



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

STATES OF DELIBERATION

OF THE

ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

HANSARD

Royal Court House, Guernsey, Wednesday, 28th January 2026

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Present:

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

Law Officers

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

People's Deputies

C. P. A Blin	A. Kazantseva-Miller
Y. Burford	M. S. Laine
T. L. Bury	M. P. Leadbeater
A. K. Cameron	M. Malik
H. L. Camp	A. D. S. Matthews
G. M. Collins	L. J. McKenna
R. P. Curgenvin	P. S. N. Montague
H. L. de Sausmarez	A. J. Niles
D. F. Dorrity	G. A. Oswald
S. J. Falla	J. M. Ozanne OBE
A. Gabriel	C. N. K. Parkinson
J. A. B. Gollop	S. R. Rochester
L. T. Goy	T. M. Rylatt
S. T. Hansmann Rouxel	A. S. Sloan
M. A. J. Helyar	G. A. St Pier
R. M. Humphreys	J. D. Strachan
N. R. Inder	L. C. Van Katwyk
B. R. Kay-Mouat	S. P. J. Vermeulen

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 S. Williams (*absent de l'île*)

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States of Deliberation

*The States met at 11.00 a.m. in the presence of
His Excellency Lt Gen Richard Cripwell
Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Bailiwick of Guernsey*

[THE BAILIFF *in the Chair*]

PRAYERS

The States' Greffier

EVOCATION

CONVOCATION

The States' Greffier: Billet d'État II of 2026. 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 Wednesday, 28th January 2026, to consider the items listed in this Billet d'État.

IN MEMORIUM

Tribute to former Lieutenant-Governor Vice-Admiral Sir Fabian Malbon KCB

The Bailiff: Members of the States of Deliberation, our former Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Fabian Malbon, KBE, died in Scotland on 17th January at the age of 79.

Vice-Admiral Sir Fabian Michael Malbon, as he became, was born on 1st October 1946 in Southsea, Portsmouth, a highly appropriate location for someone who was to join the Navy. After an education at Brighton and Hove Grammar School, he joined the Royal Navy in 1965. He served in 12 ships during his naval career. He commanded the frigates HMS Torquay and HMS Brave. While Commanding Officer of the latter, he was made Captain of the 9th Frigate Squadron in 1987. The following year he became Director of Naval Service Conditions.

During the Bosnian War in the early 1990s he was Commanding Officer of HMS Invincible, which provided air support. In 1996 he became the Naval Secretary. His final appointment in 1999 was as Deputy Commander-in-Chief Fleet. He retired from the Navy in 2002.

In the 2001 New Year Honours list, Vice-Admiral Malbon was appointed a Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

After he had retired from the Navy, in 2005 Sir Fabian was appointed by Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II as her Lieutenant Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Bailiwick of Guernsey, holding office until 2011. He was therefore in office when I was appointed as Her Majesty's Comptroller in 2009.

As is customary, Sir Fabian was active in Island life during his term of office and I believe he was a popular Lieutenant Governor. He enjoyed seeing how the islands worked and the sense of

community in each of the islands and as a whole across the Bailiwick. He was known as someone who liked people, and in return was well-loved, no doubt helped by his great sense of fun.

As a sailor and Royal Navy officer, he was very happy at sea, which must also have assisted in adapting to island life. He was also known for being fiercely competitive.

30 After leaving the Royal Navy and settling in Weymouth, Sir Fabian had responded to a local newspaper advertisement for crew aboard a fishing boat. He applied and was successful. He joined the crew, who felt rather special at having a retired Admiral to helm their boat. Apparently he loved it, and they all got on like a house on fire. This may account for his habit of visiting the White Rock Café here to drink tea and chat to fishermen. Chris George took some wonderful photographs of him there.

35 Now some may regard the White Rock Café as the alternative seat to this parliament. He clearly really did have the sea in his blood. He could also often be seen more generally around the harbour. He used to ride a small Honda Cub scooter wearing a full-face motorcycle helmet and his blue Guernsey. He said it allowed him to get out and about unnoticed, which he very much enjoyed doing.

40 Among his other hobbies and interests, Sir Fabian enjoyed walking on the cliffs, often at an early hour. He was also a keen amateur photographer, to the extent that he did a day of work experience with then press photographer Adrian Miller, which by all accounts he thoroughly enjoyed.

45 During his term of office he hosted two royal visits. Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal came in 2007 when she opened the extension to the courts and then the Earl and Countess of Wessex, as they were then, in 2009.

Following Sir Fabian's departure at the end of his term of office, he returned to Weymouth to live and threw himself into the life of that community.

50 He is, of course, survived by Lady Malbon and their three sons, who are Timothy, Benedict, and Johnny, some grandchildren, and wider family and friends, to whom we send our sincere condolences.

Members of the States, will you now please join me in rising to honour the memory of former Lieutenant Governor Sir Fabian Malbon, KBE.

55 *Members stood in silence.*

The Bailiff: Thank you all very much.

STATEMENTS

General Update – Statement by the President of the Policy & Resources Committee

60 **The Bailiff:** The first Item of real business is going to be a statement on behalf of the Policy & Resources Committee given by the President, Deputy de Sausmarez. Deputy de Sausmarez, please.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

65 I am pleased to provide this General Update Statement on behalf of the Policy & Resources Committee, but before I get into the detail of that, I want to put on record my thanks to those in the public sector, the volunteer sector, the private sector and indeed the community more generally who pulled together in what I think we would all agree was an impressive response to Storm Gorette, before, during and in its immediate aftermath.

70 While much of the Island is now back to normal, we are mindful that some people experienced significant damage to their homes and property, and those and other effects will be felt for some time longer. Guernsey lost around 1,000 trees, according to the latest estimate, and a fund has been established by the Nature Commission and Guernsey Trees for Life to mitigate some of that damage. As much of their focus will be on re-establishing trees lost on public land, the Committee will be contributing to that fund.

75 Sir, I will begin with a couple of long-running property issues. As has already been reported in the media, the situation stemming from the States' sale of Fort Richmond has finally been resolved outside of the court system, and good relations with the affected family restored. We are also having constructive conversations with the tenants of the Fermain Café. We are hopeful that this situation can also be amicably agreed without further court involvement, and the relationship positively reset going forward for the remainder of the current tenancy.

80 I will touch only lightly on Leale's Yard in this statement, given its status as a proposed super priority in the Government Work Plan and the recent media coverage following Deputy Williams's Guernsey Press podcast broadcast in the last few days, but updates include the encouraging fact that there has been strong engagement from industry on the demolition tender, and that the infrastructure master-planning has similarly generated a lot of professional interest, and the planned works remain on track.

85 More generally on the topic of property, the States Property Unit has begun engaging with Committees on the Strategic Property Portfolio. Given the scale and importance of States' land and property to delivering our infrastructure, housing, operational efficiency, affordability and long-term financial sustainability goals, the Committee considers it essential that Members are well informed, and that Committees have input with respect to their mandate's needs.

90 On Tax Reform – another of the GWP's super priorities – Members will be aware that we have published a Policy Letter relating to Workstream 1, which carries out the direction from the previous Assembly that was passed in November 2024. Political and public engagement on that front continues. Deputy St Pier and I will be answering questions in a Facebook video livestream tomorrow evening, and while we are open to being quizzed on any subject in our mandate, we are expecting the majority to focus on tax.

95 Meanwhile, we recently launched a consultation on Workstream 2 – the work exploring the potential for Corporate Tax reform that is being led by Deputy Parkinson and his Sub-Committee, which has made swift and good progress. Industry bodies are playing an active and important role in making sure the consultation reaches the various businesses with relevant information and perspectives, but we are keen to stress that the consultation is open to anyone that wishes to share their views. The consultation will run for five weeks, and the overall timeline to bring the twin tracks of work together for a States' decision on tax reform is still on target for the summer.

100 This brings me on to the all-important other side of the ledger: States' expenditure. As a Government, we must clearly justify all expenditure and make sure effective controls are in place to prevent waste. This will require not just systemic change but a cultural change as well. This challenge has been a major focus for the Committee since its inception, but even more so in the last two months.

105 At the end of November last year, Deputy St Pier, on behalf of the Committee, made a statement to the Assembly on a number of significant matters, including the original MyGov project. Members will recall that this programme ran until 2024 and was intended to digitise government services, incurring significant costs as previously advised. Ultimately, though, it failed to deliver the intended benefits.

110 In announcing the investigation into this, Deputy St Pier confirmed that he would keep the Assembly updated regularly on progress. The first of those updates is planned for next month. For now, though, and ahead of that, I can provide an interim update on the work undertaken to date and the next steps.

120 Since that statement, the Chief Executive has personally reviewed a substantial body of material relating to the project and has conducted numerous interviews. I know that he is grateful to many colleagues across the organisation who have provided information and insight to support this work.

125 Based on the material reviewed to date, I can report that the Chief Executive has reached the following preliminary conclusions, While appropriate financial controls had been set within the organisation, they were not always effective because they were frequently not followed; external suppliers failed to meet agreed deliverables, and there was no sufficiently robust mechanism to ensure that they did; concerns raised about the project were not addressed adequately or in a timely manner; there was a significant disparity between how the project's status was reported (including to politicians) and the reality of its progress.

130 To ensure that this work continues thoroughly and swiftly, the Chief Executive has redirected the work programme of the Internal Audit Team to focus fully on this investigation, as well as seconding additional assistance.

135 I wish to be clear, the Committee is absolutely determined to establish a comprehensive understanding of how this project was allowed to proceed as it did, and where accountability properly lies. This work is being undertaken to ensure that lessons are not just identified, but more importantly acted upon, so that similar failures are not repeated, and accountability is ensured. We are also committed to being open with this Assembly and with the public about the outcomes of the investigation. Every word of this commitment applies equally to the other projects and areas that we are investigating. Members will be kept informed of the findings and of the actions that follow, so that confidence can be restored in how major programmes are governed, monitored and reported.

140 This is important because the public service must be able to account for its actions, particularly where outcomes have fallen so far short of expectations. There is some excellent work taking place across the sector, delivering real value for our community, and too often, criticism falls on the people who do not deserve it. That happens because we are not sufficiently clear about where responsibility for waste and failure properly sits. When that clarity is missing, the consequences are felt by everyone. We know that short-term this level of openness may impact the public's trust and confidence, but we believe it is a necessary step. The scale of this failure requires a clear, evidenced understanding of what went wrong and why.

150 The Revenue Service transformation programme is another that the Committee is reviewing. We are pleased to report that the new Director of the Revenue Service Operations took up her role on 17th November and is making strong progress in developing a clear and definitive plan to – once and for all – address the issues of which the community is only too well aware. The Committee will receive regular updates on progress, which will be shared with the Committee for Employment & Social Security (given its link to contributions), and the Assembly and the public, whom we are keenly aware include many people directly affected by these problems.

Central to this work is a newly-launched initiative focused on direct engagement with Revenue Service staff, recognising their experience and insight as essential to understanding the challenges. All of this will provide both the Assembly and the wider community with a clear and shared view of what needs to change, and what will be required to deliver the necessary improvements.

160 Another of the Committee's major priorities relates to the States' IT function. In my first Update Statement, I set out our commitment to strengthening political oversight and constructive challenge throughout the digital transition. Within our first few weeks in office, we engaged Deputy Laine in a digital and technology advisory capacity, and I will take this opportunity now to put on record our thanks for his valuable input. The scale of the task is and will remain for some time very significant, but work is proceeding with energy and determination.

165 Progress against all of the Scrutiny Management Committee's recommendations from its Review of the Future Digital Services Contract with Agilisys continues, and I will have an opportunity to provide more detail shortly in answer to some Rule 11 questions later in this meeting.

170 Since transitioning to a multi-vendor model, following the termination of the contract with Agilisys, we have focused on stabilising the operational environment, reducing risk, achieving greater efficiency and implementing more effective financial controls.

175 Meanwhile, the Digital & Technology Team is working to continually improve IT services and strengthen the States' in-house capability to meet the organisation's – and ultimately, the Island's – evolving needs. We know, through the much-improved visibility and oversight the Committee now has, that while there is still much to be done, the key metrics on work to date are positive: operational delivery is more stable and resilient, risks have reduced, and crucially there is now much stronger governance around expenditure, meaning more control and savings.

180 We are currently recruiting to the IT Advisory Panel which will – alongside Deputy Laine as its chair – provide the Committee with robust support in terms of understanding the problems, tracking the progress, identifying issues and informing better decision-making. The need for this type of specialist advice and support was highlighted in the Scrutiny review as an important defence against similar problems arising in future, so we are very encouraged by the quality of those that have put themselves forward for consideration. We are lucky to have people willing to volunteer their considerable talent and skills in this way. The Committee will continue to meet with 185 Deputy Laine and the Chief Digital and Information Officer at least monthly, but they know that they have immediate access should they need it.

190 As the Assembly will be aware, as part of the 2026 Budget process, the Strategic Leadership Team has been tasked with leading a comprehensive review of all consultancy and contracted support arrangements. This work started in 2025. There is a robust focus on identifying opportunities to reduce reliance on external support and to realise savings of £4 million in 2026, including £2.5 million in general revenue expenditure. We recognise that in a small Island where it is simply unrealistic for us to have certain types of expertise or specialisms in-house, the use of some consultants will still be necessary. The review, however, is considering the purpose, value and outcomes of each and every arrangement, alongside opportunities to build internal capacity and 195 ensure that external spend is used only where it adds demonstrable value.

200 This leads me on to the work we committed to in the 2026 Budget Report to undertake with respect to developing Priority-Based Budgeting. This approach ultimately helps to ensure that public money is deployed where it delivers greatest impact. We are planning to launch a pilot scheme that will – subject to discussions with the relevant Committees, of course – cover three areas. We are proposing one of the corporate services, a key service area of the Committee for Health & Social Care, and one of the smaller States' Committees.

205 By piloting Priority-Based Budgeting on these three contrasting areas, we will be able to test the methodology in different-sized operational environments with different cost drivers and different statutory constraints. We want the organisation to walk before it tries to run. We will not engage another Big Bang initiative which risks failure. The pilot will inform how we can most effectively roll the programme out across the rest of the organisation. The potential for delivering greater efficiency and impact is obvious, for example by identifying services that may no longer be needed in their current form, or where simplification could improve outcomes and reduce cost, but I do need to be upfront about the intensity of the process. It will require, even at pilot stage, a significant and sustained commitment from each of the participating service areas and a good deal of political 210 engagement to determine the prioritisation.

215 However, we believe that the benefits of this more structured, evidence-based and transparent approach to budgeting will be significant enough to justify the effort. We also welcome principal Committees' help in providing Members as their finance leads to help build consistent experience and skills among those Committees.

Sir, I would like to bring this General Update Statement towards a conclusion by reporting the positive progress of the work on the Bailiwick Commission. This work represents a truly significant moment in the modern development of our constitutional relationships between our islands. Following the decisions taken last year by the respective parliaments of Guernsey, Alderney and

220 Sark, the Commission has now been agreed and is about to be launched as an independent body,
external to all three governments.

The Policy & Resources Committee has worked closely with Alderney's Policy & Finance
Committee and Sark's Chief Pleas to agree the terms of reference, governance and constitution of
225 the Commission. The details will be published in the next few weeks, along with the names of the
five Commissioners that have been appointed. While I cannot name them today, as contractual
arrangements are still being finalised, I can say that the calibre of the individuals is exceptional, with
a genuine interest in the task in hand. They bring a wealth and breadth of constitutional, economic,
legal and governance expertise, alongside experience of working with small island jurisdictions and
remote communities.

230

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez, I am afraid your time is up.

Deputy de Sausmarez : I welcome any questions.

235 **The Bailiff:** It is now an opportunity, Members of the States, to ask any questions within the
mandate of the Policy & Resources Committee. I will just explain that I am not going to extend the
period for questions because there is quite a lot of business at this meeting, so I will be taking one
question per person unless we run out of time, in which case we can take some more.

Deputy Gollop.

240

Deputy Gollop: Some of us on Committees are pleased that Policy & Resources are hitting the
ground running, but Deputy de Sausmarez has identified, through the words of the Chief Executive,
project failure in the past with IT, which is being dealt with. I think the philosophy for the future is
that Members of the States and Committees need to be better trained, but will Policy & Resources
245 still consider that members of boards should be part of the oversight of ensuring not necessarily
the detailed specification of projects but the conceptual arrangement and telling other Committee
members what is going on and whether there is an overspend or delay of some other issue?

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

250

Deputy Gollop: Does P&R want corporate governance on projects for Members.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

255 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Thank you, sir.

Deputy Gollop does raise a good point and, in fact, it was the focus of much of our conversation
yesterday in a Committee meeting. Really one of the key factors in this is the Thornton review.
Deputy Gollop and other Members will be aware that that review was undertaken to understand
where a major project had gone off the rails. I know that all of the Committees were then consulted
260 about the findings and the recommendations. I am pleased to say that as of yesterday, P&R has
actually endorsed that revised framework and we will be recommending it to all the Committees to
implement.

I should stress that it will provide – I think it will have lots of benefits, for example, providing a
much clearer structure for Committees to use to make sure that their governance and oversight is
265 more effective, but it will still have the flexibility to be able to adapt to projects as those adaptations
may be required. I am hoping that will be a significant step forward this important area.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater.

270

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

275 I thank the President for her update. The President was one of the Members that came along to a presentation that we had at the prison recently, and I want to thank her and the other Members who attended. But during that presentation I had the opportunity to point out some issues of maintenance. I have some maintenance on that building that have been dating back from since I have been in the States in 2016.

I would like to know who on P&R is responsible for property services and whose ear can I chew off when I need to chase up these issues.

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

Deputy de Sausmarez: I am pleased to report that person is Deputy St Pier. I look forward to that conversation taking place between the two. But in all seriousness, it is really important and this flow of information is essential that we can have that running through Committees to development leads. So, Deputy St Pier is that person.

The Bailiff: Deputy Ozanne.

Deputy Ozanne: Thank you, sir.

290 I thank the President for her update, and particularly for the transparency around the process that we are going through with the Chief Executive looking at this overspend and what the problems were around that. To have a £42 million problem, which did not deliver any benefits, was a huge shock not only to ourselves but to the Island. That has added, I think, to the lack of trust and confidence that some hold in us.

295 Rebuilding that trust and confidence requires honesty which we have had, transparency which we have had, and accountability which you touch on. But I would like assurances that we will know who the individuals were accountable as opposed to broad, amorphous statements, that we will actually have a sense of clear accountability as to what lay behind those poor decisions.

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

Deputy de Sausmarez: I can assure Deputy Ozanne that what she raises there in her very important question reflects the exact conversations that we have all the time here now. We are absolutely determined, as I hope came through in my speech, but I can give her that additional assurance that when we talk about accountability we really need accountability. So she will get, as will all Members, a very clear idea of where responsibility sits and where things have gone wrong.

The Bailiff: Deputy Cameron.

310 **Deputy Cameron:** Thank you, sir; and I thank the President for her update.

Given the growing difficulty in securing private sponsorship for commissions and civic events, including Liberation Day, will the Policy & Resources Committee look at whether a formal States-backed recognition of businesses that fulfil their corporate social responsibilities, for example an official certificate or mark that businesses can visibly display, could help unlock more private support and reduce pressure on public funds?

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

320 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** That is a very interesting suggestion. It is not one that I have previously considered or indeed discussed. I am very happy to take that away and for the Committee to give it more consideration. It does sound like an interesting idea. I would say of relevance is also the fact

that we are, again, putting a lot more structure and thought into our commissioning processes as well, which is something that I hope will have a positive impact in that area.

325 But it is an interesting suggestion and I would invite Deputy Cameron to maybe come in and talk with us about it in more detail.

The Bailiff: Deputy Laine.

330 **Deputy Laine:** Thank you, sir.

Would the President agree that when it comes to project governance and the role of Committee members that we cannot over-emphasise the importance of delivering sound business requirements at the inception of a project and the governance after the fact will doom you to failure? So we need greater scrutiny on the inception of projects and the adequate business requirements that define those projects rather than what we have seen so far.

335

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: I would certainly agree with that very wholeheartedly. It is a very good point and again was the subject of much of the conversation yesterday. I will add to it that one of the issues seems to have been – one of the common themes – from our investigations so far the issue of scope creep.

340

A project is one thing at its inception but morphs and expands, and that is often where problems start to really become exacerbated. I would very much agree with the points that Deputy Laine made and say that they are explicitly addressed I think within the framework that I mentioned earlier.

345

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Thank you, sir.

P&R as employer is responsible for the setting of the relocation packages, which include rent allowances. The rent allowances have contributed to distorting the private rental market and anecdotally have led to high inflation in the private sector market. There are also multiple anecdotal cases where it was deemed that such rent allowances have not been necessary, such as in the case of couples relocating to Guernsey.

350

What actions has the Committee taken to review the rent allowance and relocation package setting to ensure it is fit for purpose and is not actually having the unintended consequences of what I have talked about?

355

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

360

Deputy de Sausmarez: As Deputy Kazantseva-Miller knows very well, this is a subject very close to my heart because I was probably the most vocal person in the previous States to highlight this. Not surprisingly, it was one of the first subjects that we have raised with the officers who deal with it.

I think the analysis of the problem – I know Deputy Kazantseva-Miller describe them as anecdotal, but I think it is a very strong anecdotal, evidential base myself. It is something that we are actively dealing with, but I have not yet got to the point where I am able to say what the solution is.

365

As ever with these things, it is very important to understand what the current state of affairs is, and I would say that within this particular area it is made even more complex by the fact that we have such a varied range of different types of accommodation and those employment packages are – again there is a lot of variability in there.

370

375 So it is a complex picture but it is one that I absolutely share her determination to sort out, and I am also happy to say that this is of course something that we have discussed and will continue to discuss with the Committee for Housing of which Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is the Vice-President.

The Bailiff: Deputy Niles.

380 **Deputy Niles:** Without wishing to labour the point, but wishing to labour the point, about the investigation of the lost money around the IT project, it is sometimes important to understand the impact at a household level about just how much money we have lost for the people of Guernsey. Sometimes when I reflect on the size of our economy I look at the UK, because there are very many sectors, and the economy size is similar but different by a factor of thousands. So looking at that in the UK context, our 42 million becomes 42 billion.

385 When you think of what the UK has achieved in recent times, or about to achieve, we could have built the entire Elizabeth line, we could have built two aircraft carriers, and we could have delivered the Northern Powerhouse Rail system. That is the same relative value for each household in Guernsey versus each household in the UK. So when we do have the results of that –

390 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Niles, I am afraid the time for asking the question has expired, so there is no need to answer it.

Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: I thank the President for her update, sir.

395 In it, right at the start, she touched on the Storm Gorette Appeal Fund. I thank her for providing funds available to the storm.

400 Would she agree with me that proactive investment in infrastructure is essential in the role that trees and our natural environment play in supporting our very existence, with the CO₂ absorption, oxygen creation and cooling and shading effects that trees play a very important part in our natural environment and infrastructure?

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

405 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Deputy Gabriel knows the answer to this because he has had four-and-a-half years of my views. Of course I do agree with that point, but I think another important point is that we underestimate at our peril – maybe not our – yes, I think our peril. The cost efficiency of natural infrastructure, and I extend this not just to trees but actually to things like coastal defences. We know that our soft coastal defences are hugely less expensive and less costly than hard structures and often much more effective in the right circumstances.

410 Flood mitigation and attenuation is another very important aspect and this is why green and blue infrastructure is an important part of the planning process, and certainly something that we are giving proper consideration to in planning areas where, for example, housing and other developments are coming forward.

Just very briefly in response to Deputy Niles's point.

415

The Bailiff: No, you cannot answer that.

Deputy de Sausmarez: No, I cannot? Oh, I really want to.

420 **The Bailiff:** Well, you might want to, but somebody else will have to ask the same question. Alderney Representative Snowdon.

Alderney Representative Snowdon: Thank you, sir.

425 Would the President just be able to update us on how we are progressing with wind farms and
if we are still working with Jersey and Alderney and the opportunities there might be for the
Bailiwick?

Thank you.

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

Deputy de Sausmarez: Yes, thank you.

435 As Alderney Representative Snowdon is probably aware, we have got an Offshore Wind Delivery
Board, which is ably chaired by Deputy Blin, and it comprises, in terms of political membership,
Deputy Blin, myself and Deputy Gabriel as representatives of E&I and P&R. Of course Deputy Blin
has long been involved.

440 But I am pleased to say that actually we have formally included Alderney within that group. The
work is progressing along the expected timeline and the main challenge remains, as it was indeed
when we last debated it in this Chamber, although I appreciate that was in the previous political
term, establishing a clear route to market. So that is the primary focus of the work. I am pleased to
say that those conversations are very much still live and the work is very collaborative.

445 As well as Alderney, we are in very regular contact with counterparts in Jersey, and actually
maybe not as obvious to others, but the Isle of Man. We do operate as a bit of a unit in terms of
the Crown Dependencies with this respect, because our objectives are very strongly aligned. I can
provide reassurance on these points.

The Bailiff: Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel: Thank you, sir; and I thank the President for her update.

450 The President mentioned the Bailiwick Commission and did not quite finish her statement on
that regard. Could the President update us on a timescale – the expected timescale – for that piece
of work?

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

455 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** I have already mentioned – I think I did manage to get this part out –
that we will be publishing the details, including the names of the people who have been appointed
to that Commission in the next few weeks. I would also like to extend my thanks to all the people
involved in the other jurisdictions involved in that.

460 I believe the overall process is anticipated to take between 12 and 18 months, but there will be
an interim report that will be published this year, I believe. I am slightly reticent to give a specific
month in case I have not remembered it accurately, but I can provide that detail at a future point.

465 It is worth saying that this is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reset our relationship in a
way that gives us the best opportunity to meet the challenges of the modern age. How it is going
to take place is also important. It will be basically like a Bailiwick-scale national conversation, with
inverted commas around it, but it will involve a lot of dialogue and consultation with different
stakeholders, as we tend to call them in Government, but in the real world we are talking about
civilians, we are talking about community groups, industry, and people with a constitutional role
and interest.

470 **The Bailiff:** Your time for replying has now expired.
Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: Thank you, President, for the update.

475 Negotiation is always better than litigation, and the President made reference to the Fort Richmond, an Allez family bar. Could she advise if there are any other Deputies that assisted in facilitating those meetings to get her to that point of dropping the case?

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

480 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** There are people; I do not have their permission. There was one Member of this Assembly whose permission I have not sought, so I cannot provide a name, who was instrumental in making sure that a message reached me. That message reached me from several other directions as well, so it was very efficient; not just that one Member. But that Member made it very clear that they would not and could not be involved and they were literally acting as a post
485 box.

But as I say, the Guernsey grapevine is a wonderful thing and the message reached me from multiple directions pretty much simultaneously. So, yes, I was pleased to be able to move that situation forward. I am grateful to all of those who played a role in whatever respect.

490 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

Building on the points raised by Deputy Niles, does the President recognise the importance of improving the governance accountability and visibility of the technology function and strategy?

495

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: I wonder if Deputy Matthews might repeat the core of his question. I got the subject but not the core of his question, I am afraid.

500

Deputy Matthews: Apologies.

Building on the points raised by Deputy Niles, does the President recognise the importance of improving the governance, accounting and visibility of the technology functions and strategy in the States of Guernsey?

505

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Yes, that is a fundamentally important part of the work that we are doing, and I think that has been a very clear theme that came up very early in those investigations. It is something that needs to be greatly strengthened and improved.

510

I think it is relevant to make the point at this juncture, that yes, we were staggered ourselves by what we discovered. We wasted no time in being transparent about that. Politically, I think it would have been a lot easier not to have been, frankly, but I think it is important that we can be upfront and transparent about it.

515

The point that I do want to make, though, and this was made very clear to me by a whole range of people who came and talked with me privately after that news broke, that these problems are by no means unique to Guernsey. They are absolutely widespread and I would say endemic, not just through the public sector. The stories that surprise me most were people who came and said, 'You ain't seen nothing. The waste that I have experienced or I am aware of in the private sector puts this into the shade'. It is just that obviously they do not have the same obligations to be transparent.

520

I think it is an important point. I was really surprised by the number of people who explained that actually Guernsey is not uniquely facing these problems, but it is irrelevant who else faces them. What is important from our perspective is that we get a handle on this, we get a grip on it, and we make sure that there is accountability.

525

The Bailiff: The time for replying has expired again.
I will take one more question.
Deputy Humphreys.

530 **Deputy Humphreys:** Thank you, sir.

Further to Deputy Leadbeater's question, the prison; it has become apparent to me that the States have prioritised reduction of the infrastructure at the long-term detriment of our buildings, St Julian's House and the Airport to name but two. This has led to some huge ongoing revenue costs versus capital investment just to keep the buildings open.

535 My grandmother taught me that a stitch in time saves nine. Does the President agree that we should reassess our approach to building maintenance overall, and actually, potentially, that will lead to cost savings?

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

540

Deputy de Sausmarez: The problems that Deputy Humphreys refers to are actually issues that I think were experienced far more acutely in the days where Committees were having to find those savings, for example, as a result of the – what was it called – the FPT? I cannot remember that acronym.

545

The Bailiff: FTP.

Deputy de Sausmarez: The slash and burn exercise. Inevitably it was building maintenance along with training that were the easiest targets of that programme and of that requirement to make cuts. Actually this is why personally I have always been quite reticent about imposing an arbitrary savings target on Committees because I do think they tend to be the casualties in that.

550 I think it was in about 2019 that we did change the system so we could take a more holistic look at the estate, and obviously we have got processes in place to be able to provide an opportunity for all of that need to be assessed relative to each other. We are always open to ideas about how that can be improved, but ultimately it is going to come down to budget. The fiscal situation of the States and where we think that balance lies is going to be a material factor.

555 But I do agree that it is always better, as in fact the Roads Maintenance Programme demonstrates, it is always more cost effective to maintain our assets rather than to let them deteriorate. But I think there have been some improvements in recent years, it is just a very long arc, but always open to others.

560

The Bailiff: The 90 seconds has lapsed once again.

**General Update Statement –
Statement by the President of the Scrutiny Management Committee**

The Bailiff: We will move on to the second General Update Statement pursuant to Rule 10(4).
565 This time it is from the Scrutiny Management Committee and I will invite the President, Deputy Sloan, to deliver that statement.

Deputy Sloan: Thank you, sir.

570 I am pleased to provide Members with an update on the work of the Scrutiny Management Committee over the first six months of this term, and to outline how the SMC intends to approach its work going forward.

575 The SMC was not fully constituted until mid-September, meaning this is closer to a four-month review. An open recruitment process in the summer attracted just under 40 applicants, enabling the appointment of non-States members of very high professional standing, whose contribution is already strengthening both the SMC and the Public Accounts Sub-Committee.

In my opinion, scrutiny exists to improve the quality of policy, governance, accountability and outcomes, and to ensure that public resources are being used effectively and for their intended purpose.

580 While some scrutiny will inevitably be retrospective, I believe it can also add value when policy is being developed. At its best, scrutiny acts as a form of institutional disinfectant; improving transparency, testing assumptions, and strengthening proposals before final decisions are taken.

That function is particularly important in a small jurisdiction, where institutional closeness and time pressures can crowd out legitimate challenge, increasing the risk of unclear accountability and insufficiently-tested decisions whose costs and long-term implications are not fully understood.

585 Early in the term, the SMC wrote to all principal Committees proposing a practical and proportionate approach to pre-decision scrutiny. The response we received, via Policy & Resources, was, in effect, a polite refusal. While Policy & Resources has an important co-ordination role, I was not persuaded that acting as a gatekeeper to that engagement added value. It was also, in my opinion, a missed opportunity.

590 The SMC has a right to comment on Policy Letters, and it is a right we will continue to exercise wherever timescales allow. That right is meaningful only where policy development is sufficiently mature and Policy Letters are not rushed through at speed. When policy development is rushed, it is usually for a reason and often at the expense of proper assessment of costs, risks and alternative options.

595 This week's Policy Letter on the Government Work Plan, I believe, is a case in point. It was progressed rapidly and expressly records that Scrutiny was excluded from discussions. That omission arguably contributed to the surreal situation in which the President of P&R is seconding amendments to her own Committee's Policy Letter; a scenario that earlier scrutiny, including assessment of impacts on economic growth and competitiveness, might reasonably have helped to avoid.

600 The Government Work Plan remains a candidate for future scrutiny work. Our interest is straightforward: to examine it through a cost-benefit lens, including administrative and opportunity costs, and whether outcomes are proportionate to the scale of effort and resource involved. Where the SMC has been afforded the opportunity to engage properly, we believe it has added value.

605 The Public Accounts Sub-Committee reported on both the Budget and the Fiscal Policy Framework, with Letters of Comment lodged by the SMC. In each case, the Committee's analysis was placed on the public record to inform debate and improve transparency around fiscal assumptions, risks and sustainability. It is worth noting that P&R's response to our comments on the Budget were broadly accepted and P&R substantively agreed with our points.

610 At present, however, the Public Accounts function exists only as a Sub-Committee of the SMC. There is a strong case for strengthening its constitutional position and mandate, thereby improving the overall architecture of financial oversight and accountability. These issues, and the potential role of an Auditor General, are under active consideration, and we would welcome engagement from Members interested in progressing that discussion. Indeed, it would be remiss of me not to note, following media reports, of a potential requête from Deputy Rochester on the topic of an Auditor General, and the Committee would like to extend an invitation to her to assist our work in this area.

615 The SMC has devoted significant time to reviewing the operation of the States Property Unit, including a public hearing examining its governance, performance and approach to managing the public estate. It is important to note that this review is ongoing. We have submitted various supplemental questions to P&R on 16th December, and have been advised that responses will be provided by 20th February. We recognise that there are many competing demands on their time, but this pace does make progress challenging.

625 What became clear at an early stage is the Unit operates without a meaningful performance
framework. There are no clearly defined KPIs, there was no systematic tracking of performance
against objectives, and no robust means of demonstrating whether claimed efficiencies are real or
sustained.

This is not merely technical: efficiencies have been claimed but not evidenced - a point picked
up by Internal Audit many years ago and seemingly ignored, while spending has continued to
grow – over the last two years at approximately 9% per annum – without demonstrable
630 improvements in transparency or outcomes.

The absence of an internal charging model and clearly defined service levels further complicates
accountability. While collaboration is important, yes, the lack of transparent cost attribution and
performance expectations makes it materially more difficult to manage demand or evaluate service
effectiveness.

635 What was striking to the SMC was the early political reflex to defend the Unit rather than allow
Scrutiny to perform its proper function. That instinct to close ranks, rather than to welcome
challenge, is a cultural issue, not a personal one.

The initial assessment of the handling of Leale's Yard illustrates many of these wider concerns.
Evidence provided to the Committee indicated that there was no substantive business case, no
640 five-case business model, no whole-of-life cost of project assessment, and no clear evaluation of
contingent liabilities or the full investment envelope required. The SMC continues to examine how
and why the approach shifted from a proposed private-sector partnership model to a direct public-
sector acquisition without a transparent assessment of alternatives. We plan to report in quarter
two.

645 There are a small number of areas where the Committee is seeking to complete work initiated
in the previous term. One such area is recruitment and retention in the public sector, where progress
and the dataset has been hampered by limitations in data availability and quality.

More broadly, the lack of timely and reliable economic data is no longer acceptable. We do not
have up-to-date GDP data, nor a clear picture of productivity or labour-market dynamics. This
650 materially weakens policymaking, scrutiny and accountability alike.

The Committee is also seeking to conclude the investment governance review. That work has
been broken down into a number of defined questions and strands, and we aim to complete it later
this year.

655 Sir, I also wish to highlight an important piece of work that the SMC will shortly bring before this
Assembly.

In 2021, the Assembly resolved not to introduce a full freedom of information law, but instead
to strengthen the existing Code of Practice by establishing an independent Freedom of Information
Appeals Panel. Experience since then has exposed a material weakness in the current arrangements:
an appeals mechanism that lacks the power to enforce its determinations.

660 In a small but significant number of cases, determinations to release information have not been
complied with, not due to any lack of independence or rigour on the part of the panel, but because
it lacks the power to compel compliance.

The SMC therefore will bring a Policy Letter to the States in quarter two proposing limited,
proportionate and clearly defined additional powers for the Appeals Panel to compel compliance,
665 with appropriate rights of appeal to the Royal Court. Genuine transparency cannot rely on goodwill
alone.

Looking ahead, sir, the SMC has a substantial and carefully prioritised work programme. A key
area of future focus will be Corporate Services. Centralisation was justified on the basis that it would
deliver efficiency and cost control, yet budgets continue to grow year on year. We will examine
670 whether real value is genuinely being delivered, or whether increased scale has displaced
meaningful accountability.

The SMC also expects in 2026 to give consideration to the governance, funding and
accountability of certain third-party bodies that receive significant public funding, including
whether performance expectations are clearly defined and outcomes properly monitored.

675 We also intend to make greater use of public hearings, including on the Finance and Investment Plan and through more deliberate alignment of Public Accounts Sub-Committee hearings with the publication of the Budget and Annual Accounts. Our next public hearing, sir, now that consultation has commenced, will focus on the Corporate Tax review in the first quarter of 2026.

680 Health & Social Care is also on our radar, particularly the governance of capital expenditure relating to the Our Hospital Modernisation programme, where we are in discussion with HSC about how best to take that forward, and I take the opportunity to note that the SMC has indeed an interest in the review of longer-term health funding.

685 Housing was, for many, the number one issue on the doorstep during the election. This term has seen the creation of a new Committee, and we have seen and heard this week the President's view of that Committee that the States itself build social housing once more. The Committee considers that the underlying policy thinking in this area warrants further examination, and we hope to hold a hearing in the coming months.

690 The SMC maintains a watching brief on the governance of the IT review, where repeated requests for terms of reference and governance arrangements have not been met. However, I am pleased to report that on Monday, the SMC finally received the terms of reference for the Leale's Yard Political Oversight Group, following repeated requests.

695 Those terms of reference are labelled 'confidential', which is difficult to justify given their largely procedural nature and reflects a default tendency to restrict information rather than to publish it. More substantively, they offer limited clarity on decision-making authority, accountability, escalation, or how costs, risks and delivery options are to be robustly tested. The SMC will now examine these arrangements carefully and report further to the Assembly in due course.

We have also written to P&R outlining concerns with Pillar Two implementation and related accountability issues, including the treatment of temporary revenues as permanent, assumptions about collection, and potential impacts on the wider economy. We still await a response.

700 Members should be aware, Sir, that the SMC is consistently inundated with requests for action. We turn down more work than we do take on, recognising finite capacity and the need to focus where scrutiny can add the greatest value. Sir, Scrutiny is not opposition by another name. It is an essential component of good governance.

705 Across multiple areas, scrutiny has encountered an authoritative, bureaucratic and statist culture. Too often, producer rather than the public interests dominates, where what is best for an organisation is assumed to be what is best for Guernsey, which is a culture we need to rectify. (A Member: Hear, hear.)

Across its work, the SMC will continue to focus on evidence, proportionality, accountability and outcomes for the public, rather than the convenience of institutions.

710 Where scrutiny is engaged with constructively, it strengthens policy, improves governance and builds public confidence. That is the spirit in which we will continue our work.

Thank you.

715 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, it is now an opportunity to ask questions within the mandate of the Scrutiny Management Committee.

Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

720 While I very much welcome the development of the appeals panel for freedom of information requests, does the President agree with me that true transparency would be far more effective and drive a change in culture with a legislative backing to a freedom of information function?

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan.

725 **Deputy Sloan:** Sorry, sir, I missed that last bit of your question.

The Bailiff: Can you repeat the question again, please, Deputy Matthews?

730 **Deputy Matthews:** While I welcome the development of the appeals panel for the freedom of information function, does the President agree with me that true transparency would be far more effective with legislative backing, which could drive a change of culture with a freedom of information law?

735 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: Sir, I emotionally agree with Deputy Matthews. However, pragmatically I do believe we need to approach the issue with proportionality and what is achievable within the resources we have available.

740 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Curgenvén.

Deputy Curgenvén: Thank you, sir.

745 Thank you, Deputy Sloan, for the update. It was just off the back of Deputy Matthews' question about potential freedom of information legislation. Please correct me if I am wrong, anyone in the Chamber, but I do believe the freedom of information process suggests a *[Inaudible 12.01.20]* stated that freedom of information requests cost £200. I do not know if you guys are aware of that or not. Given the low cost of it, would you reconsider working on freedom of information legislation rather than guidelines?

750 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan.

755 **Deputy Sloan:** Sir, actually having lived under a world where freedom of information was compelled can be recognised, what my concerns are – and I do not know the answer to your £200 question – is with respect to people are already seeing how – actually that £200 cost is actually the cost of information being collated, etc., so it is hidden costs. So that is the balance that needs to be addressed or considered and, quite frankly, when we came to a debate as proposed in the Policy Letter it needs to be proportionate where in fact we will fix this part first, there is a clear problem that really ought to be addressed.

760 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Falla.

Deputy Falla: Thank you, sir.

765 I believe the President referenced scrutiny of Government-funded bodies. Could he tell us which bodies he has in his sights?

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan.

770 **Deputy Sloan:** Certainly various, in actual fact, and has not been decided by the Committee. It came up a few times over *[Inaudible 12.02.54]*. There was a general recognition that *[Inaudible 12.03.00]* it was agreed by the Committee that a watching brief would look at that. So nothing has been determined as yet.

775 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Camp.

Deputy Camp: Thank you.

780 As Deputy Sloan has referenced, scrutiny is conducting a review into recruitment and retention, one particular area of which is the impact of rental allowances on the labour market and our wider economy. Would you agree that the single most limiting factor for scrutiny in that review is the lack of quantitative data and analysis undertaken by the States of Guernsey only exacerbated by recent data collection issues?

785 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: Yes, I would agree with Deputy Camp. Having looked at the issue ourselves and as the economists say, yes, it is not just anecdotal evidence, one can demonstrate causality using [Inaudible 12.03.56] language, and economic progression, using [Inaudible 12.04.00] variable, and the statistical significance of the impact of rents allowance would lend one to an assumption of causality. So what I am saying is there was a clear impact on rental prices and the States increased the rent allowance from two years to four years. There was a clear uplift in rents and that was the evidence. It is all there for everyone to see and we should redress that as soon as possible.

795 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne.

Deputy Ozanne: Thank you, sir.

Given the importance of scrutiny in the parliamentary process, does the President have the resources he needs to conduct the job he wishes him and his team to do? Are there different ways of looking at scrutiny of committees that he and his Committee may be considering?

800

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: Sir, that lends itself to a staffing resourcing type issue. I am not exactly specifically sure what Deputy Ozanne refers to exactly. In terms of the scale of resources, in terms of budgetary resources, I think it is adequate. Whether they are exactly the types of resources that I believe every scrutiny function should have, that is a moot point. It is difficult because each person will do the job in a different way, each Committee will do the job in a different way. The Chief Executive and I have had discussions about this and he has agreed to [Inaudible 12.05.29] his views.

805

810 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Furthering the question of resources, Deputy Sloan has made reference to how helpful it would be, both to them and us, to have Policy Letters, reports, structures come to the Committee for analysis before they are published and finalised. I would concur and I believe they do that in Jersey, but in Jersey they have more resources and many more States' Members involved in scrutiny. Would Deputy Sloan welcome some of us who sit on other Committees joining his panel or committees from time to time?

815

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan.

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Deputy Sloan: I think so, yes. That is the intended modus operandi of the scrutiny function. My point was also that, particularly the Government Work Plan, the time involved with that, for the Committee to review a report, then it is impossible for the Committee to exercise its proper function. I did have members of both Committees asking if we had time to but there just was not, not with the Report being lodged before Christmas and January with all the schedules, so there just was not physically the time to go through that.

825

The Bailiff: Deputy St Pier.

830 **Deputy St Pier:** Thank you, sir.

Has the Scrutiny Management Committee given consideration to the adequacy of the States' current process for the review of legislation?

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan.

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Deputy Sloan: In terms of a formal work programme we have committed for a year. I understand it has been a topic during the Committee's deliberations and we have nothing tangible to say, 'We are going to do X' this year. *[Inaudible 12.07.30]* We have not formally reviewed the work, although we have discussed the arrangements *[Inaudible 12.07.42]*. It has been discussed. We have no formal plan.

840

The Bailiff: Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel: Thank you, sir.

845

I thank the President for the Scrutiny Management Committee's look at the States' Property Unit and I was curious what politicians defended the unit as was referenced in his Statement. When will we see the results of his or the Committee's Report into the States' Property Unit as there are a number of issues which I have noticed since being re-elected to the States? Clearly, the States' Property Unit was a new thing from the last term.

850

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: The Report, once we have received the answers to our supplemental questions, which *[Inaudible 12.08.54]* responses, so some time after that. Assume it is as soon as possible. But in terms of those politicians, I think if you go back to the panel that each of you will see what I am referring to. I think it would be remiss, and I could not actually add *[Inaudible 12.09.11]* it was either an officer at *[Inaudible 12.09.15]* I believe they are not allowed to adlib. But one point I did add is that we *[Inaudible 12.09.22]* during a Scrutiny hearing, but which *[Inaudible 12.09.24]* for legal issues that we cannot discuss in public but what was also actually good to see was the fact that P&R monitored in regard to – for a moment they *[Inaudible 12.09.37]*, that was a public *[Inaudible 12.09.39]* we would welcome that the President of P&R, and say that she would look at addressing those issues too. *[Inaudible 12.09.47]*

855

Thank you, sir.

860

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

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Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Sir, the President justifiably pushes for the importance of strong KPI and accountability frameworks for service areas, publicly-funded bodies, etc. Could the President outline under what accountability and KPI framework his Committee operates so that this Assembly could know that it is delivering value for money and can hold the Committee responsible to its own KPI?

870

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: *[Inaudible 12.10.28]. (Laughter)*

875

Questions for Oral Answer

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Dog Walkers to be Licensed

880 **The Bailiff:** I do not see anyone else rising to ask any further questions to the President of the Scrutiny Management Committee, so we will move into Question Time proper under Rule 11. The first question is indeed from Deputy Sloan to the President of the Committee *for the Environment & Infrastructure*.

Deputy Sloan, your question, please.

885 **Deputy Sloan:** Thank you, sir.

May I ask the President of Environment & Infrastructure when the regulation to amend the Second Schedule of the Animal Welfare (Guernsey) Law 2012 adding the requirement for dog walkers to be licensed was made?

890 **The Bailiff:** I invite the President, Deputy Gabriel, to reply, please.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

The regulation was made on 23rd January 2026.

895 **The Bailiff:** Supplementary, Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: Yes, please, sir.

900 Sir, I note that date is after I asked the question. It is also after the media announcement announcing the regime was made by the States before Christmas. May I ask the President if they gave consideration to actually making the regulations in good time for the States to be able to annul those regulations before they came into operation?

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

905 **Deputy Gabriel:** Yes, is the short answer. The Committee met, went out to consultation period with the industry. In fact, these regulations were suggested by the industry on animal welfare benefits.

910 **Deputy Sloan:** Sir, if I may, that is not –

The Bailiff: Just a minute.

Second supplementary, Deputy Sloan.

915 **Deputy Sloan:** Sir, that is not the question I asked. I asked –

The Bailiff: Well, that might not be but that was the answer that you got so (*Laughter*) you have to ask a –

920 **Deputy Sloan:** That was not the answer to the question.

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan, if you want to ask another supplementary, you are permitted to. It could be the same question; it could be a different question.

Deputy Sloan: Sir, yes.

925 That is not the answer to the question that I asked. I asked if the Committee gave consideration to making the regulations in time for the States to annul those regulations when they were laid before the States before they came into operation.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

930

Deputy Gabriel: Yes.

The Bailiff: Second supplementary.

935

Deputy Gabriel: Yes, is the answer.

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

940 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Sir, just for Members' clarity, I am sure the President can confirm that the States can annul regulations after the fact consequent to Meetings, I believe, of the States. They do not have to be laid ahead of the States' Meeting. That is in part of the powers that the States have got.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

945

Deputy Gabriel: I agree with the sort of quasi question that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller asked me in that there is ample time to annul regulations on a retrospective basis.

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Recommendations of the Scrutiny Report into Agilisys Contract

950 **The Bailiff:** The next question is from Deputy Strachan to the Policy & Resources Committee. So your first question, please, Deputy Strachan.

Deputy Strachan: Thank you.

955 The 2025 Scrutiny Report into the Agilisys contract set out multiple failings by the States of Guernsey. This Report made a number of recommendations: (1) to hire a 'credible, qualified and empowered Chief Technology Officer'; (2) to set 'an IT strategy and target operating model'; (3), to set up an IT Advisory Board; and (4), to improve 'supplier management and specialist IT contract management'.

960 To date we have had an IT Advisory Board created, which is in the process of being set up. What steps has or is the Committee taking to meet these other recommendations?

The Bailiff: I will invite the President of the Committee, Deputy de Sausmarez, to reply, please.

965 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Most of these recommendations have been met or are well under way, supported by Deputy Laine in his role as Digital Transformation Adviser.

Turning to the questions, the Report identified the requirement for a Chief Information Officer or equivalent. A Chief Digital and Information Officer was appointed in April 2024 and several technical roles have since been added to strengthen internal capability following the allocation of

970 additional funding in recent Budgets. Securing skills, talent and experience remain a priority to meet our long-term digital aims.

With respect to the IT Strategy and operating model, the Scrutiny Report was written in the context of Agilisys still being in place. However, five months since the termination of the contract, the 2025 Digital Strategy defining our long-term digital ambition is in place and a detailed digital roadmap is being developed. This builds on the change in operating model to one where the States are in control and the roadmap will set out the further practical steps required, including clear milestones, sequencing and deliverables. The IT Advisory Panel, the third recommendation for which we are now recruiting, will play a key role in evolving the operating model and overseeing delivery through constructive challenge based on experience.

975
980 Finally, with respect to supplier management, the return of design and oversight responsibilities to the States have enabled more consistent evidence-based supplier management. This is strengthening and improving visibility of performance, risk and value for money. As the model using performance-based contracts is maturing, we are seeing benefits through stronger accountability, improved commercial discipline and better alignment between supplier activity and organisational priorities.

985 **The Bailiff:** Supplementary, Deputy Ozanne.

Deputy Ozanne: Thank you, sir.

990 I note the work that is being done to look at contracts. Can the President explain to me the difference between temporary roles and consultants when it comes to employing very expensive data professionals? Are we just spinning what is really a consultant and calling them a temporary employee?

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

995
1000 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** I think there is a very significant difference when it comes to the expenditure, and that is something which I know is being actively reviewed at the moment by the senior leaders involved. It is a pertinent question. It is something I am very much on the case on, but essentially the difference probably comes down to money. We are keen to spend as little as we need to in order to deliver the right results.

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Strachan.

Deputy Strachan: Thank you, sir.

1005 I am very much of the mind that digital transformation will be the key to delivering much of the change we need to make our States more efficient. The States of Guernsey Digital Strategy, to which the President refers, is dated 2024-29, though published in 2025. It includes a wide range of principles, objectives, KPIs, very few of which have been met. There is only a brief mention of artificial intelligence and no mention of health. Furthermore, we have been told that during the Vice-President's IT update in November about the current state of Government IT systems, that there is some stabilisation work to be done. As a result, I am assuming this Digital Strategy will need to be renewed to be a more current and detailed IT strategy. Assuming the President agrees with me that the inclusion of health, AI and stabilisation are important, when will Members be expected to see the updated IT strategy and the roadmap that she mentioned?

1015 **The Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: I think much of the detail that Deputy Strachan is looking for will actually be included in the roadmap. Obviously, a strategy is, by its nature, a high-level document and she is right that it does not dwell as much on some of the issues, AI and healthcare, as it might, but she

will note that those are very strong themes within the GWP. So hopefully once the Assembly has had the opportunity to agree its priorities through the GWP, that is exactly the sort of thing that we can make sure is considered and everything dovetails.

1025 **The Bailiff:** Second supplementary, Deputy Strachan.

Deputy Strachan: Sir, while I appreciate the urgent work being undertaken now to stabilise the States' IT systems and deliver at long last a workable Income Tax system, I am concerned about the time that it has taken to get these systems functioning. Is the reason we still have delays in the stabilisation of our IT system and implementation of the Digital Strategy a lack of staff, a limited budget, something else, or all of the above?

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

1035 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** It is much more than that. Deputy Laine is really the person who would be able to answer this question in significantly more detail, but it is such a complex picture. It is important that we do it right. Can of worms does not even get close to the situation as we encountered it on taking up office, but I do have to applaud the very structured and methodological way that it is being approached. Deputy Laine will testify to the focus and determination that is going in to address that work. The list that Deputy Strachan used is not inclusive. It is much more complex than that and it is so important that we do this job properly because it is something that is so fundamental to so many government services.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder, supplementary.

1045 **Deputy Inder:** In reference to stabilisation, two parts to stabilisation; one is scope drift as well. That is largely defined by uncontrolled and unapproved expansion through the project. Can the President assure us that with Deputy Laine involved and herself having more oversight over it, and of course the confidence we have in the new IT [*Inaudible 12.21.12*], can she assure us that that scope drift has stopped immediately?

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

1055 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Yes, Deputy Inder is absolutely right to point to scope drift. As I mentioned earlier, that does seem to be one of the common threads in many of our large projects, especially those involving IT, which has enabled more things to go wrong. So he is absolutely spot on with that diagnosis.

I would say in terms of tackling the problem, the problem of scope drift is not applied to the project, if you like, of sorting it out, but he is absolutely right that scope drift is very much in our sights. It is not just in the IT work but actually is something that we are tackling through the governance framework that we were discussing earlier in relation to a different question by Deputy Gollop, I think. But certainly scope drift has been a persistent problem.

The Bailiff: Second supplementary, Deputy Inder.

1065 **Deputy Inder:** I think it is, sir, and I thank Deputy de Sausmarez for the response.

It is the uncontrolled and unapproved. We spend significant amounts of public money. Could I ask her to please at some point, along with Deputy St Pier and Deputy Laine, how on earth did we get to that point that uncontrolled and unapproved expenditure was happening over a long period of time? Someone somewhere must be responsible and someone somewhere must be out of a job. It is as simple as that.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

1075 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Sir, I have already addressed this at some length, in fact more length
than I was technically allowed, in my Update Statement. Again, I could not agree with Deputy Inder
more, but I have already explained in quite some detail what the findings are to date. So these are
exactly the issues that we have had oversight of. Obviously, the reviewing of the information has
1080 been something undertaken by the Chief Executive in relation to some projects and obviously the
Chief Digital and Information Officer. There is some very thorough and analytical work going on to
understand exactly all of those issues because we must not let them occur again in future.

The proper process, however, does need to be followed. We cannot just have a kneejerk reaction
based on a notion. So we are building an evidence base and he will see the accountability that he
is asking for.

1085

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: I do not mind scope drift necessarily, and I do sometimes get bamboozled by
misleading perhaps media comments. There was a feature on TV recently which suggested that
1090 local IT providers perhaps had mixed feelings about being subcontracted by a new provider. Will
the new Committee review as to whether it is best on occasion to employ local people directly
through the States rather than through a variety of providers? What is the cost-effective human
resources and accountability elements of that?

1095

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: There are various different elements. It is quite a broad piece, this IT and
digital transformation, so perhaps it will help if I split it down into a couple of distinct areas. There
is the service provision, and obviously we have very noticeably increased our in-house resource.
1100 I am pleased to report that actually the new joiners in that sense are settling in well. We are actually
in the next couple of weeks, I think, going to go and talk to that team.

I think it is horses for courses because actually under the previous model, the previous contract
that we had, everything went through them, including things like procurement. Actually, the new
multi-vendor model enables us to strip out layers of middlemen and actually achieve significant
1105 savings, comparative savings, as a result of that. So it is horses for courses. It is not just about saying
everything needs to be brought in-house. It is about making sure that we have the appropriate
capability at the right points in the system. That is an area where there has already been a lot of
change and it is obviously still undergoing a degree of transformation still.

Steps taken to review processes for IT project deliveries

1110

The Bailiff: Your second question to the President, please, Deputy Strachan.

Deputy Strachan: Thank you.

I am just going to ask the President what steps has the President taken to review the contract
processes for IT project deliveries.

1115

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez to reply, please.

Deputy de Sausmarez: The Committee has zeroed in on the importance of robust financial and
contractual controls. Strong governance is achieved not simply by drafting policies but by

1120 embedding them in day to day activity, monitoring compliance and acting promptly when issues
arise.

The work that we have done looking into this issue shows that whilst the organisation had
appropriate financial controls in place on paper, they were not consistently followed on the ground.
1125 These failings must not be repeated. We have already established more robust lines of
accountability. Investing in technical leadership and operational capacity has provided clearer
accountability for system changes, more robust management of suppliers, and more reliable
oversight of expenditure. Politically, we are receiving frequent and regular updates on progress and
priorities. In addition, the introduction of gated funding arrangements ensures that investment is
1130 released only when specific milestones have been reached and governance requirements and
assurance criteria have been met.

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Strachan.

Deputy Strachan: Given the internal audit investigation that has today been announced into
1135 these issues, I hope the President would agree that these issues are not just process but also cultural.
If so, I would then ask what efforts have been made to change the internal culture to ensure this
never happens again.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

1140 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** I used those very words in my Update Statement. It is actually really
reassuring to see that many of the themes of the questions are things that I have already addressed
in that Update Statement. I used the words – and I might not be absolutely verbatim correct on
this – that this is an issue that will require not just systemic change but cultural change as well. The
1145 first step is understanding what has happened and why, but cultural change, as everyone knows, is
actually a hard thing to do. It is not necessarily overnight, but my goodness, we need it. Actually,
having the correct structures in place and making sure that those systems are followed is a really
tangible step in changing that part of the cultural issue. So making sure that people understand
what the process is and they are empowered and enabled, for want of a better way of putting it,
1150 and held to account if they do not, that is a really important first step in the cultural change in the
respect that I think Deputy Strachan is framing it.

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Inder.

1155 **Deputy Inder:** Yes, I believe so, sir, or I will try.

In response to Deputy Strachan, Deputy de Sausmarez said some actually quite useful things
about changing culture, but does she accept it is only the Head of Public Services that can actually
drive that? Because ultimately Policy & Resources do not employ the staff, it is employed by the
Head of Public Services and it is his job. He told us 11 or 12 months ago that he was going to do
1160 things differently. When are we going to see evidence of that?

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: The Head of Public Service is the one who has been driving all of the
1165 very significant work to date, and I think he is doing exactly what Deputy Inder has just outlined.
I spend many hours a week talking with him about these issues and I see on the ground the work
that he is doing and the changes that he has already catalysed and the changes he intends to make.
So if Deputy Inder would like greater insight into that, I would be more than happy, I am sure the
Chief Executive would also be happy to talk with him. But I can assure him from my first-hand
1170 experience and interactions being very involved and having great sight of that work that very
significant change has already taken place and will continue to do so.

The Bailiff: Second supplementary, Deputy Inder.

1175 **Deputy Inder:** It is very kind of Deputy de Sausmarez to offer me a private viewing, but this is quite significant. If it is the case that she has the confidence that things are changing, I think that is something to be shown publicly. We really do need to see that. It is not for me to have a private meeting. This is public money we are spending and I would like to see the evidence of doing things differently. I am sure I speak on behalf of most of the Islanders, if not all of them.

1180 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

1185 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** I am slightly concerned my microphone was not working particularly well during my Update Statement because I could not make out that point more clearly. I reiterated on more than one occasion during that Update Statement that we are not only determined to deal with this thoroughly, with determination and with commensurate speed, but also that we would be clear and transparent and we would be sharing information with Members of this Assembly and with the public. We have already said that that is what we have committed to and that is what is happening.

1190 I have provided here today just an interim update. I have also reassured Members that Deputy St Pier will be providing a more detailed update at the end of February or at our Meeting towards the end of February. The very fact that we are having this conversation is evidence that the CEO is already driving that cultural change because that has not actually happened before now. It is not an easy job to do and he has had very good engagement and support from colleagues across the organisation who have really bought into this. I think everyone does understand that things need to change and they will change, and we will be transparent about that and we will put that information into the public domain as soon as we are able. We have already committed to that and I stand by that commitment.

1200

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Vermeulen.

1205 **Deputy Vermeulen:** Sir, dare I ask, and I will ask it, (*Laughter*) reading between the lines, is that cultural change the total lack of action-centred leadership or was it something else? Was it, for instance, when we looked at Income Tax and we decided that a man and his wife could file their returns separately? Was it that decision which has caused the problems which we now see?

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

1210 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** I am struggling to understand the relevance of that last thing. That was obviously a political choice, the independent taxation, as Deputy Vermeulen will be aware. But in terms of what the cause of the problem is, there is no one single cause. This is the point that I have been trying to communicate. Certainly, the work that we have done to date quite clearly shows a number of different factors. I did list them in my Update Statement earlier. That Update Statement will be, as soon as I have managed to send it to the States' Greffier, published on probably parliament.gg these days, is it not? So Members can go back and double check, and I am obviously more than happy to have any conversations of anything they might have missed.

1220 But some of the issues were, for example, that even though we had good financial controls and protocols in place in terms of our policies, they were not being regularly and consistently followed. So that was one of the things and that is indicative of this cultural issue that the likes of Deputy Strachan and Deputy Inder have referred to. There are a number of other issues in terms of how information is reported, but I did go into significant detail, time allowing, in my Update

Statement and I am happy to talk Deputy Vermeulen through that afterwards because I am about to be cut off, I suspect.

1225

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

*The Assembly adjourned at 12.34 p.m.
and resumed its sitting at 2.32 p.m.*

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Plans to Revise and Reconsider Strategic Land Use Plan

The Bailiff: Members of the States, the final set of questions are going to be asked by Deputy Gollop, again to the President of the Committee *for the* Environment & Infrastructure. So your first question, please, Deputy Gollop.

1230

Deputy Gollop: Thank you very much, sir; and to the President for talking to me and answering the questions on behalf of the Committee.

My first question: is the new Environment & Infrastructure Committee planning to revise and reconsider the SLUP, the Strategic Land Use Plan, as soon as possible, especially given the proceedings and dialogue at the current DPA review of the Island Development Plan?

1235

The Bailiff: I will invite the President, Deputy Gabriel, to reply, please.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

The Strategic Land Use Plan was approved by the States for the 20-year lifespan and remains valid until 2031. There is no statutory requirement to review it before that time. The Committee has, however, identified the potential for a SLUP review as one of its priorities of this political term. This means the Committee intends to consider in 2027 whether a review is required and, if so, what the appropriate scope should be. That assessment must be undertaken in an orderly and evidence-based way, recognising that any review of the Island Development Plan, the IDP, is a matter for the Development & Planning Authority. Given this, the Committee does not intend to begin a review immediately. Its focus is on preparing for a structured consideration of the SLUP at the appropriate time.

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1245

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: While agreeing with the need for careful, measured consideration, I would ask again: could the process of review not be slightly accelerated to the end of 2026 when hopefully the Planning Inspector will have returned the report and the DPA, under new management in a sense, will have brought back the report hopefully by the autumn so that we will then be able to consider in the round the integration between the two?

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1255

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: I thank Deputy Gollop for his question. He mentioned twice in it 'hopefully' that the report might come back. I do not work with hope, I work with evidence. When that report is in front of us, then yes, we will commission a review looking at all the evidence in the round as he suggests.

1260

1265

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Leadbeater.

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

1270 I am just concerned about the timeline if the Committee is going to consider whether it is going to have a review in 2027. If the Committee does then decide that they are indeed going to review this, will there be enough time this term to develop it?

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

1275

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, Deputy Leadbeater.

The SLUP is valid until 2031. This term ends 2029, but there are still two years to hold consultation and to get views in place, so I think we are working on an adequate timeline with 2027 whether to consider a review or not.

1280

The Bailiff: A second supplementary, Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: In the context of the proposed review, which I think is genuinely put forward, will it not be useful to consult with all principal Committees in the States and also perhaps talk to Scrutiny prior to a final deliberation and publication rather?

1285

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

1290 Again, as I said in my first response, evidence-based. So collecting evidence from all consultees and all Committees, in my view, have the ability to be consulted and should be consulted. So, yes, the terms of the review will come out with that so we are way before that at the moment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Matthews.

1295

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

Given that the Strategic Land Use Plan has a great impact on the availability of land of housing, does the Committee President consider that the responsibility for the Strategic Land Use Plan would more comfortably sit with the Committee *for* Housing than the Committee *for the* Environment & Infrastructure?

1300

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: With respect, sir, I think Deputy Matthews is missing the point. The Strategic Land Use Plan is about strategic land use on the Island and not just for housing, but for infrastructure, industry, agriculture and dairy. There are plenty of other streams that have strategic importance.

1305

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

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Deputy Inder: Thank you, sir.

As part of the preparation for any future consultation, it is relatively clear that the elected Members have views on that. May I suggest that the President writes to all Members rather than hearing that there is a problem with SLUP [Inaudible 2.37.56]. If it is going to be [Inaudible 2.37.58], may I then suggest that he at least writes to all States' Members inviting them to at least give their views and make [Inaudible 2.38.05]?

1315

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

1320 **Deputy Gabriel:** Yes, on this occasion, I agree with Deputy Inder. Consultation should be wide and every States' Member is a stakeholder.

The Bailiff: Deputy Falla.

1325 **Deputy Falla:** Thank you, sir.
I have long considered that the SLUP is an overly prescriptive straightjacket on development and I am interested to know whether the President thinks that, in the event of any review, the length of time in which this SLUP deems to be enforced should be reduced. It seems like a very long shelf life currently that it has.

1330 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

1335 **Deputy Gabriel:** Unfortunately, that is the very nature of the Strategic having a long-term focus. The IDP perhaps should have much more flexibility in it and, again, maybe a shorter review period but we are talking about the SLUP and, at the moment, while it may not be fit for all purposes, it does form a purpose.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder, a second supplementary.

1340 **Deputy Inder:** Deputy Gabriel has just said the IDP needs more flexibility. Can I invite him, as I did previously, and request he write to us to then tell us about the flexibility he does not believe he has? And that is all Members, by the way.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

1345 **Deputy Gabriel:** I thank him for the invitation.

Greenhouse horticulture change of approach

The Bailiff: Your second question to the President please, Deputy Gollop.

1350 **Deputy Gollop:** Thank you, Mr Bailiff, sir, and I will have two supplementaries as well.
Will a change of approach or policy be considered regarding the development of greenhouse horticultural existing or derelict or former sites as potential small-scale close housing or family housing or social affordable key worker housing?

1355 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel to reply, please.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.
Redundant greenhouse and viney sites raise a range of considerations including planning, land use strategy and, in some cases, environmental matters such as potential contamination. The Committee's role relates specifically to the Strategic Land Use Plan and when the Committee considers in 2027 whether the SLUP should be reviewed, it will be at that point that the scope of any review, including whether changes to the Spatial Strategy should be examined, can be determined. It would not be appropriate to pre-empt that structured process or to comment on individual land types of specific site options before then.

1365 **The Bailiff:** Supplementary, Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Deputy Gabriel mentions contamination of sites as an issue, which did indeed come up a lot at the planning inquiry recently. As the Environment & Infrastructure Committee, surely their role goes beyond that in finding solutions as to how this contamination of diverse sites can be remedied. Is the Committee looking at the contamination issue as a project?

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

1375 I can confirm that that is a live project and the contamination of land, especially derelict greenhouse sites, is on our radar and our Environmental Health colleagues are working on a solution, if there is one, because again there is financial considerations to take into account.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop, a second supplementary.

1380 **Deputy Gollop:** Yes, I appreciate the Spatial Strategy is very broad but does constrain potential development options. Can the Spatial Strategy not be modernised to include perhaps a restructuring of agricultural, horticultural and land use for food production because I think attitudes have changed in the past 20 years and that is one reason why revision, which is timely, would be beneficial? So will the Spatial Strategy also look at how best to conserve environmental management for the future?

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

1390 **Deputy Gabriel:** Yes, in my view, that is a fundamental underpinning of what the Spatial Strategy should do. It should take into account all aspects of Island life. Deputy Gollop has perhaps read my answer to question 3 or pre-empted question 3's answer because he will get a lot more out of that I think.

1395 **The Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

1400 Would the President agree that the Strategic Land Use Plan is a high level strategy document that does not deal with the granular level of detail around sites but that actually the Spatial Strategy, which is something which sits within the SLUP, is concerned primarily – and quite right in my opinion – with where those sites are and not what each individual site is? That is of overriding importance because it is what prevents urban sprawls. So a disused greenhouse site in or very close to an urban area is a very different proposition to one where it is very difficult and expensive to get the infrastructure out.

1405 But, anyway, my question is: would the President agree that actually given some of the conflation of these issues, it might be a good idea to hold maybe a series of briefings for States' Members clearly articulating the differences between the Spatial Strategy, the SLUP and indeed the IDP as well possibly in conjunction with the DPA?

1410 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: Yes, I do agree, and to go back to my previous answer, it is not appropriate to pre-empt a structured process that we should be undertaking or to comment on individual land types or specific site options. This SLUP is a generalism of what we can do and is not site specific.

1415 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder, a supplementary.

1420 **Deputy Inder:** Deputy Gabriel has – in fact it came via Deputy Gollop, the matter of contaminated land, and I am aware that some work is ongoing on that. Just for the record, when Deputy Gabriel gives consideration to the huge issue around contaminated land, could he ask his office to explain to me how you can grow potatoes in contaminated land, eat them yourself or sell them, yet you cannot build a house on it?

1425 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: I will try to answer within the boundaries of the question, sir. There are of course different horses for different courses and different contamination on different sites and levels of contamination, again if it is measured. It is what is one's contamination is maybe not to another.

1430 **The Bailiff:** Supplementary, Deputy Vermeulen.

1435 **Deputy Vermeulen:** Sir, I am quite alarmed by what I have just heard. I am aware of the sites the States has recently – although I will not name them but it is near the harbour (*Laughter*) and it does have contamination on it. I hope I am not hearing that it is one law dealing with building houses on contamination sites for us and another for the others. We want consistency. If you cannot build houses on it and that land is contaminated, it clearly is why we bought it in the first place. Can you give me any piece of mind that you are applying it consistently whether to Government or private development sites?

1440 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

1445 **Deputy Gabriel:** We are in general use around the SLUP. We are site specific without naming sites, but there are various levels of contamination, and you do not necessarily have to build housing on contaminated land. If you can identify that particular contamination, then it is acceptable perhaps to put a car park over that contaminated land – because that is never going to be dug up and used to grow potatoes – quite easily and safely next to housing. So Deputy Vermeulen should be assured that, number one, the standards will apply and, number two, that contaminated land, while an issue, is not insurmountable.

1450 **The Bailiff:** A second supplementary, Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

1455 I am slightly puzzled as to how the questions on contaminated lands arise from the original answer, but as everyone else is doing it, I am going to too. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) As Deputy Williams is not here today, I think it is a pertinent reminder that he has mentioned in recent media interviews that the work that was actually started under E&I last year to look at how we could implement a more proportionate approach to contaminated land has indeed continued and seems to be bearing fruit.

1460 Would the President agree with me that actually one of the tools that I think would be particularly pivotal in relation to this is the potential development of a contaminated land registry which then enables us to keep track of where that contamination is and means that we do not need to move contaminated land off site. That is what has been said to us by the developers themselves as a really practical solution, so I would like to hear the President's views on it.

1465 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: I thank Deputy de Sausmarez for the question, or even the prompt, and I did not want to jump the gun or give information out that was perhaps not fully formed or in the full

1470 public domain. But, yes, the intention is to create a register of contaminated land with all the benefits that I would prescribe.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: A second supplementary, Deputy Inder.

1475 **Deputy Inder:** Would the President agree with me that, when we are looking at sites where we are building incredibly important housing, that the viability of the site that are quite significant [*Inaudible 2.49.08*] directly related to land clearance. And does he understand and realise how important it is to deal with that with the greatest of speed?

1480 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: Yes, I do agree with Deputy Inder. Again, it is vitally important that we provide housing, we provide land available for developers, not only to build affordable social housing but to build housing for the people of Guernsey, and that contaminated land does play a part in that. 1485 So the register, any potential treatment or even land allocation on those sites has a significant part to play and I am hoping that Deputy Inder and his colleagues at Planning will also bear that in mind.

The Bailiff: A supplementary, Deputy Leadbeater.

1490 **Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, sir.

I think the issue for me in respect of this contaminated land thing is you can have one big site, say, a former site, say a former winery site, and everything has been cleared. Part of that site has been allocated for domestic development. But you would have to test that land in there and, if it is contaminated, that has to be remediated at a cost, but the rest of the field that could be completely 1495 contaminated land, you can still grow fruit and veg on and still sell that to the public. That is the anomaly for me which stands out, and I just wanted to know if that is something that is on your radar.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

1500 **Deputy Gabriel:** Thank you, Deputy Leadbeater.

I very much resonate with your thoughts and that is the whole point of creating a register of contaminated land because there are certain pockets of land on sites where it is perfectly good for, again, market gardening, as you described, agricultural use and house building. There are parts of 1505 that site which are not, but they may be specific to that site and very small areas where, for example, hardstanding car parking is allocated on. But it is site by site so, again, back to SLUP, it is not really that relevant, but the contamination part is certainly.

Incentivising more local arable animal agriculture and smallholder food production

The Bailiff: Your third and final question, Deputy Gollop, to the President, please. 1510

Deputy Gollop: [*Inaudible 2.51.21*]. Will Environment & Infrastructure be working with Economic Development on encouraging and incentivising more local arable animal agriculture and local smallholder food production on Island to accommodate maintenance of our green economy, ecology, habitats, resilience and green areas including greenhouse sites in diverse states of repair? 1515

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel to reply, please.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

1520 The Committee recognises the value that local food production can contribute to environmental resilience and the wider economy. Increasing on-Island production can support biodiversity, reduce environmental impacts, when undertaken sustainably, and help diversity economic opportunities. Population levels on available agricultural land means it is not feasible to achieve full food self-sufficiency.

1525 However, modest increases in local production can still strengthen resilience. Members of the Environment & Infrastructure, Economic Development and Policy & Resources Committees along with the Development & Planning Authority recently met a small local food producer to discuss how Government can better support high quality small-scale environmentally sensitive production. Those discussions highlighted several practical areas where collaboration may be beneficial and the Committee looks forward to continuing that engagement.

1530 The Committee will continue to collaborate constructively with colleagues across Government to explore opportunities that are consistent with existing strategies and the Island's environmental objectives.

The Bailiff: A supplementary question, Deputy Gollop.

1535 **Deputy Gollop:** It has been ratified here [*Inaudible 2.53.24*]. I recall during last term when I sat on ESS that [*Inaudible 2.53.30*] needs. The question here is some of these practical areas may require finance and resources. Will an appropriate demand be made in order that we can give support, perhaps for the first time, to what is a growing sector on the Island?

1540 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

1545 **Deputy Gabriel:** Food security is very important because of all the benefits that I described earlier around producing on Island and if we can do that sensitively, and environmentally sensitively of course, and do the best that we can to produce good quality food, then there is an argument certainly that the spend is better spent with that producer rather than an importer. So, yes, you have to take it in the financial scope of where we are as well.

The Bailiff: A second supplementary, Deputy Gollop.

1550 **Deputy Gollop:** Yes, the existing SLUP is now 15 years old and includes, among its policies, LP13 redundant glasshouse sites which will identify the redundant glasshouse sites that appear capable of making a positive contribution to open space and agricultural land provision. But within the SLUP, agricultural land provision is not defined and seems to predominantly revolve around the dairy sector. Is it not time for the new SLUP to consider agriculture in the wider context which would include other animals and indeed non-animal vegetable and fruit production in order to update I think what are growing sectors in our economy?

1560 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, Deputy Gollop.

1565 I refer back to my earlier answer to a question around evidence-based. So, yes, we are 15 years down the line, and we have seen many changes, so data gathering and evidence will form part of the review, as I have said earlier, which could and perhaps even should – not so it will allocate land – give it a strategic direction. We have important open land as a designation already and there are a few restrictions on important open land. They could well be converted or used. We have agricultural priority areas in the IDP and, again, the IDP sets that rather than the SLUP.

The Bailiff: A supplementary, Deputy Inder.

1570

Deputy Inder: I am going to try to help, which is not normally my style. The DPA reflects Government policy and would the President agree with me that, without an agricultural policy, without a horticultural policy, without market gardening policy, the urban creep, which none of us particularly like, is very difficult for the DPA to make arguments against them when there is no policy to save some of these sites. Rather than the SLUP, might it be the case that E&I bring a short policy letter to the States to talk about the market gardening, wrap it up in some way, shape or form to give the DPA something to actually face? Because, right now, we have not got anything to face.

1575

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

1580

Deputy Gabriel: Three for three. I agree with Deputy Inder again. *(Laughter)* This is becoming a nasty habit. I must just snap out of it, sir. I do agree with him that, yes, perhaps we could better define areas to help planners stop urban creep because, again, urban creep is one of the problems which does cost us money, certainly in transport infrastructure and even with utilities providing infrastructure. The creep of a network is very hard to administer and plan for so, yes, I do agree with him.

1585

The Bailiff: Well, as no one else is rising, that now concludes Question Time. The next Item of business please, Greffier.

Billet d'État II

ELECTIONS & APPOINTMENTS

PRESIDING OFFICER

1. Election of a Member of the Transport Licensing Authority – Election commenced

Article 1.

The States are asked:

To elect a sitting Member of the States as a member of the Transport Licensing Authority to complete the unexpired term of office, that is to 30th June 2029, of Deputy Neil Inder who has resigned from that office, in accordance with Rule 16 of The Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees.

(N.B. Pursuant to the Mandate of the Transport Licensing Authority, the President shall not be the President or a member of the Policy & Resources Committee; or the President or member of the Committee for Economic Development; or the President or a member of the Committee for the Environment & Infrastructure; or the President or member of the States' Trading Supervisory Board.)

1590

The States' Greffier: Article 1. Election of a member of the Transport Licensing Authority.

The Bailiff: Well, normally, I would turn to the President to move a nomination, if he so wishes. Do you have one, Deputy Gollop, or is it going to be somebody else?

1595 **Deputy Gollop:** We do collectively on the Transport Licensing Authority have a nomination of a Deputy who is willing to serve, but I think the proposal will be made by my past President.

The Bailiff: Yes.

1600 **Deputy Gollop:** But we are all [*Inaudible 2.58.49*].

The Bailiff: Deputy Collins then.

1605 **Deputy Collins:** Thank you, sir.
We are proposing Deputy Chris Blin.

The Bailiff: Okay, so is that nomination seconded?

1610 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Yes, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez. Are there any other nominations for the vacancy on the Transport Licensing Authority? No. In that case, there is no need for any speeches, but there is a requirement that you vote by secret ballot. Therefore, if you want to vote for Deputy Blin, who is proposed by Deputy Collins and seconded by Deputy de Sausmarez, then you should write his name on a piece of paper. If you do not want to vote for Deputy Blin, then you can return a spoilt paper or you can return a blank paper.

1615 Are there any more voting slips to hand to the Sheriff? No. In that case, we will move on to the next item of business please, Greffier. Quiet, please, Members.

COMMITTEE FOR HOME AFFAIRS

2. Appointment to the Data Protection Authority – Ms Sara Willis and Mr Steve Wood elected

Article 2.

The States are asked to decide:-

Whether, after consideration of the Policy Letter entitled 'Appointments to the Data Protection Authority' dated 11th November 2025, they are of the opinion:-

- 1. To appoint on and from 1st January 2026 Ms Sarah Willis as a voting member of the Data Protection Authority until (and including) 31st December 2029;*
- 2. To appoint on and from 1st January 2026 Mr Steve Wood as a voting member of the Data Protection Authority until (and including) 31st December 2030.*

1620 **The States' Greffier:** Article 2. Committee for Home Affairs, Appointment of the Data Protection Authority.

1625 **The Bailiff:** I will invite the President to open any debate on this matter.
Deputy Leadbeater, please.

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

1630 This is a self-explanatory Policy Letter which seeks the appointment of Ms Sarah Willis and Mr Steve Wood as voting members of the Data Protection Authority, and I commend these two appointments to the Assembly.

1635 **The Bailiff:** Does anyone wish to comment on the proposed two appointments for the periods that are specified in the two Propositions? Does anyone want to vote differently on Proposition 1 and Proposition 2? In that case, I will take both of the Propositions together whether you are minded to vote for Ms Sarah Willis to the end of 2029 and Mr Wood to the end of 2030. I will invite the Greffier to open the voting.

There was a recorded vote.

1640 *Carried – Pour 37, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 2*

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	DID NOT VOTE	ABSENT
Blin, Chris	None	None	Sloan, Andy	Williams, Steve
Burford, Yvonne				
Bury, Tina				
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Gary				
Curgenvin, 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				
Snowdon, Alexander				
St Pier, Gavin				
Strachan, Jennifer				
Van Katwyk, Lee				

1645 **The Bailiff:** So in respect of both Propositions to appoint voting members of the Data Protection Authority, there voted in favour 37 Members, no Member voted against, no Member abstained, 2 Members were absent at the time of the vote and, therefore, I will declare both Propositions duly carried.

LEGISLATION LAID BEFORE THE STATES

The Plant Health (Preserved Phytosanitary Conditions Regulations) (Amendment) (Guernsey) (No. 2) Regulations, 2025;
The Parochial Elections (St Andrew's) Regulations, 2025;
The Air Transport Licensing (Exemption of Non-Essential Routes) (Amendment) (Guernsey) Regulations, 2025;
The Fire Services (Fees and Charges) (Guernsey) Regulations, 2025

1650 **The States' Greffier:** The following legislation is laid before the States: The Plant Health (Preserved Phytosanitary Conditions Regulations) (Amendment) (Guernsey) (No. 2) Regulations, 2025; The Parochial Elections (St Andrew's) Regulations, 2025; The Air Transport Licensing (Exemption of Non-Essential Routes) (Amendment) (Guernsey) Regulations, 2025; The Fire Services (Fees and Charges) (Guernsey) Regulations, 2025.

1655 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States will note that all of those matters are laid before this meeting of the States. I have not received any motions to annul any of them, but there is another opportunity at the next meeting.
Next Item, please, Greffier.

LEGISLATION

COMMITTEE FOR HOME AFFAIRS

3. Customs and Excise (General Provisions) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Law, 2026 – Proposition carried

Article 3.

The States are asked to decide:-

Whether they are of the opinion to approve the draft Projet de Loi entitled "The Customs and Excise (General Provisions) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Law, 2026", and to authorise the Bailiff to present a most humble petition to His Majesty praying for His Royal Sanction thereto.

1660 **The States' Greffier:** Article 3. Committee for Home Affairs, Customs and Excise (General Provisions) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Law, 2026, P.2025/139.

1665 **The Bailiff:** I will invite the President, Deputy Leadbeater, to open any debate on this matter.

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

1670 The Policy Letter approving the preparation of this legislation was approved at the end of the last term. The Amendment Law provides a statutory ability to issue concessions for landing goods and passengers in the Bailiwick places other than the approved ports and I commend this legislation to the Assembly.

The Bailiff: I do not see any Member rising to speak on the legislation and, therefore, I will simply put to you the Proposition as to whether you are minded to approve this draft Projet de Loi and invite the Greffier to open the voting on it.

1675

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 37, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 2, Absent 0

1680

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	DID NOT VOTE	ABSENT
Blin, Chris	None	None	Sloan, Andy	None
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				
Snowdon, Alexander				
St Pier, Gavin				
Strachan, Jennifer				
Van Katwyk, Lee				
Vermeulen, Simon				

The Bailiff: In respect of the Draft Projet de Loi there voted in favour 37 Members, no Member voted against, no Member abstained, 2 Members did not participate in that vote and therefore I will declare the Proposition duly carried.

**Election of a Member of the Transport Licensing Authority –
Deputy Chris Blin elected**

1685

The Bailiff: Now, before we move on to the next matter let me announce the result of the election for a member of the Transport Licensing Authority. Deputy Blin, who was proposed by Deputy Collins and seconded by Deputy de Sausmarez, received 32 votes. There were three blank papers and there were two spoilt papers, so therefore I declare him duly elected. *(Applause)*

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

4. Government Work Plan 2026-2029

1690

Article 4.

The States are asked to decide:

Whether, after consideration of the policy letter entitled 'Government Work Plan 2026-2029' dated 16th December 2025, they are of the opinion:

1. To agree the three government areas of focus – Foundations for our Future, Sustainable Wellbeing, and Island Resilience – and their associated work plans for this political term (illustrated in Appendix I) and direct the Committees of the States to prioritise their resources accordingly.

2. To agree to classify the following workstreams as super priorities for the duration of this political term to deliver sustainable economic growth, and direct the Committees of the States to treat their work contributing to these workstreams as their highest priority:

- Decide and deliver tax reform,
- Clear and commence site development at Leale's Yard,
- Agree and advance a sustainable health and care system,
- Shape and strengthen the focus on early years and families, and
- Determine and design future harbour requirements.

3. To direct the Policy & Resources Committee and each Principal Committee to publish a Committee Work Plan for the term (as set out in section 7).

4. To direct the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee to review the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees (in line with section 5) and to return to the States with proposals for updated Rules of Procedure that a) do not require the Government Work Plan to be debated at an annual Special Meeting; and b) do not set out specific reporting requirements for policy planning.

5. To direct the Policy & Resources Committee to submit to the States this term a mid-term report and an end-of-term report on the progress of the Government Work Plan.

The Bailiff: The next Item of business, please, Greffier.

1695

The States' Greffier: Article 4, Policy & Resources Committee, Government Work Plan 2026-2029.

The Bailiff: I will invite the President – she looks like she is hiding –to open the debate. Deputy de Sausmarez, please.

1700

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

I thought it would be prudent to attach my laptop to a power source. I do not know which is going to give way first, my laptop or my voice.

1705

Sir, I will keep this relatively brief, actually. I know that it is a substantial item of work and one which engages everyone in this Assembly but actually we have already had very good engagement leading up to this and so I do not want to just regurgitate information that everyone I think is already familiar with.

1710

While I am presenting this Policy Letter on behalf of P&R the Government Work Plan is not really ours. It is authentically in a real sense the Assembly's plan, and in drafting it we were keen that it accurately reflected the collective priorities of the Government as shaped by the input of all of the principal Committees. So this debate is an opportunity for the whole Assembly to refine it further, potentially through amendments, and put their views on record throughout the debate.

I want to begin by thanking colleagues, in particular the Presidents, Committees and officers, for working with us very constructively within quite a tight timeframe to bring this plan together. But between us we have turned it around far quicker than previous Assemblies have produced their

1715 iterations of the Government Work Plan, and to me that is a promising sign that this States is eager
to get on with delivering the priorities that it has identified.

The Policy Letter opens on a fairly sobering scene in its opening paragraphs, for which I make
no apology. It is vital context for the role that we, as Guernsey's Government, must carry out and
we are facing a combination of pressures that affect daily life and threaten the Island's long-term
1720 stability - a shortage of various types of housing, the need to renew critical infrastructure, rising
demand for health and care services, demographic change and factors well beyond our direct
control, such as geopolitical instability, volatility in the global economic system and the increasing
frequency of extreme weather events. The Government Work Plan 2026-2029 responds to these
challenges by concentrating our efforts where they can make the greatest difference, and I think
1725 that point is important to really draw out.

In an ideal world we might not need a Government Work Plan. We have got a committee system
of government and there is a theory that we should just let Committees do what they like, but the
fact remains that there are certain pieces of work and these really are the focus of the Government
Work Plan, which can only be delivered by cross-Committee working, and because we have finite
1730 resources it is also important that we agree among us what our top priorities are so that we can
make sure that those resources are directed to the things that we collectively think are the most
important.

The GWP groups work into three areas of focus providing clarity, structure and a whole of
Government approach to major strategic prioritisation. Each area addresses a specific cluster of
1735 long-term challenges while contributing to the shared goal of a stable, prosperous, resilient Island.
One area of focus is Foundations for our Future and this is about the essential social and economic
enablers that underpin Guernsey's wellbeing and economic success. It underscores the importance
to the future of our Island; secure housing that people can afford, resilient infrastructure,
opportunities for children and young people and a dynamic, competitive and vibrant economy. This
1740 area of focus brings together the crucial work needed to sustain and enhance Guernsey as an
attractive place to live and work for generations to come.

Another area of focus is Island Resilience, which deals with the pressures and uncertainties the
Island must be ready to navigate, whether they are fiscal, environmental, geopolitical or
technological. This work is about strengthening public finances, ensuring essential needs can always
1745 be met, investing in secure, modern, digital government and maintaining Guernsey's strong
international standing. A resilient Island is one that can withstand shocks without compromising
core services or economic stability.

Finally, the area of Sustainable Wellbeing recognises the demographic and financial pressures
on our health and care system. It emphasises prevention of ill health and early intervention and a
1750 long-term model capable of meeting the needs of a growing older population. Sustainable
Wellbeing requires reforms that protect the most vulnerable, reduce long-term cost and can deliver
high quality care for decades to come. No small task.

The work covered by these areas of focus is necessarily broad, and that is why this plan also
proposes five super priorities, each identified because it draws together a number of different
1755 threads that straddle different areas of Government. These proposed super priorities are a clear
expression of what the public can expect this Assembly to concentrate on and be accountable for
delivering.

The first of those is to decide and deliver tax reform. I am sure no one in this Chamber is unaware
that with rising cost driven by demographic change and decades of under-investment a decision
1760 on tax reform is essential to protect the economy and public services, restore fiscal stability and
support long-term investment. As I mentioned in my update actually just a little bit earlier, a lot of
work is already underway and the States will receive options in the second quarter of this year but,
of course, it is helpful to bear in mind that the earliest possible implementation is still a couple of
years away.

1765 The second super priority that we are proposing in the Policy Letter is to clear and commence
site development at Leale's Yard. Leale's Yard presents one of the Island's most significant

regeneration opportunities. This term we will demolish and clear the site, establish enabling infrastructure, develop the site plan and with a following wind start that first phase, those steps towards housing construction. This will catalyse wider regeneration in that part of the Island and support the Bridge as a local economic centre as well as helping to address housing need, of course.

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The third super priority is to agree and advance a sustainable health and care system. Demand for health and care is growing faster than our current system can fund or deliver, and this proposed super priority includes agreeing changes to long-term care, developing a new long-term care model and bringing forward a whole systems strategic plan with sustainable funding options, and the emphasis really is on sustainable in that sense. This work is vital to ensure that the health and care system remains accessible, is of high quality and is financially viable.

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Next in our super priorities we have to shape and strengthen the focus on early years and families, and I think we all recognise that the earliest years of life shape lifelong outcomes and strong family support strengthens both the community and the economy. With this super priority we are looking to agree a cross-Committee framework and start delivering priority actions to support families, improve early childhood outcomes and strengthen workforce participation.

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Finally, but not least, we are proposing a super priority to determine and design future harbour requirements. Our harbours are essential for freight, fuel, travel and a whole range of wider economic activity but they suffer from an ageing infrastructure, capacity constraints and climate-related or geographic-related vulnerabilities. We are underscoring with this super priority how essential it is to agree the Island's long-term harbour and port requirements and complete detailed design work on whatever this Assembly agrees is the best option. I know it gets overused but this really is a once-in-a-generation decision that is going to underpin a very significant part of the economy as well as all those wider effects.

1785

Each of these super priorities is tightly interwoven with those broader areas of focus I mentioned at the outset. Appendix 1 is for me where a lot of the meat of the GWP is because that is really the detail of the individual workstreams that will drive progress across Government. It sets out the work that the Committees have told us that they want to undertake. There are, contrary to some of the early public commentary I think on the GWP, a range of workstreams that relate directly to economic growth and productivity, for example, which is clear right from the outset of that appendix. Just to list a few, we have got an updated Economic Development Strategy, a Finance Sector Strategy, a Digital Framework, skills for work and productivity and participation in work, and I have really just listed there the first three workstreams under the Foundations for our Future heading. There are plenty of others as well so if there is any Member sitting in this Chamber who has not yet read the Policy Letter, if they only read one thing, I would urge it to be Appendix 1.

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Also under that heading we have got a number of workstreams relating to sufficient housing, fit-for-purpose infrastructure, and creating a place to grow and succeed. Under Island Resilience we have work relating to sustainable public finances, digital government, a strong international position, a safe and secure population and effective governance, many of which topics have been trending very strongly in today's meeting already.

1805

In Sustainable Wellbeing we have work relating to a sustainable health and care delivery model, Supported Living and Ageing Well Strategy (SLAWS) a vital piece of work which involves input from at least three Committees and increased prevention, early intervention. Together these workstreams form the practical actions which, when combined with the focus provided by the super priorities, will we hope deliver the outcomes that our community needs.

1810

I am not going to dwell for very long on the procedural aspects but there are a couple of details that I think it is only right to pull out. We have made a really conscious effort to make this iteration of the GWP much more streamlined and focused. That is how we have approached it from the get-go, and we are also proposing a number of modest but we hope impactful improvements to the process; one of which is around the Committee's autonomy to be able to publish their own workplans. We think this is really important because it gives them that autonomy, yes, but also flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances that they might want to keep our colleagues, but also members of the public informed as to how their work is progressing, how their priorities stand and

1815

1820 how their work is contributing to the GWP. I know that some Committees are really organised about this and I commend them for the work that they have put in but I do think that is going to be a positive improvement, as well as making the GWP proper a bit less bureaucratic.

We are also proposing to streamline the way in which we debate the GWP, so really just with this start mid-term and end-of-term structure, which again frees up that process and allows us to focus our resources on the delivery more than the process, and that is why we have got a Proposition in to that effect. We are also proposing that the legislative drafting programme will come to the States in the first half of this year, which will ensure legislation supports the priorities set up by the Assembly.

1830 These changes allow us to maintain accountability while focusing more time and energy on the delivery of the outcomes, which everyone would agree is really what we are here for. So, to summarise, sir, it is, I would stress, the Assembly's plan built substantively from the input from those Committees and subject of course to today's debate.

1835 An approved Government Work Plan will provide clarity on what matters most, stabilising our finances, delivering more homes, modernising our infrastructure, supporting families, preparing for demographic change and ensuring the long-term sustainability of our health and care system. All of these are the absolutely essential ingredients into a vibrant and successful economy and that is really what it is all about. These are the ingredients and that is the golden thread, someone has used the expression there of.

1840 So, it focuses on the outcomes that will improve life for Islanders today, while also putting in place the foundations needed for tomorrow. We have been very encouraged by the engagement of States' Members, not just ahead of the publication of the Policy Letter, but for the most part in terms of the amendments that have been developed and lodged as well. So on that note really it is important to just get on with the debate.

1845 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, as you will be aware, there are nine amendments that have been put at least at this stage to the Government Work Plan. What I thought I would do is just run down the list in which I am going to take them. Amendment 1 will be dealt with first on the basis that it is the only amendment that does not go further than the original Propositions.

1850 I am then going to move to Amendment 3. Third will be Amendment 5 and then we are going to go back to Amendment 2. I am going to take Amendment 8 after Amendment 2 and then I am going to move to Amendment 4. I am then going to move to Amendment 7 and then Amendment 6 and I am going to take Amendment 9 on the basis that Members would have had the least opportunity to consider it, and it does include a motion under Article 7(1) of the Reform (Guernsey) Law. First, I am going to take that one ninth. So that is the running order for the time being.

[Amendment 1.](#)

In Proposition 5, to insert immediately before the full stop the following:

‘ including commentary on how delivery of the Plan has:

(a) supported or strengthened the Island's economic capacity and competitiveness;

(b) involved trade-offs affecting economic growth, resilience or productivity; and

(c) balanced economic considerations alongside other policy objectives in the delivery of super priorities’.

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The Bailiff: So, Deputy Camp, is it your wish to move Amendment 1?

Deputy Camp: Yes please, sir.

1860

The Bailiff: Thank you very much, then please do so.

Deputy Camp: Thank you.

1865 So, recognising all that Deputy de Sausmarez has said in terms of the fact that there are discrete workstreams here in respect of economic growth, and when we do come to discuss my other amendment on this that there will be some more full and frank reasoning for it. But, on that basis, where we say that we are looking at the Island's economic capacity, competitiveness, resilience and productivity then we ought, as an Assembly, be willing to demonstrate that.

1870 I thank P&R for helpful engagement in bringing about this amendment and thank you to Deputy de Sausmarez for agreeing to second it. I really think that is probably all I need to say on this one. I hope it is what it says on the tin, that if we are going to do something, let us demonstrate we are doing it and let us make this real.

Thank you very much.

1875 **The Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez, do you formally second the amendment?

Deputy de Sausmarez: I do, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you.

Nobody is rising to their feet to speak on this amendment.

1880 Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: This might be a much shorter debate than we were all expecting, judging by this, right.

1885 I absolutely support the principle of what this is trying to do and obviously in terms of the Committee for Economic Development that is the kind of thinking and vision we ought to consider advocating for.

1890 My only concern in relation to this amendment is it is asking us to include commentary on how the delivery of the plan has three items: supportive and strengthens the Island's economic capacity and competitiveness; involves trade-offs affecting economic growth, resilience, productivity; and balanced economic considerations alongside other policy objectives. My concern is that it does not really provide any framework or tools around how we will be measuring any of that combination of very crucial items that have been mentioned.

1895 I am not sure we necessarily have the internal tools right now to be providing objective commentary on pretty much all of the elements developed here. I know that when, for example, the Jersey Economic Strategy was developed, there were different phases of work but one of the phases included the development of tools that could be used internally to analyse exactly the kinds of things that are being mentioned in this amendment but that toolbox was to be provided for internal departments, Treasury, etc., to be able to measure the economic benefits, trade-offs, etc., that would help.

1900 So my concern is that adding a few words to the GWP does not suddenly mean economic growth is going to be front and centre and we are going to magically be able to measure it and analyse it as part of all the different policy developments. There has to be much more done fundamentally internally for us to have that capacity, ability and resources to be undertaking the kind of things this amendment is demanding us to do.

1905 I would say that some of those tools might hopefully come through the Economic Development Strategy, and Deputy Sloan has mentioned that that is absolutely one of the key priorities for the Committee, and we will work closely across the Departments to be able to develop those tools and thinking. But all of that is to be developed, so my real concern is that while in principle absolutely we should be supporting this amendment, my concern is that in reality I am not sure we will be able properly to deliver against this amendment. What is necessary is then the discipline and the tools required to support the Committee, the policy officers to be able to report on this amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

1915 **Deputy Gollop:** I probably should have waited for Deputy Niles because I missed his speech, but I support this amendment with perhaps one minor issue. Because I think one of the flavours of the new Assembly has been we have had quite a lot of Members who have come from the professional and corporate community and they just do not think, rightly, that we have strengthened the role the economy plays and its essentiality for our survival and resilience as a society.

1920 I know there are some commentators and thinkers and pundits on the centre-left of Guernsey politics, past and present, who almost say why do we need an Economic Development Committee. In one sense, they have a point because the Economic Development budget, which has been well managed, is very low in comparison to Health & Social Care and many other Committees. But, as we heard today, some of us went to an interesting presentation from the revamped Guernsey Finance, maintaining and bringing over the wealth creators, employers, innovators, it is really important. I felt immediately when I saw the plan, and I understood the reasons for it, I felt the Policy & Resources framework did not have enough key priorities or functions on the economy.

1925 Although Deputy de Sausmarez is right when she says it is really in part of everything we do, it nevertheless needs prioritisation and focus because, if it is true, and Deputy Soulsby said the same in the previous States; that the Government Work Plan is not the P&R plan, but it is the plan of all of us, of all our Committees and all of us Members, then I think we should shape what is in it. I think strengthening the contribution about the economy is very much about that.

1930 Of course, there is a slight clumsiness with this because it relates to the priorities that is not in itself a priority, but it does add in criteria to strengthen the reporting of economic considerations. I might like Deputy Camp, or other people, to explain quite what they mean by trade-offs of economic growth, resilience or productivity, because you could have situations – you do have situations – where environmentalism or social policy or population policy might on occasions clash with some economic policy interpretations, economic growth interpretations. But we need more analysis on that.

1935 I accept it does not mandate growth targets, sector strategies, or delivery methods. It strengthens strategic coherence, transparency and accountability. Those are key words and buzzwords that are used a lot, but I would like to see more outcomes and action from them than just corporate governance points.

1940 But I do think this amendment not only would give a certain strength to people in the business community who initially felt the plan was not economically-focused enough, but hopefully, I do not know if it would be key performance indicators or what, but that we will have reporting of sufficient commentary to evidence the considerations and we will be able to hear in live time how Policy & Resources manage to achieve these objectives while at the same time having an underlying commitment to not only consider the economy, but grow the economy.

1945 There is one thing Deputy Inder has said in the past, is he said we can all argue about resources and, if you have a slight downturn, I do not know, in day tourism that is one thing. If you have a bigger downturn in our economy, in the bigger industries, the key sectors of finance, then we would notice that and therefore we do need to have a growth strategy, even the Labour Government has a growth strategy, and that has to be centre to what we do even if it is balanced against land use, environmental, social and other considerations.

The Bailiff: Deputy Niles.

1950 **Deputy Niles:** I will support this amendment, and there are a couple of amendments that look at economic growth and how we measure it and how we can strengthen it, for no other reason than to emphasise the importance of being able to measure our activity. At the moment, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller made a good point that how do we measure all of the outputs from these various components. But, importantly, we have some lagging economic indicators like GDP growth that we cannot measure at the moment. So our entire economy is in the dark. We do not know how many people live in Guernsey, we do not know how many people work in Guernsey, and so if it

does nothing else but emphasise the importance of having measurables and our reliance upon them, then I will absolutely support it.

1970 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: Sir, briefly, the way I am going to approach this amendment out of the way first, I am going to go after it in general debate in the Government Work Plan.

1975 Sir, to get the majority of this out of the way, anything that improves the economic outlook for Guernsey I am obviously going to support; demonstrably support. So, if it helps, Deputy Camp and Deputy de Sausmarez, I am supporting this. But it does not necessarily mean I will support the Government Work Plan, and I will give some reasons.

1980 If I look back at I think what the election delivered, the key themes coming out of it were housing, and that was almost certainly an electoral super priority, and I have to accept that Leale's Yard has been mentioned in the Budget, we agreed an amount of money to have it cleared in the next 18 months, so that matches what I saw in the election.

1985 Tax and economic policy, depending on what side of the fence you were, was either good or either bad. But what worries me about this is that we seem to be voting on something when we do not know how much money we have got. I have never ever done this before in my life, I have never bought anything in my life personally without knowing if I have got the money in the bank or I can finance it. I have done a lot of financing myself. I really do struggle with this.

1990 The other theme seems to be economic development and productivity. I am sure, as we go through the various amendments, these will be improved. So I think we have got something there. But there is something significant missing from the super priorities. Government efficiency and political development, and that was key in the election, and it is not a super priority. You heard what I said in the questions I have asked, and my position is not going to change. We simply cannot have an administration which is growing like topsy and without recognising that it is completely unaffordable. So a super priority has to have been Government efficiency and delivery, and it is simply not there, not as a super priority.

1995 So, Members, I want to turn briefly back to those so-called super priorities. I understand the motivation behind them, and I commend the Policy & Resources pocket versions of Idiot's Guide to What We Need to Do, and there is nothing wrong with that. I find often the case is that there are more words in [*Inaudible 3.36.41*].

2000 After a term in which the Government Work Plan became long, diffuse, difficult to track, there appears to be a genuine desire to focus discipline [*Inaudible 3.36.58*] responsibility and in principle that [*Inaudible 3.37.01*] But there is a fundamental weakness in the way that these super priorities are being presented to this Assembly. We are being asked today, possibly tomorrow, to endorse five projects as the highest priorities of this term, in effect to elevate them above all other Government actions, without being given even an indication or information about what they will cost. There is no indication at all in what any of these super priorities will cost.

2005 Harbour, millions; health, millions. I genuinely think this Government Plan is out of sync. What this should come is after we have agreed how on earth we are going to pay for even the day-to-day running of this Committee, so there is a slight small 'm' madness here. We are asking to agree to something in the form of a Government Work Plan and we have got no idea how to pay for it, none whatsoever.

2010 What is explicit, it is explicit the Government Work Plan is not linked to the Funding and Investment Plan, it says as much. Well, it should do. It is not linked to the Major Projects Portfolio. Well, it should do. And does not itself carry financial implications. Well, it should. That may be procedurally correct but leaves Members in a difficult position. I may be on my own here, would not be the first time, unlikely to be the last.

2015 Because, in reality, once something is labelled a super priority, political die is largely cast. When the funding requests come forward, whether for harbours, health reform, site development, or early years, the argument will not be should we do this, but simply how do we pay for it, or you have

2020 agreed it already. That is not a small sequencing issue, it goes to the heart of effective scrutiny. That is your job ultimately, Members. You are not here just to nod stuff through, your job is to scrutinise on behalf of the public.

2025 This Assembly has already acknowledged that Guernsey faces a structural deficit, growing pressures on reserves, major long-term liabilities in healthcare and infrastructure. Against that backdrop, it is reasonable – indeed necessary – for Members to ask what is the order of magnitude of these commitments and are they affordable together or are they even deliverable? Because, right now, uncosted, then none of these are deliverable; we simply have not got the money.

2030 I do not know how on earth I can get this across to people. Without deciding what your fiscal policy is likely to be, there is no money. This is our lives, genuinely. We do not even know if they are collectively manageable, whether pursuing all of them within a single term will crowd out other services or force difficult decisions later with less transparency, we have just simply got no idea.

2035 I am not arguing these priorities are wrong, I said that from the beginning. Many of them are clearly important – of course they are important – but I will remind Members that the electorate told you that they have concerns about the size of Government, and it is not here; it is not a priority. What I am questioning is whether it is good governance to ask the States to give them special status before we have sight of even high-level prospects, delivery assumptions, or financial risk.

2040 If the super priorities are intended to strengthen accountability, particularly to the public, then cost clarity is not optional, it is essential. Otherwise we risk offering focus in name, postponing the most important scrutiny until after the principle has already been agreed. This whole Government Plan, right of statute, Policy & Resources, I know the difficulty of it, it is entirely out of sync. We are running out of money, we have not made a decision on how we are going to do it, and right now I can vote for the amendment because I think it improves it, but once we get to the end of it I will not be supporting the Government Work Plan. It does not add up.

Thank you.

2045 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne.

Deputy Ozanne: Thank you, sir.

2050 I rise to support this motion too and I do that for two primary reasons: (1) as I read it, it sets out a way of working which we are committing ourselves being open about the trade-offs that different parties can have, looking at the economic considerations. That seems wise and puts our economy right at the heart, as has already been explained. But (2) because it also shows a response to a quite robust conversation many of us were part of when people were concerned about the economy. The bringing of this amendment, which is seconded by our Chief Minister, for me proves a new and quite welcome way of working, which shows that we want to respond to criticism rather than deflect it. That we want to embrace feedback rather than be defensive. So, to me, this is an important amendment because it shows a way of working which our Committee and indeed our Assembly is committed to.

2060 **The Bailiff:** If no one else is rising, I will turn to the President next to comment on this amendment, please, that she has seconded.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

I have got some more bits of paper, let me find the one.

2065 I believe Deputy Inder was speaking in general debate, so I will not go into those comments at this stage and just focus my comments on behalf of the Committee, and indeed myself, to the amendment that we are currently debating and about to vote on.

2070 Deputy Kazantseva-Miller raised a point that I raised during the presentation; it was a useful discussion and I do agree with that point broadly. However, I come at it from a slightly more optimistic perspective because to me we are not going to get those tools. We can all agree that this would be a great outcome, we should be able to do this as a Government, this is the mindset we

should be adopting. We are not going to be able to develop or get our hands on or embrace those tools or that framework unless we try to do it.

2075 So, for me, this amendment is a real enabler to moving us further on. I do not deny for a moment that we are going to be able to just do it and it will be great and easy, completely agree with Deputy Kazantseva-Miller about how difficult it is likely to be. But I do think we should be trying because I do think this is exactly the kind of mindset that we should be applying to everything. That applies to all of us in our Committee settings when we are working on policy development or the delivery of projects; having these criteria in mind is a very useful discipline. It is one that we are going to need to learn, it is one that is going to need to evolve, but I do think that this amendment, 2080 if it is agreed, and subsequently agreed at substantive proposition stage, will be an important stepping stone to move us further towards that.

Now, I certainly do not know what the solution is, but I can say from my work in other areas we have had similar issues in terms of trying to evaluate environmental impact when I was in the role that Deputy Gabriel now holds. What I can say is that other people – we might not need to reinvent this wheel because there are other jurisdictions out there that have the same thing. I take Deputy Niles's point about data. That is obviously one of the facets that we are working on very hard at the moment, to make sure that we do have reliable and up-to-date data. But I do know, for example, that we work very collaboratively with other jurisdictions and, certainly in terms of other types of impact, we have been able to borrow and adapt their tools, so we do not need to reinvent this particular wheel. 2085 2090

But I do think it is important stressing that this is not just something that is going to land on P&R's desk. For us to be able to report on this, we will be asking the Committees to give us that information. So I do need to be upfront about the fact that this is something that will fall to all of us, or certainly all of us who serve on Committees, to be able to do. So I do not think it is an overnight solution, but I do think it is absolutely the right direction and we should be embracing this as a result. 2095

The Bailiff: Finally, I will invite the proposer of the amendment, Deputy Camp, to reply to the debate on it, please. 2100

Deputy Camp: Thank you, sir.

In some ways, perhaps Deputy de Sausmarez has stolen my thunder, because that is exactly it. When we had the presentations in P&R and I raised that I was looking at economic growth and economic resilience and economic productivity under the lens of this GWP, my point there really was that this is about behavioural change and about also signalling to the public we are serious about growing the economy, looking after the economy, alongside all those other things that we are asked to do. 2105

So, there is no perfect answer to this. You could build all the toolkits in the world, and I know one of our prominent journalists so constantly refers to the fact that putting targets on economic growth is incredibly difficult and probably rather self-fulfilling sabotage, but what we can do is we can talk about the behaviours that fall into that. That is why my proposal has not been prescriptive in terms of how that happens. It is about establishing that behavioural piece, about recognising every time a key decision is made, about considering what it does to economy in terms of stabilising, resilience, productivity, and hopefully we all hope for growth at the end of that. It makes our lives much easier and future debates much less difficult. 2110 2115

So, in short, I will respond to Deputy Gollop; he asked about trade-offs. Again, I think he answered the question for me. Those trade-offs are things where things have a health and longevity benefit, where housing obviously provides a benefit, which does not appear to have immediate economic pay-off, but over the long term must have. Maybe they are not trade-offs, but again it is about establishing that behavioural way of thinking that, if we spend this money now, what do we expect it to do for our economy moving forward. So, I hope that will address that point 2120

In terms of responding, everybody else is very supportive, so thanks a lot. Deputy Inder, yes, many of your points were to the wider debate so we will probably leave those to the wider debate. I do not think that is quite my place to respond to a lot of those at this point.

2125 So, yes, thank you, and I hope you can support this amendment.

The Bailiff: Members of the States, it is now time to vote on the first of the amendments to the Government Work Plan 2026-2029. It is proposed by Deputy Camp, seconded by Deputy de Sausmarez, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 1 please.

2130 *There was a recorded vote.*

Carried – Pour 37, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 1, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	None	None	Sloan, Andy	Williams, Steve
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				
Snowdon, Alexander				
St Pier, Gavin				
Strachan, Jennifer				
Van Katwyk, Lee				
Vermeulen, Simon				

2135 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Amendment 1, proposed by Deputy Camp and seconded by Deputy de Sausmarez, there voted in favour 37 Members, no Member voted against, no Member abstained, 2 Members did not participate in the vote, and therefore I will declare Amendment 1 carried.

[Amendment 3.](#)

To insert a new proposition, as follows:

“Recognising the importance of a fit-for-purpose, accountable and high-performing leadership within the public service and supporting structures capable of delivering the Government Work

Plan, and to enable political committees to exercise challenge, control and vision, to agree to mandate the Chief Executive, drawing on external expertise where appropriate, to lead a programme of organisational reform as a priority to deliver performance, culture and capability improvements across the public service, and to direct the publication of clear terms of reference, approved by the Policy & Resources Committee, and to further direct the Policy & Resources Committee to resource the programme as necessary to achieve these outcomes, reporting regularly on its progress to the States."

2140

The Bailiff: Is it your wish, Deputy Laine, now to move Amendment 3?

Deputy Laine: Yes, sir.

2145

The Bailiff: Please do then.

Deputy Laine: Thank you, Bailiff.

2150

Members of the States, first of all, I would like to thank the President of Policy & Resources and Deputy St Pier for their assistance around this amendment. Initially, I had penned a much longer amendment and perhaps a little bit more brutal and time bound, but the P&R brought some pragmatism to the party and many redrafts followed, and the version you have today to a large part was penned by P&R and myself.

2155

I want to claim no responsibility for the incredibly long sentence or sentences in it. I did debate reading it out and, while it made sense in my head, it is a pretty daunting prospect to read such a long sentence as the amendment begins with. I also intended to make a longer speech, but on the one hand I sense that we are all together on this, and of course the Statement and the update from Deputy de Sausmarez this morning on some of the issues the Audit Committee and the projects really underlines the fact that we need public service delivery reform. So, I have gone for a shorter version, but it is still important for me to give an overview so I will try and keep it to five minutes.

2160

This amendment addresses a fundamental question that underpins our every ambition as well as those in the Government Work Plan. Is our public service genuinely capable of delivering what we ask of it? In light of the President's P&R statement this morning, I sense that we all agree it is suboptimal. For almost a decade our senior leadership and core structures have barely changed. Reporting lines, accountability, organisational design and relationships with the Chief Executive and politicians remain unclear. The Chief Executive does not have the basic management authority associated with a CEO role. The result is senior managers operate in independent orbits, difficult to co-ordinate, harder to manage, and nearly impossible to hold to account. We cannot afford to keep failing public expectations.

2170

Meeting expectations requires a functioning Government. Consistent operations, strong professional capability and disciplined execution. We politicians tend to be generalists. We bring, by and large, lived experience but not often subject matter expertise in depth. There are pockets of it. Our system absolutely depends on the professional management layer beneath us. Chief Officers and senior leaders who operate as genuine expert executives offering propositions and execution to politicians of the standard that a non-executive on a board would demand of its executive.

2175

Since taking on my current responsibilities, I have been struck by the lack of transparency, co-ordination and ownership. Many issues have no clear home. We respond to problems rather than anticipating them. Skills gaps are filled with consultants, not capability, and outdated working practices cannot support modern operational demand.

2180

This amendment seeks to address those systemic weaknesses. What it proposes is straightforward, to ensure that the Chief Executive can build and maintain a highly professional management team, capable of running Government operations, executing policy and supporting politicians with credible expert advice. The public should expect a Civil Service that turns political decisions into results without avoidable delay or rework. Committees should expect that their

2185 officers have subject matter expertise and delivery competence so that decisions are well-informed and implementation is reliable.

For this to happen, the Chief Executive must be empowered in practice, not just in title. That means having the authority to set standards, deploy resources, and intervene when performance fails. This is not about centralising power; it is about making the organisation capable of acting at a pace and delivering for our Island. This amendment mandates a focused programme of organisational reform as a core enabler of the Government Work Plan. It allows external expertise where appropriate. The review it initiates must be serious and evidence-based. It should look at whether senior leaders are genuinely accountable, whether project and portfolio management are fit for purpose, whether consultant use reflects need or structural weakness, whether capability and performance mechanisms are strong enough, and whether Committees receive support they need and how our structures compare to elsewhere.

2195 These are not instructions; they are simply questions any credible reform must answer. The amendment ensures clear terms of reference approved by Policy & Resources and transparent reporting to the States. That strengthens oversight and keeps the work focused on outcomes, not rhetoric. This amendment builds on work already underway. The Chief Executive has begun improving operations and ways of working. This gives that effort clarity and political authority. P&R has confirmed it can be delivered within existing budgets, so a small investment compared to the costs of inefficiency and failure.

2200 The real question before us is not whether the reform is affordable, it is whether inaction is affordable. Members, these challenges are systemic, they affect delivery, public confidence and our ability to govern, and please support this amendment.

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

2210 **Deputy Helyar:** Yes, sir, just to note, my name is spelt incorrectly.

The Bailiff: Yes, but not on the Order Paper.
Nobody is rising to speak. Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: I do not want to kick off the debate.

2215 I do support the amendment but I would ask one or two questions about the context. It is useful and it is, in the absence of a more structural Machinery of Government or perhaps the restoration of traditional Chief Officers or Ministers, this is a useful context. It is being put forward by two people who are very knowledgeable about the legal and corporate world, and I would say they are specialists in many ways, not just generalists. I am perhaps more of a generalist.

2220 But, historically, the senior Civil Service in the UK, and to a degree in Guernsey, does consist of generalists. You will see somebody who is working hard in Social Security and in a few years they have moved over to Health or Environment or Policy & Resources. So we train people in that way and there are benefits to that, but also some disadvantages, because sometimes very particular expertise is useful.

2225 Where I will be a little bit philosophical about the amendment is it puts on page 2 the financial implications to the States of carrying the proposal into effect are estimated to be in the region of £150,000 to quarter of a million. Well I would say to achieve that that is a bargain because, if you are trying to bring in training, cultural change, capability improvements, oversight, organisational reform, that could be a bit more expensive than that, but we have to be optimistic.

2230 I also think, as one other Member said, why is this amendment necessary because it should be within the Mandate of Policy & Resources and the Chief Executive Officer anyway? To a degree, previous Chief Executives in different ways attempted cultural change. We had that two or three Chief Executives ago when one individual very much spoke to every civil servant as one organisation and so on. Some things were maybe improved; others perhaps were not.

2235 The other question I would have is I had not had the advantage of sitting much as a
non-executive director on what you might call proper boards or financial boards, which is a gap in
my understanding. But I sometimes think our States' Member role is akin, to some extent, with
non-executive directorships. But the public, strangely enough, and the media try to portray us
2240 instead as leaders pushing change, a bit like Lord Sugar or something like that. Well of course the
American Apprentice did become President of the USA.

I do not know if we are; certainly I can think of many politicians past and present who do push
change and have the ability to do that, but this particular amendment really is saying that the Chief
Executive is the dynamic figure. Not just this Chief Executive, but hypothetical future Chief
Executives, in delivering the change rather than political leadership. In the way that we are
2245 structured. That is probably right, but it creates one or two challenges because, for the Chief
Executive, he or she – because this would go on the Chief Executive – the current person of which
we have lots of confidence in, would have to lead the programme with a clear mandate from the
States, which this might give them, but also Policy & Resources.

If there was too much second-guessing by States' Members, even the Senior Committee, that
2250 could be detrimental because there has to be political ownership, but this amendment implies that
in the immediate future it will be the Chief Executive and his advisers who will be delivering this
change rather than politicians per se. That opens another question that maybe Deputy Laine or
other Members could comment on. In the last term, one of my burdens was I was involved a little
bit with human resources employment negotiations, which was a privilege as well, but there were
2255 certainly challenging conversations on occasion.

It is possibly true – probably true – that some civil servants have contracts of employment which
give them certain rights and benefits and privileges and liberties. Again, this approach might have
to work within that framework while perhaps challenging it, because organisational reform, cultural
change, ownership, cross-departmental working, culture and capability improvements, and all the
2260 rest of it, indicate that we will be going into a new era, not necessarily one more modelled on the
private sector, but substantially different from where we have been.

We should give this amendment certainly the benefit of the doubt. A lot of hard work has been
put into it, and I very much support the political direction of the proposer and seconder, and hope
that we can build performance expectations, approach to capability, and as Deputy Laine said,
2265 ownership of projects across the States so there is a more efficient, cheaper, and timely delivery,
and there is accountability. But as another Deputy said earlier, that accountability might come at a
price with perhaps occasionally people moving on in their position rather than just staying in post.

The Bailiff: Deputy Goy.

2270

Deputy Goy: Thank you, sir.

This is a question for Deputy Laine. Could Deputy Laine kindly explain what this cost of £150,000
to £250,000 consists of?

Thank you.

2275

The Bailiff: Deputy Helyar.

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

I have said it a few times, but I will probably say it again before the end of the term anyway,
2280 always beware of the opinions of lawyers because there are always two lawyers on both sides of an
argument and they are paid to take a particular view that they have, and one of them always wins
and the other one always loses. So that is the only thing you can be pretty sure of.

I laughed to myself when Deputy Gollop said why do we need to do this; it is within the Mandate
anyway. I thought, well, why do you ask so many questions each time we have a statement, because
2285 you could just send an email. I suppose the reason for it is the same, it is to demonstrate to the
public, which we absolutely have to do, that we are taking steps to back the CEO in his public

statements about wanting to reform the service and to give him complete and utter support. It would be great if we could have a unanimous vote in support of this amendment to give him full support and backing to reviewing where the service stands.

2290 It is certainly acknowledged behind closed doors that getting rid of Chief Officers was probably an error because it leads to a lack of ability for there to be a cultural, from top to bottom, change when those sorts of changes need to happen. Members will be aware, because I circulated it, I also drafted an amendment which has dealt with a slightly different aspect of the way the service operates. I did not submit it in the end because I felt, having had discussions particularly with the
2295 Law Officers, I did not get an opportunity to talk in detail to P&R, it is a cake that is not quite sufficiently mixed yet before it needs to be baked, so it needs little bit more time. But it will come back, I promise you.

That was more about not the structure of the service and what people's responsibilities are and how they are accountable for them, but more about the ethos of how they exercise their authority
2300 when it is delegated directly from us. Because I do not want to see people, personally speaking, going around trying to find new things to spend money on. We do not have any money and we need to demonstrate to the public that we have control of that. I am personally not convinced that we do have control of it and it seems to be very difficult to push that down into the organisation and get everybody to sing from the same hymn sheet.

2305 Anyway, I thoroughly supported this. I thank Deputy Laine for giving me the opportunity to have some input into the drafting, and I commend it to everybody. It would be a great step forward and a real positive sign for the public that, notwithstanding the enormous list of things we have to do in the Government Work Plan, we are taking steps to ensure that we have control of Government because that is the only way in which we will be able to deliver things in sequence and hopefully
2310 with the public first in mind.

The Bailiff: Deputy Ozanne.

Deputy Ozanne: Thank you, sir.

2315 Just briefly, I too very much support this amendment for all the reasons that Deputy Helyar has set out, and indeed Deputy Laine in his speech. Although I also am cognisant of what Deputy Inder has said about the need for us to be clear about resources and, while this amendment does set out the need for it to be adequately resourced, I hope that we will be given some indication as to how much that is likely to cost.

2320 I understand that there is cultural change, structural change, but also actual change needed, and that will need, in my humble opinion, quite significant resource. So I would like to be given an indication of what sort of budget we are talking about before having a final, if it is possible, decision on this today.

2325 It strikes me, having worked a lot with Civil Services, the servants over the water, that we have some very unique challenges here in the UK, and not least that we do not have quite the career pathways that people can have. When you get up to a certain level, there is nowhere else for you to go. I do hope that we will be drawing on experiences across other small jurisdictions when we do this work so that we can understand how we can challenge, motivate, and, if necessary, move on civil servants because of the problems that we ourselves face.

2330 I come back to the question about resource, because I agree with Deputy Inder that is key here.

The Bailiff: Deputy Strachan.

2335 **Deputy Strachan:** Just very briefly and following on from the questions that were answered this morning. If we are really talking about cost, and just responding to Deputy Ozanne's question, when we have the final audit of what happened with doing this, I think we will find that there is a cost to not doing this and we need to keep that in mind.

Thank you.

2340 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: So, again, absolutely the spirit of this amendment is what many of us have been trying to advocate for and brought other amendments in the previous political term trying to achieve savings in the form, etc.

2345 The spirit and principle is great. I find right now this is quite generic, and there is a little bit of irony as well to the fact that the Proposition itself specifies potentially the drawing on external resources, but then in the explanatory note what it is trying to encourage is a culture to reduce reliance on external consultants. Obviously all of us, and there is a whole savings plan in place to reduce the reliance on consultants, and I certainly know that that even Deputy Laine and
2350 Deputy Helyar are quite keen for that reliance to be to be reduced. So, a bit of an element of irony to some extent is that we are trying to change the culture, that the proposition mentions the potential use of external consultants.

The other issue which has been mentioned is the budget and resourcing. So, while there is an estimation, which it sounds like it is very much drawn out of thin air because there is no explanation
2355 given as to the figure, the Proposition – if you read the Proposition carefully – it basically, towards the end, says to further direct the Policy & Resources Committee to resource the programme as necessary to achieve these outcomes. So, to some extent, the Proposition as currently drafted gives a carte blanche to the Policy & Resources Committee to resource this programme of change as necessary. So there is absolutely no budget consideration requirements.

2360 Again, it is contrary to the spirit of what we are trying to achieve through this Assembly is really a focus on efficiency and stuff like that, so, as drafted, it is slightly problematic. It is not great. It is not the end of the world. I do not think there are any fatal technical mistakes, I would say, in the amendment, but it is not ideal.

The main saviour to me, having said it is quite generic, etc., is that it is directing the publication
2365 of the terms of reference, which will give probably the substance that we are all seeking and hopefully will come through in thinking that the CEO is already applying to this field to give us more clarity about what this programme is going to be. So, on this basis, I am going to support this amendment, I absolutely support the principle it is trying to achieve.

2370 But we just need to be careful as an Assembly to think that, when we bring these kind of amendments and the issues I have still outlined with the previous amendments, they are too generic and sometimes we are setting these expectations that just bringing a very generic amendment, we have solved everything. It is a panacea to all the problems we have got. It is really not, it maybe addresses the continuation of the direction of travel, but we probably need to be a bit more concrete and specific in the direction we are trying to give as an Assembly, whether it is to Civil
2375 Service, to the CEO, or whatever.

Because I am just worried that where we set the expectation high but delivery might be not what we expect unless we are becoming much more specific about what we are trying to achieve. So, well done in bringing this amendment. It is not 100% great in my view, but it does the job for now and it will be really important in terms of the terms of reference that come back from this.

2380 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Rochester.

Deputy Rochester: I would support what Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has just said in terms of using the good knowledge and understanding of the challenges we face internally rather than
2385 necessarily looking externally. While I understand why this amendment has been revised and reduced in scope and the timelines are not baked into the initial amendment, I would also support this piece of work being done efficiently and quickly. We all understand what major challenges need to be addressed. It is understood in the Civil Service. I do not think we need to make this complicated. We need to be efficient and effective in delivery.

2390 So, I will support the amendment, but that I would ask that we use the knowledge we have and we act swiftly.

The Bailiff: Deputy Burford.

2395 **Deputy Burford:** Thank you, sir.

Just briefly, I would just back up really some of the points that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller said. They are very relevant, but I would like to just remind Members that in terms of internal versus external resource, this morning in her Statement the President pointed out that the Chief Executive had in fact redirected the work of the Internal Audit function to this work largely, and also some subordinates within the Assembly itself. So that, together with the possibility that sometimes – and

2400 we have this very much on IT – bringing in an external resource does not need to mean money because we have got some very skilled people on this Island. We often hear it at election time how we should be using those skills and resources, and there are very many of them who are happy to do that as public service and not as employees.

2405 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

2410 I am very happy to support this amendment. In a lot of ways, this is what we all in this Assembly believe should be happening and in fact believe probably is happening to an extent. The thing that this amendment adds is really the publication of the terms of reference. We all might have slightly different views about how it should go, but I am sure we are all unanimously agreed or nearly unanimously agreed this is organisational change that needs to happen and should be happening.

2415 The exact devil in the details may well vary between us, so I would like to see the publication of terms of reference as early as possible. That will enable us to then review that and see if this is the direction that we expect reform or changes and organisational efficiency to happen within the public service. I certainly would welcome that. I am sure that Deputy Laine would maybe address it in his summing up or if somebody from P&R were able to answer a question about how quickly that could be achieved so that we could get an idea of when we might expect to see something resulting from it.

2420 Thank you.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Camp.

2425

Deputy Camp: Thank you.

Yes, I am going to support this amendment. Having been involved in things like change management and difficult employee relation matters and all these other things that I am sure this is going to involve, we could ask for all of the well-dotted i's and t's crossed in advance of a project like this. But then you would end up throwing them out the window in about five minutes. There is enough protection in here on the basis that the purpose of this is to deliver performance, culture, and capability improvements across the public service, and I trust that the terms of reference will adequately address exactly how that be measured and monitored. So I will be supporting this amendment.

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The Bailiff: I will now turn to the President of the Committee to speak to Amendment 3, please. Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

2440 It has been an interesting, helpful debate, certainly from our perspective, and many of the points that I will only now touch on briefly have already been drawn out in the course of what has been quite a short and focused but, as I said, helpful discussion.

Deputy Laine set the tone perfectly when he drew our focus on to the fundamental importance of this work being done. Deputy Gollop was of course quite right to point out that this is already
2445 clearly in the Mandate of the P&R Committee, and of the Chief Executive anyway. He has just stepped out of the Chamber. But the person who responded in a way that was absolutely spot on was Deputy Helyar with that aspect.

Yes, those things are already in the Mandate, but this is an opportunity for us, as a political body, to demonstrate and put on record our, I hope, resounding support for that Mandate. Because it is
2450 a tough job and, my goodness me, it needs strong political support. So please, let us take this opportunity to give it exactly that. It gives the Mandate much more welling. Obviously, I can confirm that P&R is already giving the Chief Executive a lot of support in this respect; much of our conversation and very regular contact, very regular updates, and we are making sure that he has got the support that he needs.

Deputy Burford has really already addressed the points that I was going to make in response to Deputy Kazantseva-Miller. I would just point out that that, as she mentioned, is exactly how we are
2455 anticipating populating the IT Panel. The wording is important. It is about external independent expertise where appropriate. There is no mention of highly paid consultants.

With respect to the question that has been raised by a number of people, and rightly so, on the resource. As we mentioned in the note that we circulated, the commentary on some of the
2460 amendments beforehand, the Committee does not anticipate any additional funding requirements for this work, certainly as things stand at the moment.

Deputy Laine was probably sensible; I think he would agree it was something of a finger in the air. But Deputy Strachan's point about the cost of not doing this work is likely to be very much
2465 greater than any expenditure that arises in the course of it. But, I can reassure Members that, as things stand, this is a matter that is already ongoing and we are not anticipating the requirement for significant additional, or indeed at this point, any additional resources to continue it.

So, I am delighted with some of the comments that have been made in support of this work and understanding the necessity for it, and I would encourage, as Deputy Helyar said, as strong a voter
2470 support as possible.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Finally, I will turn to the proposer of Amendment 3, Deputy Laine, to reply to the
2475 debate.

Deputy Laine: Thank you, sir; and thank you for all those that have spoken in support of this.

I will just refer to some of the questions. In terms of Deputy Gollop, yes, the role of a States' Member is not directly comparable to a non-executive; it is a hybrid and there are parts of it that
2480 are, but it is not a general like for like. But when we are looking at the Machinery of Government, away from policy, when we are talking about efficiency and the wheels running smoothly, it is more akin to that role.

On Deputy Goy's question, this is cost neutral, effectively. As I said before, I had a three-page amendment which was quite brutal, time bound, and put that finger in the air to come up with costs. As Deputy de Sausmarez said, the Committee is now confident with the reworked amendment
2485 that it can be done within existing budgets. So I do not think there are any issues around cost there.

As Deputy de Sausmarez mentioned, there is no intention on my part or the Chief Executive to use external consultants. I went out to people in our community, people that chair international listed boards, an incredible wealth of experience that we have got here, that have dealt with far
2490 bigger crises than we find ourselves in today. To a man, or woman in some cases, they are all happy to contribute and none of them are looking for money. I specifically did not suggest that we use management consultants or anything like that, and I know that our CEO is of the same mind, and

I have put forward some people – he may not choose to talk to them – but the plan is to use people within our community

2495 Deputy Ozanne also spoke about what Deputy Inder had said around resources, and I agree with both of them. But it is this amendment that will see a cost-effective, efficient running of Government. While we say this is in the Mandate of P&R and this is in the Mandate of the CEO, it is not that simple. The way that roles are defined and the power of the Chief Executive may well change or there may be recommendations to allow the Chief Executive to exercise authority in a way that is difficult today. But we are talking about operational delivery, we are not talking about political
2500 decisions. We drive the car, but he fixes the engine, and that is what it is about.

The President of ED came up with an interesting point about the amendment being generic. I can assure you that my initial amendment was far from generic and had blood running down it. But having a generic amendment is the price of getting P&R on board with the amendment, getting wider support and taking into account the delivery.

2505 Yes, I am happy to give way.

Deputy de Sausmarez: I am really grateful to Deputy Laine for giving way. He might have just been about to get to it, but I just did not want it to be represented as a transactional thing.

2510 Okay, he was about to get there. In that case I will use the opportunity while I am on my feet to say, I am so sorry. I did forget to address Deputy Matthews's question about the terms of reference and absolutely we can commit to making sure that we can get those out as soon as possible. I am sure Deputy Laine was just about to come on to the point about flexibility and speed.

Deputy Laine: Yes, absolutely. So I met with both the President and Deputy President of P&R
2515 as well as Boley, our CEO, on a number of occasions to talk about –

The Bailiff: Deputy Laine, you cannot name somebody, you can refer to them by title.

Deputy Laine: Okay, our Chief Executive. Strike that from the record.

2520 So I met with our Chief Executive about the practicalities of delivering my amendment as originally drafted and he is airtime available, he is incredibly busy. There are issues all over and he has very little support. He is our CEO but in fact he has half an assistant. Yes, there are the same secretariat that supports the Committees, but we might find that changes. So I was listening to the Chief Executive on, if this amendment as originally drafted went through, how could he possibly
2525 deliver it, or were we just setting him up to failure.

So, absolutely, we took a pragmatic approach, and I take my hat off to P&R on coming up with – long sentences aside – an amendment that will I believe empower our Chief Executive and will allow him or give him the support to do things that perhaps are on the tough side. So, absolutely, that is the reason behind that.

2530 As I said already before, but again with regard to the President of Economic Development not anticipating any consultants, the Letter of Comment from P&R stated that this can be done from an existing budget and could be – when I say cost neutral, there are elements that they would do this anyway but they are going to do it in a more empowered way.

2535 Moving on to Deputy Rochester's comments, again internal resources, maybe those internal resources are finite and I certainly advocate use of internal resources, but also if there is free expertise out there in the community, then take advantage of that as well.

Again, thank you, Deputy Burford, for pointing out that Internal Audit are already doing some of this work, and we have some good people accountable directly to the Chief Executive doing that.

2540 In terms of Deputy Matthews's questions about speed of terms of reference, that is a P&R matter and I cannot talk for P&R, but I would expect that within three months you would probably see something, but it is not my place to promise.

So I think I have covered all the questions and it is great that there has been no dissent and we can have strong support and empower our CEO to ensure that we have a team to deliver on our ambitions.

2545 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 3, proposed by Deputy Laine, seconded by Deputy Helyar, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 3, please.

2550 *There was a recorded vote.*

Carried – Pour 37, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 1, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	None	None	Helyar, Mark	Williams, Steve
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				
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				

2555 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Amendment 3, proposed by Deputy Laine, seconded by Deputy Helyar, there voted in favour 37 Members, no Member voted against, no Member abstained, 2 Members did not participate in that vote, and therefore I will declare the amendment duly carried.

2560 We will now move on to Amendment 5, if Deputy Rochester wishes to move that amendment now.

Deputy Rochester: I do not.

2565 **The Bailiff:** You do not want to move Amendment 5. We will skip over that one very quickly then.

[Amendment 2.](#)

To insert two additional propositions as follows:

“6. To agree that maintaining and strengthening the Island’s economic capacity is fundamental to the successful delivery of the Government Work Plan and to note the following, which should be included in the consolidated version of the Government Work Plan to be published on gov.gg:

“Economic development, competitiveness and productivity are enabling conditions which underpin the delivery of all super priorities set out in this Plan, rather than representing a discrete policy area or a competing objective.

Economic growth, resilience or recovery (termed depending on prevailing financial conditions) materially strengthens the Island’s ability to fund public services, invest in infrastructure and meet community needs over time whilst actively promoting innovation. Economic development should therefore be regarded as a cross-cutting consideration informing prioritisation, sequencing and delivery decisions across the Government Work Plan.

Responsibility for supporting economic development and long-term economic capacity is a whole-of-Government responsibility. While specific policy levers may sit with individual committees, the economic consequences of decisions are shared across Government and should be considered accordingly in the delivery of all super priorities.”.

7. To agree that in setting priorities, sequencing work and allocating resources under this Plan, committees should have regard not only to policy objectives and fiscal constraints, but also to the impact of proposed actions on economic activity, productivity, labour participation and the Island’s longer-term economic capacity, and where delivery of super priorities involves trade-offs with economic competitiveness or growth, those trade-offs should be explicitly identified and considered; and for this to be included in the consolidated version of the Government Work Plan to be published on gov.gg.”.

2570 **The Bailiff:** We will go back to Amendment 2. Deputy Camp, is it your wish to move Amendment 2?

Deputy Camp: I do, yes, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much, then I invite you to do that now then, please.

2575 **Deputy Camp:** Excellent, right, thank you, sir.

So I bring this amendment. To set the scene on this, it was born somewhat out of frustration. While we see proposed super priorities, workstreams focused on how to tax more and propose frameworks setting out how we might borrow significant sums of money, we are simply not very good at talking about our economy, how we grow it, how we strengthen it, and how we sustain it.

2580 I do thank P&R for taking the time to consider this amendment and Deputy de Sausmarez for agreeing to second it. Like all of us, we heard commentators ask why this was not one of the five super priorities put forward by P&R, with AI coming thick and fast and talk of digital innovation, it might have seemed the perfect moment to make economic growth a super priority.

2585 But, like many others, I struggle to find a credible way of signposting economic growth as a discrete piece of work. How does one simply do growth? How do we measure it and is it growth we are after or is it economic stewardship? What is clear, however, is that the economy sits at the heart of everything we do, and the fact that it ranks behind the super priorities irked me because, in truth, our only role as Deputies is to provide stewardship for the sustainability and furtherance of our economy. It is the backbone of everything we have done, everything we do, and everything we hope
2590 to do in the future.

2595 If we want excellent schools, they require investment. If we want city-scale medical provision on a small Island, that comes with a price tag. Taxing the same people more and borrowing without a firm plan for repayment are reckless approaches if they are not grounded in a clear understanding of the economy, both from a growth perspective and from the perspective of living within our means.

2600 To my mind, economic consideration is the thing upon which everything else can hinge. It is what I would term the enabling super priority. We know that not everything Government does will result in a neat tangible percentage increase in GDP, but we can and should consider the economic impacts of the priorities we choose and what those impacts mean for, among other things, affordability.

2605 Some impacts will be more immediate, enabling business, both in the regulated and unregulated space for a strong growth mindset, can deliver obvious results, increased activity, higher headcounts, and investment into the Island, whether that is established firms taking on prestigious offices or new firms choosing Guernsey as their home. Other impacts will be longer term. The States getting on and building houses will not deliver an instant return, but it will help prevent us becoming stuck in a cycle of endlessly paying out more simply to chase our own inflationary pressures.

2610 This amendment therefore asks the requirement to understand economic impacts is made explicit in every decision. It seeks to remind all Committees existing resolution is there not for window dressing, it is the consideration that should sit at the core of the decisions we are making. Guernsey is not the growth centre it once was, stymied by complacency, regulatory overreach, and Government overreach, we have forgotten how to be a centre for business. If we are serious about restoring trust of the public, we must also show that we understand the consequences of our decisions, how they are paid for, how they affect affordability, and how they contribute to a sustainable future rather than short-term fixes.

2615 Why should this not simply be a matter for Economic Development? Because the economy is, to put it quite frankly, all of our concern. It is present in every decision, in every Committee, in every policy choice. It is not the responsibility of five Deputies; it is the responsibility of all of us. Therefore, I ask you support this amendment which, at its core, asks us to accept that economic growth, resilience, stability is an enabling super priority that should be inherent in everything we do.

2620 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez, do you formally second Amendment 2?

2625 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** I do.

The Bailiff: Thank you.
Deputy Niles.

2630 **Deputy Niles:** As a colleague of Deputy Camp on Economic Development, I absolutely agree with her that having a measurable, vibrant economy should be at the centre of everything we do. Government needs to understand that economic growth does not come from Government. We do not do this. Every man and woman that works in our economy, every business that operates in our economy, delivers economic growth for us that sustains us, our schools, our hospitals, our whole infrastructure. So what we must do is create the environment that enables them to grow our economy and to move the obstacles out of their way so that they can go faster.

2635 I will be supporting this amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Rochester.

2640 **Deputy Rochester:** I will support this amendment and I absolutely accept the need for us to focus on economic capacity and productivity over the long term. But, in listening to the debate we have had so far, we have focused, thanks to Deputy Camp's amendments, on the economy. I find it

quite interesting, when we talk about how we measure economic outcomes, that we have this discussion or are having this discussion at a Government Work Plan level.

2645 Listening to Deputy Camp talk about her amendment, I look to Rule 4(1) information on her amendment and I would just, I suppose as part of this conversation, ask us to reflect on whether there is something we can do at a policy and proposition level to explicitly recognise the economic, social, and environmental impact of propositions and policies we are putting forward. It is a relatively simple starting point to integrating what we are trying to achieve on a debate-by-debate
2650 level rather than just discussing it at a four-year Government Work Plan level and then in the rough and tumble of political and policy creation, forgetting how important it is to us.

So it does not, I suppose, directly relate to this amendment, but hopefully gives an idea of how we might move forward with this in practice rather than just in principle.

2655 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Goy.

Deputy Goy: Thank you, sir.

I just wanted to say that I support this amendment and I just wanted to add one thing. One major issue the GWP does not address at all is geopolitical risk. It mentions the word 'geopolitics'
2660 but it does not really address the risk of it. Around 40% of Guernsey's economy depends on finance. That makes global politics such as sanctions, trade disputes, and conflicts between major powers directly relevant to our economic stability.

Sanctions are now a routine political tool. Assets can be frozen, banks can be cut off from payment systems, financial centres can be pressured to follow decisions made in Washington. This
2665 has already happened, including pressures on traditionally neutral jurisdictions like Switzerland. Guernsey is particularly exposed because we automatically align with UK sanctions and UK aligns closely with the United States.

This is before even considering the impact of AI on finance jobs. So if there were a major global conflict with widespread sanctions, especially involving a major power whose goods the Island relies
2670 on, Guernsey would have very little room to manoeuvre. The GWP does not acknowledge this risk, does not stress test the finance sector, and does not outline any contingency planning. So it is my hope that when P&R considers economic growth, it will also take into account the geopolitical risk I mentioned and take appropriate pre-emptive steps.

2675 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Sir, very similar comments to what I said previously, is that I just continue to be concerned that putting a few words into the Government Work Plan does not
2680 translate into tangible outcomes. What I am really concerned about is that we will all feel good today that we have put economic growth into the centre of our Government Work Plan, it is all going to solve everything, but I really think we are going to be disappointed because this is extremely high-level generic, without giving any guidance of what Committees should be doing.

It is also interesting because I know my colleague, Deputy Camp, is always very particular about ensuring there are tangible, measurable KPIs in what we do, with a particular focus on governing
2685 bodies, etc. So this is completely opposite of ensuring there is tangible, measurable, smart objectives in terms of what is achievable. While, again, I continue to agree absolutely with the principle of what this is trying to do, but I am just concerned that we will think that we have suddenly solved economic growth and all is going to be fine thanks to this amendment or other amendments.

This is much more complex and difficult and tangible. If we are requiring, for example,
2690 Committees to now formally consider, let us say, economic growth, traders, whatever economic capacity, and interestingly what is economic capacity? That has not been defined. We are going to be debating the fiscal policy framework; scrutiny has very justifiably questioned the use of certain terminology. Economic capacity is not an economic term that is definable across different jurisdictions, it is completely ambiguous, subjective.

2695 So, if for example Proposition 7 is suggesting that all of Committees' work and policy development should take into consideration impact on economic activity, productivity, labour participation, this amendment is not suggesting that this should, for example, become a rule so every policy publication that Committees bring to the States should require a section in the Policy Letter that creates an analysis.

2700 So, my question is that there is no, right now, proposed way to measure what successful outcomes of this amendment look like. So, again, while I support and I am sure that some others might say, if we do not get started, we would not get there. Yes, absolutely, we will get started. But I am just concerned that this is a bit like motherhood and apple pie; that we think it is going to solve everything, but it is far from that. There is a huge amount of work to do to have tools, practical applications and understanding how we do that.

2705 In addition, I will finish now, but while I think we should all be supporting the direction of travel, I do really think this is not a panacea, what we are trying to do. The thought came back to me, while being the President of the Committee *for* Economic Development, and I will absolutely say economic growth, etc., but economic growth without environmental considerations, without health, without wellbeing, without all the other factors that we talk about, we do not have an economy.

2710 So sometimes I do feel this becomes some binary argument where it is black and white, that it is either the economy or nothing else. I do think all of these conversations are much more nuanced. You cannot take the economy out of the equation, out of environmental considerations, the health of our community, etc.

2715 So, I just think we need to be a bit careful, but especially in terms of the outlook to the community, ultimately it is going to be the actions that deliver tangible outcomes to our communities and households and businesses on that daily basis, which will make the difference, not words on a piece of paper thinking it solves all of our problems. So just a word of caution.

2720 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Bury.

Deputy Bury: Thank you, sir.

2725 I will be brief. It is probably a surprise; it is not an area I normally chip in on. There are plenty of other people with far more expertise in this area than I. But I really want to echo quite a lot of the points that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has just made. I do not have any great issue with the amendment that is in front of us. As Deputy Kazantseva-Miller said, motherhood and apple pie, and I do not mean that in a derogatory way, that is things we can all get behind.

2730 But it is words and what has just been slightly missed out of the conversation around economic growth is that we are not unique in our stagnation of growth. I do not feel that, within these very admirable thrusts towards something, that we have any solutions to that. The warnings that have just been spoken out, these are just words and I would really like to see more tangible direction, instruction, action. But hopefully we will see that off the back of these.

2735 At the core of it, I agree with much of what Deputy Camp said and what is in the amendment. There was just one thing in her opening that just pushed a button in me, and that was that it is our sole job as Deputies to steward the economy. I do disagree with that. It is one of our very important jobs, but again this point has just been made, there are different viewpoints on this. Some people absolutely think that without the economy we have nothing. True. But without the environment we have nothing also. You can see that through many different lenses.

2740 So economic growth, yes, but it depends on what that looks like as well, not at the detriment of our community's health and wellbeing. If economic growth means everybody has to have four jobs and work 120 hour weeks, then no, thanks. So, it has to be meaningful when we talk about this, about how it works in practice.

Thank you, sir.

2745 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen.

Deputy Vermeulen: Thank you, sir.

2750 I welcome this amendment and it is nice to see this term so many more politicians talking about growth. You will remember I banged the drum for growth last year or last term and, had more of my colleagues supported what I was putting forward, we would have achieved significantly more growth. But that was not to be. So here we are, we have come straight to it, this is one of the main things which is missing from our business strategy, which we are putting forward, the Work Plan. I am glad to see it included.

2755 I do not think you can describe it as apple pie and motherhood. I welcome it. It is long overdue and growth is there to be had. But first of all, all you guys have got to want it to grow. You have got to want that to happen. You have got to make the right decisions. We are going to need it because we have got raging inflation. I am told by a colleague I respect that inflation has come down, so you do not have to worry about that. Well, maybe, but we have got medical inflation, we have got inflation in construction, a raging inflation. So prices are going up and you do need to grow the economy to cover those costs because if you run out of money, guess what, you do not have a government, you cannot run a government, you cannot pay the wages for those nurses, those teachers. We need those 5,000, how many we employ, we need to find the money and we need to grow. We cannot continue to carry deficits and we need to address it.

2760 So I applaud Deputy Camp and her seconder, Deputy de Sausmarez, on this occasion and look forward to others getting on board with this amendment.

2765 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Ozanne.

2770 **Deputy Ozanne:** Thank you, sir.

It is with a heavy heart that I am going to vote against this amendment. We achieved what much of this amendment is trying to do in the first amendment, which was to put the economy front and centre. This is not about me not being for the economy.

2775 But the detail of this section has already been explained, is probably better in the Economic Development's own set of policies and priorities, which I believe that we will be seeing. This does not sit well in a focused Government Work Plan, in my opinion. As Deputy Bury has pointed out, our job here in this Chamber is to balance the decisions we need to make rightly about putting the economy front and centre, but with its impact on the workforce, on the health of the workforce, on environment, and many other issues. So I would rather see that level of detail in the policy and priorities coming from ED, but I do not think it sits well at this point in this strategic document.

2780 I am also worried, if I can be honest, about how this could be used. We have got some really difficult decisions to make, obviously debates to have over GST, plus Corporate Tax reform, if I use that phrase, and that is all going to be about us trying to weigh up what is the fairest way, in my opinion, of us looking at the finances in our community. I can just see somebody rolling out this priority, 'But you, Chamber, you all agreed to this', and I am just not sure that is how the Government Work Plan should be being used.

2785 So, for all those reasons, the primary one being that we have already addressed much of this in the first amendment, this would be better placed in another document, at another time.

2790 Thank you.

The Bailiff: I am going to take the opportunity to remind Members that, when somebody is on their feet, they should not walk between the person who is speaking and me.

Deputy Matthews.

2795 **Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, sir.

Sir, I will support this amendment but I do share some of the concerns that have been expressed, that just asking for economic growth looks a little bit like putting the cart before the horse. Really, what the Government Work Plan should be doing is – because economic growth is the result of

2800 activity that takes place in the economy, which the States should be enabling. Not directly, as Deputy Niles points out; we cannot directly make growth or not much. But we should enable growth to take place by having policies which allow that to take place as efficiently as possible, rather than just ask for growth to happen.

So, to some extent, voting for something that just asks for some growth, well what policies are you asking for to do that? Looking through the amendment, in the list of requests for Committees to consider was something like labour participation. That is something that ought to be looked at in general by Committees and it is something that, in and of itself, of course you should be doing, but to what extent and how and why and what sort of participation are you talking about?

2805 Many Members went along to a presentation by Guernsey Finance at lunchtime. I asked a question there about the changes that we might expect to see in the future from something like the adoption of AI and other technologies in finance. Because we have had the IMF, for example. Quite recently the Chief Executive said they expect to see 40% of jobs affected by AI and it could be a job tsunami. It will especially affect entry level jobs and jobs for young people.

2810 So, if you took that as a hypothetical expectation of something that might happen, how would you respond to that? You could just say we will allow all the young people to leave the Island and replace them with people who can fulfil those jobs and we will then get economic growth, and then we have ticked the box to say we have got economic growth. But, in doing so, we have churned over and replaced an awful lot of our local population. That is not something that I would support.

2815 But I do not think that would stop me from voting for the amendment, because we should always want to see economic growth. It is just a case of how we achieve that and are there some undesirable impacts of some policies that you might adopt to achieve it. But, since those are not specified, there is not a reason to not vote for the amendment. It is just a reminder for Members and for Committee Members and for us as States' Members to say, when we are chasing economic growth, bear in mind that there can sometimes be consequences and we need to think about how we manage economic growth, not just wish for it in and of itself.

2820 Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: As no one else is rising, I will turn to the President to comment on Amendment 2 please.

2825 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Thank you, sir.

2830 Again, it has been an interesting debate. I agree with a range of views that were articulated but I would say, from the Committee's perspective, this amendment is more about emphasis and presentation than substance. People have talked about words when the whole Policy Letter is words, but it is a useful set of words to be able to articulate and communicate to the community that we serve where our priorities lie.

2835 So, when we were originally discussing as a Committee how we were going to present our super priorities, one of the suggestions had been whether we could present them pictorially and have them all sitting within an economic priority bubble or super sphere or whatever it was. But we had to resort to words, so conventional, but there you go. So it ended up as it did.

2840 But, from my perspective, and the reason that I am seconding it, is that it is a helpful clarification of emphasis really just to show that this is there. I do not agree that it is missing. As I mentioned in the opening when I opened in debate, there are a whole range of individual workstreams that relate directly to economic growth and vibrancy.

2845 Another interesting topic of conversation that has come up from Members, such as Deputy Vermeulen and Niles and Deputy Matthews, is talking about where economic growth comes from. It is absolutely fair to say that one of the roles that Government must play is to create an environment in which that growth can occur. But I am going to quibble slightly because there is also a direct role that Government can play and should play, and our Government Work Plan makes that case directly.

2850 Because Government investment, in particular in infrastructure; so all sorts of things, energy
infrastructure, wind development, water, housing – that is a biggie – sea development, whatever. In
fact, Government investment in infrastructure is really a role that only Government can realistically
play, obviously with support. There were various funding mechanisms, etc., but it is those big,
strategic, critical national infrastructure, it is the role of Government to determine what those
2855 investments are going to be. That has a direct impact on economic growth. So there is a direct role
that Government can play.

I would say that, even if we just look, not even at all the individual workstreams, even if we just
look at our super priorities, there are examples of exactly that. So we have got investment in Leale's
Yard, not those precise words, commencing development on the Leale's Yard site. We have got
2860 harbours, future harbour requirements, and we have also got early years and families, and a big
component of that is workforce participation. I would argue that those are direct levers that we can
and should be pulling.

So, we have tried to focus through the Government Work Plan on practical nuts and bolts and
be focused on delivering outputs. There is a lot of work in that appendix 1 that will lead to more
nuts and bolts. I listed some of them when I opened, things like the Economic Development Strategy
2865 update, the Finance Sector Review, these kinds of things will I am sure produce recommendations
that will lead to tangible actions. These are the tangible actions that we are proposing that we crack
on with straight away. Many of them will play a direct role in supporting economic growth.

Really this is about this amendment; I am supportive of it, and the Committee is supportive of it
2870 because it does just add that degree of emphasis. There is a degree of crossover obviously with the
debate we had on Amendment 1, and again Deputy Rochester talked about the practicalities, as did
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, and to an extent Deputy Bury.

I have brought probably multiple amendments to previous situations of the GWP on the kinds
of things that Deputy Rochester alluded to. So, taking into account those wider impacts as well and
2875 one on future generations. I remember one of my Committee colleagues describing that very fondly
as motherhood and apple pie as well. Fair comment, but it is still an important lens through which
to look at our policy considerations.

I give way to Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

2880 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** I thank Deputy de Sausmarez for doing that.

As Deputy de Sausmarez mentioned, some of those amendments were passed around
considering environment and the environment for future generations. Is that lens being used to
consider policies and community work or have we just easily forgotten what was resolved at some
point in time? I guess this goes back into what is binding the communities to be under exactly this
2885 lens for which this amendment is trying to advocate community work?

Deputy de Sausmarez: That is a helpful precursor to the point that I was just going to come on
to, and it is an essential point. If I was to critique my earlier work in terms of those amendments, it
was that it did not have a clear pathway to practical application. If we are going to be harsh, we
2890 could say that we have got a similar situation here. But one of the benefits of debate is that we now
recognise this, and there has been a considerable debate over this very point.

As per the previous amendment, it does give us a more direct pathway to be able to implement
it in reality. To answer Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, yes, we are not there yet, but we are developing
those tools to be able to give non-experts exactly that capability. That is the point I talked earlier
2895 about borrowing from other jurisdictions. There is a really helpful tool that has been developed by
another jurisdiction, which we are hopeful we can adapt for Guernsey, which will mean that, if you
are delivering a project, you do not need to be an expert in economic growth or environmental
impact or whatever it is.

In this case, it was about the environmental impact and it still means that it gives you that
2900 framework, it gives you that tool to be able to make some considerations. Is it going to be the
world's most sophisticated thing? Probably not. Is it a step in the right direction? I believe it is. So,

again, this is about words, this is about emphasis, but what the debate has drawn out is a shared intent – I think it is shared at least among many – to see those words become something that can be more practically applied to our work as a Government.

2905 It brings me on just to one thing; do not worry I am not going to speak for much longer. Deputy Goy talked about geopolitical risk. It is in the very first paragraph of the Policy Letter, the acknowledgement of geopolitical risk, and it is addressed numerous times through the Policy Letter, so it is obviously mentioned in the –

2910 **Deputy Goy:** Point of correction.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Goy.

2915 **Deputy Goy:** I read through 36 pages of the GWP and I cannot tell you how many copies I had to go through each one of them. Now, the words 'geopolitical risk' is mentioned but nothing further is said of that. That is a big difference, mentioning the words 'geopolitical risk' does not mean the GWP looked into the geopolitical risk, address them, and have mitigation steps.

Thank you.

2920 **The Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez.

2925 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** The 36 pages was not the full document, so maybe that is where Deputy Goy has missed it. There are various references to how we intend to address it. I can give him paragraph references. There is a very helpful tool where there is a search tool and you can find it a lot more easily, but I am sure he is acquainted with that. But it sits in appendix 1, the all-important appendix 1. It sits under the strong international position category within Island resilience. Within that Island resilience area, we do talk about the importance of being able to address those geopolitical risks.

2930 There are certain specific workstreams that pertain to that. The GWP, anyone who attended the presentation would be aware that this is not the totality of everything that Government will do, because of course there is still Committee work. A lot of P&R's work, we do have the mandate of course for our external relations. That is a big focus for us as well.

2935 So, I can assure Deputy Goy that this is highlighted specifically as an issue to address. It has got its own box; it has got its own workstreams. It does have reference within the GWP Policy Letter, and it is an important part of P&R's business as usual. I hope I can give him some reassurance on those points and I am sure it features in a range of other Committee workstreams as well.

2940 Just a quick word on the logistics. This is slightly unusually structured, I suppose, in some way with respect to this amendment. I wanted to just explain, we are being asked to agree a statement, and that is fine, but actually another part of this is to include some additional wording. It is this Assembly's job to amend policies as they see fit. It has long been a frustration of mine that actually after policies have been amended it is sometimes really difficult to find a consolidated version of that, one version of the truth that actually reflects what Members wanted to see in it.

2945 So one thing that P&R is committing to is to publish a revised version which does reflect any additional wording, etc., that has been inserted through amendments, and that will be published on gov.gg. So hopefully it will be easier to navigate in future and fewer people will be experiencing the frustration that I have often experienced historically.

2950 Yes, we do consider this to be a helpful amendment, notwithstanding the very legitimate comments that have been made which bring out various sides of the argument. Actually, I agree with many of those as well but my personal view is that they are not mutually exclusive, so I am very happy to support this amendment.

I will leave Deputy Camp, who I am sure is going to be far more articulate than me, to properly summarise.

2955 **The Bailiff:** Now I will turn to the proposer of Amendment 2, Deputy Camp, to reply to the debate, please.

Deputy Camp: Thank you, sir; and thank you for Deputy de Sausmarez who was setting me up for – I am not sure how articulate I am feeling right now. I will give it a go.

2960 I understand the problems and the concerns that various people have raised. I think the one around how do you measure this is exactly true; actually that is the problem. I think the problem is when I have watched this Government for a long time and still thought, 'Actually, I will go for that and try and get in it' and then here I am, so I have not been totally put off.

2965 The problem is I think there is a lot of talking about how you measure things and what happens where we constantly have that conversation if you never do anything at all. So that is why when I thought about why bring an amendment of this nature, that was really why. We think about this in everything we do. I think the reality from the outside world, which I was part of, is pretty useless but I still feel qualified to say this, is that, 'Where is it?' So that is why I wanted to bring this.

2970 I appreciate Deputy Kazantseva-Miller and Deputy Bury's points in terms of tangible outcomes. There is no way to measure successful outcomes; I understand that. I also understand the point about is the economy the be-all and end-all of anything? I am going to have to politely disagree and say, yes, I do believe it is because if you do not have money in the coffers and our economy fails, people leave, everything else breaks down and we will see deprivation.

2975 That is really what I am trying to avoid. I do not want deprivation. This is the Island of my family and hopefully my family to come for generations, along with many, many others which I think is why many of us do this. I cannot think of any other benefit, so realistically that is why it is about economic stewardship.

2980 A lot of people spoke about economic growth, and I would just like to clarify that we are talking about economic development, growth, resilience, recovery. Growth is hard but one thing we must try to do is be clear on what we are trying to at least maintain because, like you said, when people are asking for the big pot of taxpayers' money to spend on all of these things, if it is not there we simply cannot spend it. So while we might not grow the economy what I think we have to do is really stop turning a blind eye to the fact that our economy is shrinking, our major industry is stagnating. So it is really about how we remain resilient, and that should be part of every decision made in reality.

2985 I am not entirely sure it is my responsibility to respond to Deputy Goy's point. However, I think that geopolitical risk is something the Island is only too aware of. I would recommend a book called *Reinvention Island* to understand how actually Guernsey has weathered geopolitical risk forever and a day pretty much. So I think that is ingrained in our culture. What we do not talk about is economy.

2990 Deputy Ozanne spoke about why was this not in Amendment 1. Yes, I will address that because I wrote one amendment and following quite significant recommendations split it into two, so to an extent I understand. Then I also think I understand why it is with two amendments in the round. So, yes, perhaps together they do the same thing but I think what this one does is reinforce those behaviours that will help to meet Amendment 1.

2995 I do not think they have to be exclusive. I do not believe that Amendment 2 wording belongs with Economic Development, as I said in my opener, because I do not want to be one of five people who have the responsibility for this when, quite frankly, it is for all of us to consider it. I really think that is the way this relationship has to work: that is top-down. Send it top-down to the Committees, let us not try and do bottom-up with economic growth and stewardship. If I have mixed up another point, Deputy Ozanne can correct me later; I cannot read my own writing any more I am afraid.

3000 Hopefully I have addressed Deputy Matthews's points about economic growth, there are way more words used in this amendment. Economic growth is one thing; it is very hard to define, very hard to grope what we ought to be doing with economic stewardship and economy; is that an agency for power priority that I think we ought to be looking at?

3005 Thank you for Deputy de Sausmarez because again I think you did a lot of the heavy lifting for me in terms of risk response. So I think not as articulate as perhaps Deputy de Sausmarez hoped I might be but hopefully I got there.

Thank you very much.

3010 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 2 proposed by Deputy Camp, seconded by Deputy de Sausmarez which would, if successful, insert two additional Propositions. I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 2, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 35, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 3, Did not vote 0, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	None	Bury, Tina	None	Williams, Steve
Burford, Yvonne		Ozanne, Jayne		
Cameron, Andy		Sloan, 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				
Parkinson, Charles				
Rochester, Sally				
Rylatt, Tom				
Snowdon, Alexander				
St Pier, Gavin				
Strachan, Jennifer				
Van Katwyk, Lee				
Vermeulen, Simon				

3015 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Amendment 2 proposed by Deputy Camp and seconded by Deputy de Sausmarez there voted in favour 35 Members, no Member voted against, however 3 Members abstained and 1 Member did not participate in the vote. Therefore, I will declare Amendment 2 carried.

3020 [Amendment 8:](#)
To insert an additional proposition as follows:
“To direct the Policy & Resources Committee to build on the proposed Government Work Plan 2026–29 workstream entitled ‘Artificial Intelligence Strategy – Understanding Island Impact’ by

exploring and assessing options for the strategic co-ordination and governance of artificial intelligence across the Bailiwick, including consideration of a dedicated AI office or equivalent function, informed by models adopted in comparable jurisdictions such as the Isle of Man, and to bring forward recommendations to the States by no later than December 2026."

The Bailiff: The next amendment is Amendment 8. Deputy Rylatt, do you wish to move Amendment 8?

3025 **Deputy Rylatt:** I do, sir.

The Bailiff: Then please do so now.

Deputy Rylatt: Thank you, sir.

3030 This being Amendment numbered 8 I was fully expecting to have the graveyard shift and I suspect my speech may reflect that expectation. The question before this Assembly is not whether AI will affect Guernsey or what exactly we will do about it but whether we prepare for it in a joined-up strategic way.

3035 The main ambition of this amendment is to begin a serious conversation as to how the States can best respond to artificial intelligence and what a focal point for that response should look like. The initial reaction to this amendment has been a helpful proof of concept. Both Deputy Humphreys and I have been approached by business leaders and people working in innovation spaces locally, each offering different views on how the States should operate in a future shaped by AI.

3040 I have also spoken to two individuals who know as much about this technology as anyone else on the Island. One told me, 'Tom, we do not need an AI office, we need something else entirely different'. The other told me, 'An AI office is exactly what we need right now'. That, in essence, is the point of this amendment: to begin a structured conversation that allows the States to work through those perspectives and arrive at a conclusion that in this moment we are unable to reach.

3045 Before I get into any of the detail, I would like to make clear what this amendment does not do. This does not put a stop to any current work. Some have suggested that this work cannot wait for the exploratory process which P&R would be directed to undertake. I understand that concern and sympathise with it.

3050 In an ideal world this work would already be well advanced. However, this amendment does not stop or look to slow any existing work or new activity. Work under the Digital Framework I know will continue, and progress on digital priorities does not need to be curtailed should this exploratory work receive the support of the Assembly.

3055 An example of this is the Isle of Man who developed their own Activate AI initiative which assisted their Islanders with AI literacy and skills before they had established their own AI office. There is nothing in this amendment preventing practical steps being taken in the interim, for example, making grants available to businesses to assist with AI adoption or piloting AI within the public service.

3060 In short, we can still react to current developments while working on a long-term proactive joined-up approach. Further, I would just like to say this amendment does not commit the States to any new spending or establishing a new body. I do hope that provides reassurance to a Member of *The Guernsey Press* readership who left last week an online comment which read:

Only the States of Guernsey could establish an entirely new office for a technology that is supposed to eliminate jobs.

3065 *(Laughter)* AI will not arrive in Guernsey as a single event or in one single moment in time. It is here with us now and it will only go on to form an increasingly significant aspect of each of our lives. Crucially for the States, the effects and impacts will not be confined neatly to one Committee or remit. The opposite is almost certain to be the case.

For example, in 2024 personal Income Tax and Social Security contributions made up 74% of our taxpayers. As we all know, our public finances are hugely reliant on a strong working population. We therefore cannot afford quite literally to ignore how AI-driven automation may reshape the nature of employment, skills and earnings over time.

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Take our finance sector, as Deputy Goy referenced in the last amendment. We all know it constitutes 40% of our economy, employing roughly 6,000 Islanders and sustaining a wider ecosystem of supporting industries. Many of the roles within our specific finance sector are what economists would describe as 'cognitive repetitive', work that involves processing information, drafting, checking, summarising and pattern recognition. These roles are increasingly being augmented by AI and, in some cases, partially automated.

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Now this does not necessarily mean jobs are disappearing overnight but that the nature of those jobs will change. The skills required will change. The number of people required will change. Entry-level pathways may change. Putting this into the context of PwC's report from several years ago which estimated that 30% of jobs in Guernsey would be at risk of automation by 2035, I believe we have to begin the conversation as to how we organise ourselves for that transition now. It is why policy co-ordination and coherence in this respect are so important.

3080

These economic and social shifts will touch economic development and our competitiveness, education and our curriculum design, skills and retraining pathways, welfare provision and the sustainability of our tax laws. If each of those responses are delivered in isolation, our approach will be defined by fragmentation and contribute little to Island resilience which is what this workstream sits underneath.

3085

Fragmentation will inevitably precipitate a further erosion in Islanders' confidence where we can navigate technological change in a competent way. Where technological change directly affects livelihoods and opportunities, the question of public trust will become central. A public trust in this context does not depend on Government having all the answers at this very moment but it will depend on people knowing that the States are thinking about this seriously, coherently and transparently.

3090

At present there is no clear focal point within Government with ownership of AI policy. There is no explicit accountability or responsibility apportioned for setting AI standards, co-ordinating policy responses, assessing risks or explaining how AI should or should not be used across the States. That does not mean there is not already good work happening within the States; far from it. In pockets of the organisation there are ongoing conversations and work taking place.

3095

For example, I was particularly grateful to be invited by Deputy Kazantseva-Miller to sit on the Digital Steering Group, which has been a useful forum for updating digital work within the States and various other initiatives. However, without clear ownership, scope and accountability, AI as an area risks being addressed in a piecemeal fashion.

3100

If something goes wrong or we fail to manage this transition competently, Islanders will not ask what internal group discussed this issue, they will ask simply, 'Who was responsible?' This amendment in part is an effort to ensure that that question has a clear answer. I would also add as a sidebar that Deputy Matthews's earlier points on the potential impact of AI on entry-level jobs and young people's ability to stay and work in the Island is particularly prescient. I think part of this amendment is sending a clear signal to those young people that we are considering a future, their future, which will be defined by this technology which itself I think defines the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

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3110

Importantly this amendment does not add any new workstream. It takes the current workstream entitled 'AI Strategy – Understanding Island Impact', which falls under P&R's remit, and adds definition, direction and a timeline. It attaches priority to an issue we are already considerably behind with. Again, this does not ask the States to choose a particular strategy or operating model today but is asking us to put the foundations in place so that we can go on to pursue that work equipped with necessary organisation and understanding of the challenges that lie ahead of us.

3115

In short, the Assembly is being asked to decide whether it wants to choose deliberately how Government responds to AI, or whether we are content if that response emerges piecemeal, by

3120 accident or through circumstances forcing our hand. I do not think anyone believes this is a challenge that belongs to one Committee, one sector or even one term of Government. It is a shared responsibility that demands a shared and co-ordinated response and a commitment to future stewardship.

3125 This amendment is made for the moment we find ourselves in, knowing that AI will cut across every aspect of Government's activity and responsibility but not yet having a firm grasp of how we approach that task. This amendment, I hope, is a modest, proportionate and deliberately non-constrictive way of addressing this issue. I thank my colleague, Deputy Humphreys, for seconding it and I am also grateful for the positive engagement I have had with several Members of Policy & Resources in realising the amendment.

3130 I thank Members for listening and I look forward to what I think will be an interesting debate.

The Bailiff: Deputy Humphreys, do you formally second the amendment?

Deputy Humphreys: I do.

3135 **The Bailiff:** Thank you very much.
Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: I would hope that a 5.25 speech no one is ever going to remember or probably listen to. *(Laughter)*

3140 I think, with great respect, Deputy Rylatt is kidding himself if he thinks Government is going to act at speed with something that is moving at a very fast pace. I think he is also kidding himself if he thinks it is going to be free.

In his Explanatory Notes, and I know he refers to them in that document, it reads:

Responsibility for this workstream sits with Policy & Resources, as the Committee with responsibility for cross-Government policy co-ordination.

3145 Well, cross-Government policy co-ordination means people. I genuinely think the last people you want anywhere near this is anyone who works in Government. It is too slow, too ineffective, it will not be focused and I genuinely think this is the responsibility in the first instance with Economic Development.

3150 From memory – and it is not a very good one – I believe Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, one of her duties she assisted in at the end of my term was setting up an Innovation Board. That Innovation Board was hard-pressed by her and we managed to get some kind of input in regard to that. What was great about it, you had independents sitting outside of Government who could do things that we could never do, the various Committees, what with Moneyval, Brittany Ferries and the other nonsense that was going on at the time, you could never sit back and touch base to think.

3155 The beauty about keeping something outside of Government is that you have got people that can free think. I am happy to hear a response at some point tomorrow, if indeed Deputy Rylatt remembers; I do not blame him if he does not. Probably Deputy Humphreys as well. I would have thought that the expansion of the Innovation Board wrapping something to do with AI in the Digital Framework – because the clue is in the name, Digital Framework, it should be the same thing – there is something that Government simply cannot do and that is act quick with technology and I will give an example.

3160 We were talking about something called 'Channel Shift' over, we are talking 13 years ago. Channel Shift is something that Government was going to do. What that meant back in 2013 that we were going to migrate all of our analogue services onto the internet. That is 13 years ago. That has not happened, data servers have burned down, everyone has changed and most of the people who were going to do that are probably sitting in place in the administration.

So I genuinely believe – and I know it is coming from a very good place – my advice, and I simply will not support this, is there is not a problem that Government could not make significantly worse.

3170 This is an example of where Government should not be anywhere near.

My genuine preference – and I would like to hear from Deputy Humphreys and probably Deputy Kazantseva-Miller – is whether this sits within the current Digital Framework, the Skills Strategy, the Innovation Board or whatever it is this week, and it is something they could firm up and bring people together because politically this will not be free.

3175 This is effectively an office. Policy development means officers that need resources, nothing is free. Everything costs money. Anything that you do now will divert resources from elsewhere. Do not put this anywhere near Government, they are no good with it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Matthews.

3180

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

I think that this is a good amendment and I will support it. I think Deputy Inder may have jumped the gun a little bit in talking about how much money this might cost. Because the amendment actually talks about bringing recommendations to the States before December 2026 which might be – I will give way to Deputy Inder.

3185

Deputy Inder: Yes, I think I have not jumped the gun because I make reference to the Explanatory Note making reference to the cross-Government policy co-ordination. People getting into a different room doing something different costs money.

3190

Deputy Matthews: I thank Deputy Inder for that.

I think that amount of money is really something that should be largely internal and should be with politicians and existing resources. The expenditure on creating an office is something that I would expect to see brought to the States before December 2026, as described. I do share Deputy Inder's frustration in general about how AI and technology should really be something in terms of finding uses for, in terms of finding innovation, it is something that Government is never going to be very good at doing.

3195

That is something that should sit outside of Government, that is something that private sector takes on, very fast moving. I do not think that the States of Guernsey is the right place to be looking at how best to develop, regulate or use AI. Regulation is probably something Government should be looking at but I think we are probably a little bit small as a jurisdiction to be looking at that type of thing. What I think is useful about this amendment is that it makes use of an existing workstream which is artificial intelligence, understanding the Island impact. I think, as I mentioned in a previous amendment, there is likely to be some great impact from AI coming at us fairly soon.

3200

Now, for people who work in technology, this is something that is frustrating to an extent because technology has been around for decades and decades and AI has been around for years. Members may remember that IBM released Deep Blue, an AI computer that defeated Garry Kasparov and that is in 1997, so we are going back 30 years. What people genuinely mean now when we are talking about AI is the significant new developments in generative AI and large language models. That is where we have really seen an impact and that is where people have noticed that the pace of change is really picking up.

3205

When I mentioned in a previous amendment as well that notes from the IMF that 40% of jobs were likely to be impacted, and particularly entry-level jobs and young people, that is an impact I think we are likely to see actually at least starting during the lifetime of this Government Work Plan.

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I do share the frustration of Deputy Inder that these things take a very long time to develop. I think that the Channel Shift Programme that Deputy Inder was mentioning was the programme that led to the development of MyGov, which I think has not actually really developed anything very

3220 much other than that it is now even more frustrating to submit a tax return than it had been when they were paper forms.

I think that past failures does not mean that we should not try and understand the impacts that are likely to be affecting the Island over the course of the next – I think it will be quicker than we think – few years that are coming up to us. For that reason I think it is worth bringing forward the request, which is already there in the Government Work Plan, to look at AI and to get some idea about what should the States be doing to try and deal with the impacts that are likely to be coming out of it. For that reason, I support the amendment.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Members of the States, it has just gone half past five, so we will now adjourn until 3230 9.30 tomorrow morning.

The Assembly adjourned at 5.33 p.m.