & Social Care Committee. This review was commissioned in March 2024. Concerns over the impact of events leading up to the reprimand given to Deputy St Pier in October 2024 contributed significantly to the formulation of the terms of reference for this review. Deputy St Pier, as a member of the HSC Committee from April 2024, participated in this discussion.

3485 Following a visit of the Royal College team in November 2024, initial feedback from the review came to HSC and the Medical Specialist Group (MSG) verbally on 28th November and by letter on 8th December. The final report is privileged but I have sought approval for and received permission to quote relevant conclusions in this matter. Serious concerns were raised by the visiting team. These were political interference undermining the Safeguarding Team's ability to carry out their work effectively, risk to the wellbeing of the consultant paediatricians, and direct communication from complainants outside the formal complaint system undermining this process. These mirror conclusions reached independently and separately by the Commissioner for Standards. The visiting Royal College team were so worried as to their findings they followed up their original feedback with two further communications in the early part of 2025, prior to the release of their completed report, seeking assurances that action was being taken.

3500 As regards the telephone call from the *Guardian* journalist, Deputy St Pier, as a member of HSC and cognisant of the situation in the Paediatric Department, had a responsibility not to exacerbate the issue. A simple 'no comment' reply to journalist questions would have satisfied this requirement. As such, para 4.4 of the Policy Letter, which refers to the principle that with privileges comes responsibility, applies. This is where I disagree with Deputy Hansmann Rouxel's considered critique of the Appeals Committee's report because I consider there was more to it than in her view.

3505 The Assembly has set up an independent process to investigate conduct of Members. It is our duty as Members of this Assembly, after consideration, to confirm or not the findings and

recommendations of this process. Were we not to confirm the findings of the Commissioner for Standards, the implications that an independently recognised episode of behaviour that fulfils criteria for the definition of bullying has gone unsanctioned would be significant for the majority of 3510 the staff working for HSC and those of our contracted partners. Furthermore, a vote to overturn findings reached by an independent process would have further major ramifications. Home Affairs are, I believe, considering bolstering the role of independent adjudication in their complaints process and we in HSC are watching this potential development with interest. What would be the 3515 purpose of setting up further such systems for the States if they do not like conclusions that are reached or decisions reached and vote to overturn them?

Fellow Deputies and members of the public may accuse me, in view of my background, of 3520 colluding with the medical profession. This is categorically not the case, and I have no interests to declare in this aspect. My concern is for the protection in their workplace of all those who work with and on behalf of our Health & Social Care Committee. However, recognising our wider responsibilities to the public at large over the past two years I have strived long and hard, as 3525 Deputy Leadbeater has described, to ameliorate the position left to HSC following events leading up to October 2024. This involved working with the families who had raised their original concerns through the complaints process as part of a Task & Finish Group. This shows the virtues of a properly completed complaints process, which is a learning process. From that process a significant practical Proposition was brought forward and has become policy for hospital practice.

Our responsibility as HSC extends, of course, to the wider community outside of those families 3530 caught up in this affair. We are endeavouring to promote the Island as a safe and secure place for families to move to, to bring up their children. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) For this project to succeed, effective and functioning local paediatric services are essential. This keeps me awake at night. I have 3535 read the two articles published in the *Press* dated 24th November. Both contain mistakes. The Chair of MSG states that three paediatricians have left consequent on the event described. The situation is actually worse than this. The first paediatrician to leave was some five years ago, prior to the three named in the *Press* article. This paediatrician left directly consequent upon alleged bullying of the nature that has been described more recently. This means that there have been four premature departures. The paediatric service is now at risk precisely because of the events and their sequelae that we are now debating.

Deputy St Pier's article contains an untruth. He claims that no attempt was made to reach out to 3540 the families with whom he is involved. This is wrong. The index four families were invited to a meeting with HSC, which took place in November 2022, as Deputy St Pier acknowledges. Direct consequence resulted with the formation of a Task & Finish Group based on executing lessons derived from the learning report. Both the Director of Quality, Safety, Improvement and 3545 Safeguarding – it is one person with those four roles – who was independent from HSC and answers directly to P&R, and the off-Island designated doctor for child safeguarding made considerable efforts to make themselves available to those families who had not participated in the complaints process. This endeavour was hindered by the fact that nobody other than Deputy St Pier knew who these people were or are and requests for that information to be released were turned down.

While not underestimating any impact on the families involved, it is in the best interests of our 3550 community to learn from this episode and move on. The events that have led us to this debate we are having today has not made the process of reconciliation any easier. However, I intend to continue to work towards the same. I also say that the debate to date has been polite and appropriate and particularly the debate regarding Deputy Dorrity's amendment made me change my mind on more than one occasion. I stuck with the principle that we need to uphold the Commissioner for Standards. Voting in favour of the Proposition put forward by SACC is an essential step in the reconciliation process in my view.

3555 Thank you very much.

**Deputy Ozanne:** Point of order.

3560      **The Deputy Bailiff:** You have to say your point of order, Deputy Ozanne, before Deputy Oswald has sat down and I am afraid he was – no, I am afraid you did not. No, you did not. He had sat down. Deputy Inder.

3565      **Deputy Inder:** Members, we will carry on with the tone of the debate and I thank Deputy Oswald for speaking before me. If anyone is likely to know the facts around [inaudible] HSC. I am not an expert in legal matters and I am certainly not an expert on medical matters. As Deputy Hansmann Rouxel said, we implemented the process of having a Commissioner some years ago, of which the Deputy here did agree.

3570      Anyway, today we are not here to reinvestigate the evidence. Some think we are, but that is not what we are here to do. That work has already taken place, first by the Standards Commissioner, then by the Appeals Commissioner, who upheld the majority findings and recommended a reduced sanction of 25 days. Our role is far narrower. It also is significant. It is to decide whether the outcome is proportionate, fair, reasonable, and consider what the consequences may be not only for the individual Deputy but for the reputation and credibility of the Assembly. I would like to focus on those broader consequences, in particular reputational risks if this Assembly decides not to support the Proposition.

3575      First, the integrity of our standards system. We have a Code of Conduct. We have a Commissioner for Standards. We have a right of appeal, which has now been exercised. We are not here to relitigate. The appeal process did not overturn the findings. It simply moderated the sanction. In other words, the system functions as it was designed to do. The process is complete. There was a process, it went to appeal, and that was a closed process. If after that process has concluded this Assembly chooses not to impose any sanction at all, it raises an uncomfortable question. Is our standards process meaningful or is it merely advisory? We must consider how it would appear if we effectively disregard the work of the Commissioner and the Appeals Commissioner, both appointed to operate independently precisely so these matters do not become political contests, as they appear to have. If the outcome of months of investigation can simply be set aside, what message do we send to future complainants, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) to future Deputies and to the public? That we have a Code of Conduct but that it need not carry any consequence.

3580      To pick on something that Deputy Ozanne said some moons ago, I think it was the poor get the law and the rich get justice. (*Laughter*) If this is not an example of us looking after our own, allowing the rich, the powerful and those with resources to get the justice that they want, not the justice that they deserve, this is it right here, right now.

3585      Second, public confidence in the States as a whole. Members will know public trust is not given automatically. It is earned and maintained. When a Member is found after due process to have breached six sections of the Code and an independent appeal has supported those conclusions, the public reasonably expects some consequences will follow. If none does, we risk again being seen as a body unwilling to apply the rules to ourselves. This is a legislature unwilling to apply the rules to ourselves. We are happy to apply the law to everyone else but we will not apply our own rules. Think very carefully about this overnight. There is already a perception in many places, not only in Guernsey, that politicians protect their own. If this Assembly appears to avoid the difficult decisions because the subject is one of our own Members, we play directly into that narrative. Once trust is damaged, repairing it is far harder than maintaining it in the first place. In the 80th year of our liberation, are we really here to damage that democracy?

3600      The precedent that this sets for all future cases. The Appeals Commissioner noted something important. Guernsey has very few comparators for serious sanctions. This decision will set a benchmark. If we reject the recommendation entirely, the effect may be that the future sanctions become functionally impossible to impose if, indeed, we will even have a Commissioner the day after tomorrow. Who would really want to do all of that work to have it completely overturned by some provincial Deputies? That would place the credibility of the Code of Conduct at real risk and it would undermine what is in principle a fair and independent process.

Fourthly, the wider political and media implications. Members will be aware that this case has drawn interest beyond Guernsey, including from national media. If we fail to apply any sanction, attention may well turn not only to the Deputy involved but to the States of Guernsey as an institution. We all know we have had a number of issues over the past four or five months and most 3615 recently and all eyes are on Guernsey at the moment (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) for appearing to disregard a thorough investigation and appeal, a banana republic. In the age of social media and instant commentary, that scrutiny may be swift and unforgiving and the public narrative will not focus on the nuance of this case. Instead, it may simply be Guernsey politicians do not enforce their own standards. That would be deeply unfair to the many who serve with integrity, but it is likely to 3620 be the public perception: we apply the law to you but we do not accept our own rules. Think about that overnight.

The future independence of the Commissioner. If the States rejects the recommendation outright, future Commissioners, if we even get any, may understandably question how their work will be treated. Will their recommendations carry any real weight or will they become suggestions 3625 to be set aside whenever it becomes politically expedient or convenient? Likewise complainants: what is the point? What would be the point of anyone ever complaining again? Whether members of the public or other Deputies may hesitate to come forward, fearing the process is merely cosmetic, that would weaken accountability and diminish the standards of the Assembly.

On balance and proportionality, Members need not agree with every line of the report in order 3630 to recognise its legitimacy. That is not required. The Appeals Commissioner specifically acknowledged the lack of direct Guernsey precedents and took that into account when reducing the sanction from 30 days to 25 days. That is the system working, the one that the previous Assembly agreed is working. The system and process is complete. We are not here to relitigate. That 3635 is a sign of moderation. It is not a sign of excess. We are not being asked to rubber stamp the original recommendation. We are being asked to consider a measured response to that review. If we believe that sanction is still too severe, it is open to us to propose modification. We tried that; it did not work. I am still here. But rejecting it in entirety would signal something more serious, that even after an independent investigation and independent appeal the Assembly does not accept 3640 that the conduct warrants any consequence at all. That may prove difficult to defend publicly. Great headline on a Monday, just wait for Tuesday.

So what is at stake? Not simply the reputation of one Deputy, nor that of one Committee. What 3645 is at stake is the credibility of the States of Guernsey as a body that takes its standards seriously, that applies them fairly, and that recognises that public trust is one of its most precious assets. We are not asked to judge intent, nor to relitigate the facts. We are asked to weigh proportionality and reputation. It is in the document. If we decline to uphold any sanction, there is a real risk the public and, indeed, future Members may conclude there is effectively no consequence for breaching the Code of Conduct. Deputy Goy appears not to want any Code of Conduct at all regardless of the outcome of an investigation or appeal. That would be a damaging precedent. It would actually be anarchy.

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**Deputy Goy:** Point of correction.

**Deputy Inder:** I will not be giving way. By contrast –

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**The Deputy Bailiff:** Was that a point of correction?

**Deputy Goy:** Point of correction, yes.

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**The Deputy Bailiff:** Yes. What is your point of correction, Deputy Goy?

**Deputy Goy:** Thank you, ma'am.

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I did not say we do not want any Code of Conduct. I just said that the Code of Conduct needs to change so that it cannot be weaponised to get Deputies.

Thank you.

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**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

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**Deputy Inder:** By contrast, supporting that Proposition or amending rather than rejecting it sends a message that due process is respected, that accountability matters – and accountability does matter or at least it should matter – and that this Assembly will not shy away from upholding the standards that we expect of ourselves.

Madam Bailiff, Members, whatever decision – Deputy Bailiff.

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**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you. *(Laughter)*

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**Deputy Inder:** I just gave the Deputy Bailiff a pay rise. *(Laughter)*

Whatever decision we arrive at today, let it be one that strengthens rather than weakens public trust. Let it be one that recognises fairness includes consequences when standards are not met. They have consequences. Let it be one that upholds not only the dignity of the Assembly but the confidence of those that we serve. I commend these reflections, using Deputy Hansmann Rouxell's words, to this Assembly and will be supporting the recommendations of the Commissioner for Standards.

Thank you.

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**The Deputy Bailiff:** Thank you.

Deputy Curgenven.

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**Deputy Curgenven:** Thank you, madam.

You know, I am a little bit embarrassed. Deputy St Pier and I fell out the other day so I told myself spitefully, and none too helpfully, I am going to abstain from voting, maybe even vote to suspend him. Because I was angry with him, I wanted him to feel the rightful sting of retribution and for a moment, for far too long of a moment, I thought, well, here is the perfect opportunity to get back at him. Then, thankfully, I came to my senses and I realised how wrong I was. Because if I cast my vote from a place of resentment and not from a place of reason, I would betray not only myself but the people who trust me to represent them, and the people deserve better from me. They deserve better from this Assembly.

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Madam, behind everything discussed today lies facts too easily forgotten. Around 30 families have told us they were suffering, their children, and by extension their trust in the system, a system we are part of, has suffered, too. They have said instead of being supported in their request to find solutions and treatment they were blocked from seeking second opinions from private consultations, not only blocked, 'We were persecuted, put through traumatic and needless investigations questioning our ability to care for our own children'. One parent even went as far as to call it a sinister and sickening abuse.

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Madam, these people are not political actors. They are not opportunists. They are parents, parents who reached out to Deputy St Pier because they had nowhere else to go. Madam, some Members are parents, too; some Members are not. Most probably all have little nieces and nephews and relatives who have children, and I bet there is not a thing in the world you would not do for them. So imagine for a moment a loved one becoming ill.

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**Deputy Oswald:** Point of correction, madam.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Yes. When there is a point of correction, you have to stand up and say, 'Point of correction'. Thank you. I just make that clear.

3715      **Deputy Oswald:** Nobody has been denied second opinions. There are perfectly available opportunities for second opinions through standard process. Nobody has been denied the opportunity to be listened to. If they had gone through the standard complaints process we would have been able to establish the complaints and render them the appropriate deliberation on this.

3720      **A Member:** Hear, hear.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Curgenven.

3725      **Deputy Curgenven:** So imagine for a moment a loved one becoming ill and the anguish of a parent for a sick child, the sleepless nights, the doubt, the worry, the feverish typing and endless researching, seeking out opinions, only to be told that in seeking help for your child you suddenly may be a suspect, a danger to your child, a safeguarding issue.

**Deputy McKenna:** Point of correction, madam.

3730      **The Deputy Bailiff:** Yes, Deputy McKenna.

3735      **Deputy McKenna:** I have looked, madam. I do not see any of this relevance into the Appeals Commissioner's report. I thought that is what we were talking on.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy McKenna, you make a good point but I am waiting to see where Deputy Curgenven goes with this. It is important that we do keep on the debate itself, but I am sure that there is some relevance that he is going to come to in relation to this.

Thank you, Deputy Curgenven.

3740      **Deputy Curgenven:** How traumatic, how heartbreaking. Have Members spared a thought for the families? Have Members taken the time to meet with the families? Deputy St Pier did.

**Deputy Oswald:** Point of correction. I spent a long time meeting with the index families.

3745      **The Deputy Bailiff:** Deputy Curgenven, carry on.

3750      **Deputy Curgenven:** Yet in the process that follows their voices were then ignored. The Commissioner for Standards took no notice of them. She did not consider them relevant so she did not seek them out.

3755      Yes, let me address what some of you are already thinking. Deputy St Pier is too close to this. This was personal. He should not have said anything. I ask you, madam, and through you to Members, when did compassion become a conflict of interest? When did listening become a liability? When did caring become a breach of the Code of Conduct? The most common whisper whispering around this Chamber, we are marking our own homework. Well, let me ask you this, madam, and through you to Members. Do you think the families who were blamed and shamed would see us as marking our own homework if we vote not to suspend one of us, in fact the only one among us who paid them any heed? Or would they see a glimmer, a tiny spark of hope of a broken system finally prepared to face its own shortcomings?

3760      Madam, I would like to say something about the doctor involved, the complainant.

**The Deputy Bailiff:** I am going to be listening very carefully, Deputy Curgenven, because you may stray into a place that is unparliamentary and unfair. But I will wait to hear what you say first.

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3765      **Deputy Curgenven:** She said that she was utterly devastated and this caused her real personal distress. Her pain is legitimate. It is real and it deserves our empathy, too, but the existence of one individual's distress cannot mean that the pain of 30 families becomes an irrelevance. We are capable of them both.

3770      Madam, we elected officials are not just Deputies, we are the People's Deputies. We were elected not to shield the flaw of a broken system but to challenge it when necessary. This vote today, it is not about whether the action was perfect. It is not about whether Deputy St Pier could have phrased something differently. It is not about marking your own homework or settling scores. It is about the facts. When the people felt unheard, Deputy St Pier listened. When the people felt persecuted, Deputy St Pier gave them a voice. When the people felt alone, Deputy St Pier stood beside them.

3775      Madam, I implore you and through you to all Deputies, please, not just as politicians but as human beings, parents, aunties and uncles, do what is right, not what is easy. Do what reflects courage, not caution. Remember, this decision will not just define Deputy St Pier, it will define us, all of us as individuals and as an Assembly.

I will leave you with a comment from social media:

3780      Deputy St Pier, thank you for all you are doing to support families who are navigating their way through a broken and flawed system. This is what a People's Deputy is employed to do, to represent the people.

Thank you.

3785      **Deputy McKenna:** Madam – sorry.

3790      **The Deputy Bailiff:** Sorry, you missed your chance, Deputy McKenna. I am going to be as ruthless with you as I was with Deputy Ozanne.

Members, it is now 17:33. I do not know how much longer there is in this debate. One option is that we continue. Is there any support for a motion to carry on to finish this debate? Those against.

*Members voted Contre.*

3795      **The Deputy Bailiff:** The answer is there is not enough support to continue this this evening, so we will close for this evening and resume at 9.30 tomorrow morning.

*The Assembly adjourned at 5.33 p.m.*