



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

STATES OF DELIBERATION

OF THE

ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

HANSARD

Royal Court House, Guernsey, Thursday, 29th January 2026

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

Law Officers

H. Pullum (H.M. Comptroller)

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
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S. J. Falla	C. N. K. Parkinson
A. Gabriel	S. R. Rochester
J. A. B. Gollop	T. M. Rylatt
L. T. Goy	A. S. Sloan
S. T. Hansmann Rouxel	G. A. St Pier
M. A. J. Helyar	J. D. Strachan
R. M. Humphreys	L. C. Van Katwyk
N. R. Inder	S. P. J. Vermeulen
B. R. Kay-Mouat	

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 A. J. Niles (*relevé à 9h 42*) ; Deputy S. Williams (*absent de l'île*)

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States of Deliberation

The States met at 9.30 a.m.

[THE BAILIFF *in the Chair*]

PRAYERS

The States' Greffier

EVOCATION

Billet d'État II

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

4. Government Work Plan 2026-2029 – Debate continued

5 **The States' Greffier:** Article 4. Policy & Resources Committee, Government Work Plan 2026-2029, continuation of the debate.

The Bailiff: We are in the middle, Members of the States, of Amendment 8.
Deputy Strachan.

10 **Deputy Strachan:** Thank you, sir.

I agree that there are exciting use cases of AI in Government and compelling opportunities for Guernsey to embrace AI, to enhance in our existing businesses, and to attract new AI-forward businesses if you are to support the development.

15 But I also want to talk about AI, but also about economic development. There are opportunities for AI, ranging from improving processes, driving economic development, and reducing Government costs. For the Committee *for* Health & Social Care, on which I sit, yes, there are promising use cases, as noted in the amendment's explanatory note, including AI's use in diagnostics, care planning, and resource allocation. Indeed, it is for this reason I am concerned that Health does not form part of the States' Digital Strategy. Technology must be at the heart of any
20 efforts to deliver the super priority, reviewing the system and funding model for health and care.

Our priority at the Committee must be, and already is, leveraging technology, including AI, to strive for better health outcomes, or reduce costs, or ideally both. However, I am not sure what this amendment hopes to achieve by driving new strategic priority with no additional funding.

25 When I was the CEO of Startup Guernsey, I had the pleasure to serve on various digital framework committees in the Finance and Digital Oversight Group, etc., with other volunteer area experts. Officers spent considerable time arranging meetings, preparing papers, and various industry experts are what we needed to do. However, despite an extensive PwC report on how Guernsey could become a leading fintech centre, very little was progressed. There are many reports sitting in a

30 drawer somewhere. I would be grateful to the proposer to explain what mechanism you have to ensure any resulting initiatives actually get done.

Having said that, I do agree with the proposers that the wording within the Government Work Plan does not place AI front and centre. But I read that there was a golden thread throughout the document, recognising the opportunities and risks of all technologies; not explicitly AI.

35 Looking at internal Government, our Chief Digital and Information Officer already has the mandate to progress much of what we want to achieve within Government in this area. As you can imagine, this will rely on the quality of our data and the ability for IT systems to easily access it. Rather than creating a new, unfunded workstream for internal AI, would it be better to focus on the existing Video and Technology Team and to support them to develop our IT roadmap, which will no doubt include more detail on AI risks and opportunities as the team rolls it out?

40 Separately, working with the Digital Steering Group, in which I sit representing the Committee for Health & Social Care, alongside many other Committee representatives and their officers, we will be pulling together many workstreams together and to update the Bailiwick Digital Innovation Strategy. I am concerned about the undertaking of this project to gather resources away from this effort.

45 Finally, Government has successfully tackled into our Island's expertise with the new IT Advisory Board, which will bring in external digital expertise under Deputy Laine to lead, to help co-ordinate and guide our ambitions, and Innovate Guernsey, who will be supporting local innovation to drive economic progress across Guernsey.

50 I trust all of this work will assure Members that we are not ignoring the changes coming from AI, as asserted by Deputy Rylatt in his opening speech. So rather than an unfunded new strategy mandate as proposed in this amendment, I would much prefer to ensure our Government IT teams are properly staffed and funded, capable of developing and delivering an IT strategy, incorporating AI across all Committees. This includes using AI to improve efficiency and build the key software, and, in particular, using AI to reduce our health costs.

55 Furthermore, I would like to see Innovate Guernsey progress with its mandate and education have resources to ensure that we are delivering AI skills development across all ages. Whether we want to balance our books by spurring economic development or reducing our health costs, technology is part of the answer. You can probably tell I am very much pro-AI.

60 I am hopeful that the aspirations for the AI references in the Government Work Plan will be delivered by the combination of these existing groups, regardless of whether or not this amendment passes. I feel the Work Plan, as it currently stands, gives P&R the mandate to support this, and I look forward to seeing these investments specified for our specific digital needs. Without this, Guernsey risks being left even further behind.

65 The money seemingly wasted on the Agilisys investment was heartbreaking and was hugely damaging to our capital base. But the goals we had when we started our Agilisys journey are still the same now. That is to remake our Government to be more efficient, to make our services more efficient and responsive, and to support local businesses to grow using technology.

70 I am supportive of the aims of the amendment, but I worry that approving this amendment risks adding another layer of bureaucracy. However, rejecting it perhaps risks letting our forward-facing work on AI wait until the stabilisation work is done. As I mentioned, and as noted by Deputy Inder, I think it would have been more realistic to include a budget to ensure this work gets the focus it deserves across all Committees.

75 I appreciate this is an investigative amendment, but if we really want to ask, as Deputy Rylatt suggests, who is responsible for AI, that person will need funding. So yes to more resources, making sure our children understand the opportunities and risks of using AI. You can see how exciting it can be to open up career opportunities. Yes, to returning workers wishing to be on the front foot, to working with and in AI businesses, and yes, to Government being open to AI innovations.

80 But maybe I am presupposing the conclusion unfairly. Let us say this amendment is passed and the project proceeds. If we look ahead to the next steps, let us say this project returns to the Assembly and says, yes, AI is obviously what we need. However, if I turn to AI, I can easily find that

the Isle of Man spent £1 million in a year to set up their AI office. I can imagine many will be saying, 'There is no way we can afford that. We do not have the money'. But here is the thing, if you keep reading, they spent £1 million because they identified £2 million of productivity savings. That would be a mix of efficiencies and economic opportunities, and I am sure AI I can give you more details if you are curious.

Or perhaps Workstream will tell us we have all the right strategies in place, but they all need more funding to ensure we get the benefits. Price tag for that, probably not far off £1 million.

If I am allowed to take you on a brief diversion to the Fiscal Policy Framework we will be discussing next, there is a small section, 3.5, which says that using economic growth to erode our national debt is not a viable strategy for a small island. But on the graph below that comment, you will see a small island state. It had average growth much higher than Guernsey, and that is Jersey.

I do not have the specific data as to why Jersey has shown some growth. Perhaps AI could tell us. But I can say that when I was at Startup Guernsey, we invested £110,000 a year, mostly on our staff, versus Jersey Business, which received an estimated £2 million a year. Our shiny Digital Greenhouse received £500,000 a year, mostly on premises, versus £1.5 million invested in Digital Jersey.

So do not vote for this amendment if you are going to be shocked in six years' time when whatever workstream comes back has a price tag attached to it. It will, and it will be evidence-based. Whether we do so by an AI office or properly-funded initiatives we already have in place, this is one area we can invest to grow the economy. Economic growth is something you all have unanimously agreed by amendment is an important thing to consider in the Government Work Plan.

With regards to this amendment, on balance I think it might be helpful to have somebody responsible for this targeted work. But I would want the assurances that we do not pause the good work already being done and wait for the bureaucracy created by this amendment to catch up.

I believe this can be done in parallel. So I think I will be giving this amendment the benefit of the doubt, and for this reason will be supporting the formation of this workstream. But I, for one, will not be surprised when they come back with a steep price tag, one that I believe we need to invest in. What will be unforgivable is that we have had another report that we just put in the drawer because we do not feel it is worth the investment.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Niles, is it your wish to be relevé?

Deputy Niles: Yes it is, sir, thank you.

The Bailiff: Thank you.

So I will mark you is present.

Deputy Humphreys.

Deputy Humphreys: I broadly agree with Deputy Strachan in that I genuinely believe AI carries both extraordinary potential but additionally a very real risk for our Island if we do not approach it properly and carefully. This is no longer some abstract future issue, everyone is talking about it. EVA is addressing it with their members, the IMF have warned up to 40% of jobs could be lost, and new Morgan Stanley research has suggested that the UK economy is currently losing more jobs than it is creating due to AI.

I have seconded this amendment as I am adamant that we must not be caught napping. Importantly, this amendment does not ask Government to address all aspects of AI today, nor does it mandate the creation of a new body, new spending or a fixed operating model. What it does is direct P&R to explore options for the strategic co-ordination and governance of AI across the Bailiwick through the pre-existing Government Work Plan workstream entitled AI Strategy – Understanding Island Impact.

135 This does not require P&R to deliver on an AI strategy now, nor does it predetermine who should ultimately oversee the work. That outcome could be a working group, it could build on existing structures, or it could recommend that a third party is best placed to lead. This flexibility is not a weakness, it is the entire point of the amendment, and the starkly contrasting views of those that have reached out to Deputy Rylatt and myself have shown that this is the right approach in this moment.

140 Speaking as a member of Economic Development, this is not about stopping or interfering with the work of Innovate Guernsey or other functions. Let us not forget that there are economic opportunities – huge ones – linked to AI too, and we need to ensure that these are maximised. Indeed, one possible outcome of this work could be that Innovate Guernsey is identified as the right operating model to oversee the aspects of this agenda. This amendment simply gives P&R the space to examine those options properly in a time-limited way.

145 Further, by recognising that AI requires distinct consideration from digital, while still keeping those workstreams closely linked, we would be aligned with the approach increasingly taken by comparable governments and jurisdictions. This technology is already here. It has already changed how we all use the internet. It has changed how many, or dare I say most of us, write speeches and digest media packs. It is not creeping up on us, it is galloping towards us and we are already engaging with it, often educating it, and often without considering the long-term picture.

150 AI is not a bad thing, it is a good thing. But it has also got some bad aspects to it, or some risky aspects to it. Whether individual Members believe fears about job losses are well-founded or overstated is almost beyond the point. Our responsibility is not to govern solely on personal belief but to prepare for credible outcomes, including those we hope might not come to pass.

155 So in the words of Baden-Powell, we should be prepared, and for those reasons, sir, I ask my colleagues to support this amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Sir, thank you.

160 I feel I have adopted the role of Scrooge of the GWP in this debate, but hopefully bringing a balanced and holistic views based on experience also of the last political term.

165 I just also wanted to applaud the enthusiasm of many who have brought their amendments. It has only the new Members, which, listening to me, would probably say the old guard knows that, or have certain views about the value of the GWP, etc. But in any way, I think I wanted to applaud the quality of the amendments that have been brought, and really the high calibre of the debates that we have had so far. '

170 I was surprised, actually, to see that amendment, because the day before the amendment deadline lodging Deputy Rylatt was part of the Digital Steering Group discussions, which actually mentioned the project of the Isle of Man Office of AI, which, as Deputy Strachan said, is coming with a price tag of £1 million. I was surprised because I have been very closely involved and trying to drive many conversations on this subject. These conversations are taking place right now, and Deputy Strachan actually did a good job trying to outline just the number of those platforms through which these conversations are absolutely taking place.

175 The Digital Steering Group, which was last term expanded to be much more cross-Government, and this term expanded to be even further cross-Government, and to include industry representation through the Innovate Guernsey forum, has been this co-ordinated forum through which these conversations are currently taking place. This tangible action progressed today with no additional Government cost to the taxpayer in the state of Guernsey.

180 I just wanted to explain further this work of the Digital Steering Group where pretty much all communities, as I said, are represented, both politically and at officer level, but also in Guernsey. What is interesting is that this Digital Steering Forum is not just tasked with forwarding the work across the digital framework, which the working title is the 'Digital AI Innovation Framework'. It is actually then tapping into other multiple areas which are currently outlined in the Government Work

185 Plan, and they include cyber security, which is led by Home Affairs, data protection, the Digital Strategy, the Internal Digital Strategy of the States of Guernsey, and aspects of the AI Strategy and the Economic Development Strategy.

So we have got multiple strands that are currently listed as separate boxes under the Government Work Plan, currently being progressed and co-ordinated at that cross-Government, cross-industry level through this Digital Steering Group.

190 What is absolutely important is that there is this incredible interconnectedness within all of those areas, which you cannot split out between digital and AI. My real concern, when I first saw this amendment, was effectively cross-cutting and adding potentially additional levels of cost and bureaucracy to work that is already underway and delivering and due to deliver tangible results. But nevertheless, I came into this debate openly and wanted to listen to what Deputy Rylatt and others would say in open debate.

195 In the opening speech, Deputy Rylatt mentioned that he brought this amendment to start the conversation in a joint and structured manner. Again, this was a red flag to me because we have, as I said, forums like the Digital Steering Group. I appreciate that Deputy Rylatt has only had an opportunity to join twice, and it is early in the political term, but my point is that those conversations happen with words that create a forum which takes time, it takes commitment, internally to progress this forum exists.

200 So the second point Deputy Rylatt mentioned in his group was that while he found it interesting to be a part of the Digital Steering Group, he considered that effectively the AI theme was separate to the digital theme. This is what I really want to explore in much more detail, because I cannot see how you somehow can split digital away from AI, because it is actually one and the same. The foundations to progress an AI-driven economy are exactly the types of foundations which I have been trying to progress through the digital effort for the States of Guernsey.

205 Just to name a few critical pillars in progressing our digital capability, we have had digital physical connectivity, fibre, 5G, satellite connectivity. On top of that, it is all about data. Where do you store data? It is around data centre strategy, it is around data strategy, data trust, what you do with data. To do cyber security is absolutely crucial in terms of safe use of the internet's digital technologies, the actual digital transformation of services, and how do you adopt technology, change your business models within the public service, and certainly, absolutely key, that is what Deputy Strachan was referring to. So, this is just a few absolute key pillars of what you might call digital work, which are fundamental pillars to enable an AI-driven strategy. They are not different.

210 So my real concern, and I think that was stressed both in the speeches of Deputy Rylatt and Deputy Humphreys, is that somehow the two conversations need to be separate. I really think that is starting to duplicate the efforts, and does not see the fundamental interdependencies that we thought.

220 Just to share with you some of the programmes that are being advanced as we speak through this forum and through the specific community mandates. There is an AI catalyst programme in terms of accelerating AI training within the space that is going to be coming on board imminently. We are discussing partnerships with industry bodies to establish AI impacts of specific industries. We have been discussing the importance of looking at the harm side of things and potentially set up a forum on that subject that is very dear to Deputy Rochester.

225 Just to again indicate how this forum has been set up to bring all of those important voices and different angles to ensure that there is a joined-up conversation. Deputy Rochester is a guest at that forum and has brought already very valuable insights and feedback. The invites are open to other Deputies. I know Deputy Laine has indicated an interest, etc. The forum exists to have that joined-up conversation.

230 There is work between the CEO, States of Guernsey, the Chief Information Officer, and the Committee for Economic Development, as I said, to help catalyse the internal programmes today without any additional governance costs, which in the Isle of Man have come at the cost of the tax payer of £1 million. I think this goes back a bit. There is another amendment which is laid by Deputy Humphreys and Deputy Rylatt, which are supporting a programme of efficiencies trying to

deliver 1% real-time efficiencies. We have to be really realistic about laying amendments that are effectively very likely to bring us in the direction of creating a new office which comes at potentially a price tag of £1 million compared to other jurisdictions versus trying to support the work that is underway.

240 The PwC report that the Committee *for* Economic Development commissioned last term on the digital economy actually came up with a recommendation of setting up a digital community ministry. We considered that, and it was very clear that because digital and technology innovation, AI, is split across so many communities and industry, it was not possible to bring it into just one setting. It is also contrary to how our Government is working when we are not working in siloed ministerial systems.

245 In fact, in the UK, there is no more department for digital. This mandate has now moved to the Department of Science, Innovation, and Technology, and again, recognising that this is why the focus of Economic Development has been on innovation. Again, you cannot just pigeonhole digital or AI into some kind of silo. It is completely cross-Government and completely cross-industry.

250 As we have mentioned, also, this work to progress the setting up of this office of AI in the Isle of Man has come off the back of the work of the Digital Isle of Man Agency, which is the equivalent of the Digital Greenhouse and Innovate Board. It is exactly the types of work, again, that those Agencies and Innovate Board have also been progressing in the conversations they have been having across industry, and there will be programmes coming out from Innovate Guernsey this year and further to progress this work.

255 To some extent, finally, AI is one of the most democratising tools that is accessible to everyone. The concept of trying to centralise its control and governance through one central office is an anathema to how this technology works. What we should be doing is empowering the organisation across the board and giving those tools to the individuals to progress and develop while providing safety guidance.

260 I was actually quite concerned what the vision of Deputy Rylatt brought in terms of AI sitting somehow separately from the wider digital conversation and the duplication and the lack of understanding of the fundamental interconnectedness that exists.

265 The other element of the amendment is that it directs P&R to conduct this work. My question is: why should it be P&R? Because that is not specifically within P&R's mandate. I think I would really urge the Assembly overall to be careful to think that somehow anything that does not nip it into a Committee mandate somehow should fall under P&R, because what we are trying to propagate is a more and more centralised system where everything goes to the centre. We have spoken fundamentally how we have got to change – and this is how the Civil Service is increasing the structure, right? This is where all the central corporate services are increasing the structure.

270 By amendments like this, we are propagating the centralisation of workload through one political community and hierarchical Civil Service. Again, this creates bottlenecks in our system. So instead of centralising for the work, what we should be doing is enabling the work that is already underway. As I said, there are platforms in place today without any additional Government force to progress the work. So to me, actually, the key question, and I think this is what is central to the Government Work Plan, because it is supposed to be about the cross-community work, is what role will Committees like P&R play in facilitating and promoting this cross-community work? To me, that should not act as a proxy, we are going to be losing something. This is really a fundamental conversation that needs to take place in terms of the promotion of those complex cross-Government initiatives.

280 The point I am making is that I hopefully have made a strong case that there are some really good forums that exist that have taken time to develop. There is work that is being progressed now through the forums and through the specific Committee Mandates. What I would urge is that we need to get behind in a time when we are all extremely sensitive where we spend money, how much workload we will have. We have got to focus and deliver on what we have got and what is working. I am concerned about this creation of additional layers of governance that are being proposed.

290 My suggestion, this is absolutely a well-meaning amendment, and I absolutely support that we
need to do more on AI. I would say the most constructive approach for Deputy Rylatt and others is
to engage with the forums to which they have been specifically invited in the recognition of their
personal interest but also the importance of the Committees they are involved with, so the
Committee for Employment & Social Security has a stake in the ground in that forum because their
Mandate involves the possible impacts of AI automation, etc. To engage constructively through
these forums and to push our way behind them to make them a success.

295 I think that will send a strong message in terms of actually getting on with delivering for
Guernsey in that way. Either way, I think the work is progressing, but I have urged the Assembly to
rally behind in terms of what we have got and stronghold the confidence to progress the work we
have got.

300 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne.

Deputy Ozanne: Thank you, sir.

305 I am very grateful to Deputy Rylatt for bringing this important amendment. As we have all heard,
and I think most of us agree, AI is by far the greatest risk this Island faces and the greatest
opportunity. It is one that is already affecting all of us, as Deputy Humphreys has pointed out, but
it will particularly impact our younger generations who are engaging with this and dealing with this
in educational settings and in their workplaces. But having spoken to many younger members of
the Island, I know are extremely concerned and want to know that this is something that we are
prioritising. That fundamentally is what I believe Deputy Rylatt is trying to do here, is putting it front
and centre. There is a huge amount of work, as Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has pointed out to us,
310 and there are all sorts of forums, but it needs strategic co-ordination and it needs urgency, which
also this amendment brings. It says that we are going to hear back by the end of the year.

315 I am slightly bemused, if I could be honest, by what I have just heard about the need for us to
trust what is going on and not have a co-ordinating group. I remember a debate quite recently,
which created a certain Committee for our top priority of housing, because we felt we needed to
give it the urgency and priority that we all felt this Island was urging us to do, and therefore we
created a Housing Committee.

320 This, I think, was trying to create, or at least look at, the need for us to create an office. It does
not actually say that we should do. It also says that we need to learn from people who have already
done the work. Now we have heard about the Isle of Man, they have done a significant amount of
work which I think we could learn from. It does not mean to say we have to replicate everything, it
may not be the same price tag. If they have done that work, why can we not bring it on board? So
I applaud the desire to look further than our shores.

325 I think urgency for me is the critical factor here. This is changing so fast and I think by putting
this front and centre of our palm we will show to the Island that we are as concerned as many of
them are, and that our role as a Chamber, I believe, is to look at risks and to act when we feel we
are under threat. That, to me, is the greatest problem we have.

330 If this was a strategic defence threat, we would want to be putting an office together to look at
it. For me, this is exactly the same sort of urgency. It is a threat that impacts every element of our
life and therefore we need to be seen to be acting. Please support this amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

335 **Deputy Gollop:** I am probably closer in line to the positive spirit of Deputy Ozanne than the
more forensic speeches we have heard from Deputy Kazantseva-Miller and, to a degree,
Deputy Strachan, but of course they are very knowledgeable on this area and they have worked in
it, both politically and in commercial life. I very much respect the work that Deputy Strachan did
with the Startup Guernsey and the Angels and the work with Digital Greenhouse, as did
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, and I do hope that we can serve the best of the Digital Greenhouse in a

340 review and allow it to be a hub for new, mostly young, entrepreneurs and professionals, but at the same time create even more impetus for economic development and technological development. Perhaps it is in the wrong location in some ways, it is a hub, because that is a detail.

But actually, I am not a member of the Digital Strategy Team, I believe Deputy Leadbeater represents at Home Affairs, and I am not sure I contribute very much, because I glaze over with a lot of this and do not fully understand it. But nevertheless, it is an engine going around the track.
345 Of course, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller made some key points about over-centralisation of our political and decision-making system. I found that the Policy & Resources, political and perhaps staff, team were overworked in my time. Bearing in mind the work done on external affairs, property, pay negotiations, civic issues and so on, you just have not got necessarily the critical capacity.

I did see a tendency over recent years for P&R to creep into areas that were connected to the economy and economic development needs, I think, too. We do not have a strong voice, which indeed it does.
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Weirdly enough, in this amendment, Economic Development is not specifically named as one of the four Committees. I appreciate Deputy Rylatt and Deputy Humphreys included, but are not limited to, they mentioned Home Affairs and the need for further legislation and policing of some areas. They mentioned Health & Social Care. I do believe AI can help with diagnostics and care
355 planning. They say AI will one day be more accurate than many specialists in coming up with contributions, although when I use AI to look at Guernsey transport political issues, I often find it inaccurate.

Education, Sport & Culture and Employment & Social Security, I should flag up, and I believe tomorrow morning the Institute of Directors is facilitating a virtual breakfast. So sadly, I will have to eat a virtual sausage roll, without any real coffee. But it is a key event about skills. Skills did not quite join up in the last States, but obviously progress is being made with Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, and Deputy Montague I think will lead the discussion. AI has to be part of that conversation.
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I do recall in the last States some Members like the then Deputies Dudley-Owen and Haskins who were particularly keen on the conversation of this. Where I am coming from is broad support. I think Deputy Kazantseva-Miller's gloomy prediction that an AI office could cost £1 million a year is probably pretty accurate, because we do have a tendency to set up offices, statutory instruments, little boards and things, and that is the kind of cost in offshore community, and it always hits us harder than Jersey or the Isle of Man because you have got a smaller population, and in some respects a smaller economy.
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It is also true that in Jersey you are hearing big thinkers there, even chief executives say they have far too many quangos with expensive overheads, and that is a risk here. But as Deputy Helyar rebuked and reminded me yesterday, sometimes speeches and questions or statements [*Inaudible 10.08.02*]. Indeed, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller in the last term was successful, and I supported her, against establishment advice, really, if you like, leadership advice, in supporting the Housing Committee that we had high expectations of.
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Of course, what that did was – the work was going on anyway in various bodies, ESS, Environment & Infrastructure, but it was to focus political minds and their officers on an issue, so that they woke up and thought, 'We are doing housing today, we used to do culture and leisure' or whatever, or we had a committee who just did arts.
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I think the point of this is to get us politically and in other respects to think about AI. I do appreciate the digital group that is making strides in economic development. Innovate Guernsey, they have got a sell-out lunch next week. They do what they do best in the private sector.
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Deputy Inder made the point that Government should not be anywhere near this kind of thing really, because the private sector does it quicker and cheaper. That is right, but we do need skills for the present and the future, as Deputy Ozanne reminded us. I see AI as having really two separate places in our society. One of them clearly is Digital Guernsey, as Deputy Kazantseva-Miller said, and in the last term, Deputy Blin, a data-driven guarantee, a digital future.
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That surely will be part of our economic survival, let alone economic growth. Government, as we heard yesterday from Guernsey Finance, has a role, and I think Deputy Niles said as well, to facilitate,
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395 to encourage, not to do, but to provide maybe necessary research, frameworks, advertising, publicity, a kickstart. But I think there is another use for AI, which is far more significant than that, because like Deputy Inder, I think the private sector can get on with most of that very ably, if they are allowed to. That is AI in Government. Deputy Matthews was a bit cautious, a bit gloomy yesterday as he said, up to 40% of jobs could go to AI, and he is probably right. I was interested yesterday, I think it was Lord Stockwood in Westminster, who suggested we should look again at the Green policy, I think, of having a minimum income for people as a transition from their jobs going.

400 But although jobs will go, through AI, just as they have with digital and technological change, other jobs, such as caring, such as stacking shelves, such as arts, maybe hospitality, they will survive. We have a problem of not enough people for jobs in Guernsey. Surely we could cut down on States' expenditure in some areas of our office by using AI. This should save the money. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) This may save us millions and millions. Yes, it does mean transformation of the Civil Service. Yes, it does mean, ultimately, redundancies for some people down the line, but those people can
405 surely be redeployed in the areas where we know we need more people from safeguarding to care, to health, to other fields.

On the balance, I think having a target, a resolution at this stage, to put AI centre forward is the right way forward. I do not think this amendment demands we set up an expensive office, that is not its point, and I think we will hear more about that in his summing up. But it does prioritise,
410 I think, for the Chief Executive, the Senior Leadership Team and the whole States to consider this and work with the existing structures as well, informed by models in other jurisdictions, the strategic co-ordination and governance.

I wish to give this amendment the benefit of the doubt and say this is better than just having an amorphous debate on everything in the GWP and coming out of it with not much that we can say
415 is being pushed forward.

The Bailiff: Deputy Goy.

Deputy Goy: Thank you, sir.

420 Some of you may know this, but I will share it anyway. I studied mechatronics engineering in Singapore. For those of you who are unaware of that term, mechatronics is basically robotics. So I am a robotics engineer.

Back in the late 1990s, when I was working on robots, we participated in a number of competitions. One of it is the Singapore Robotic Games. You have robots of all categories. Robots
425 that jump, robots that climb, robots that race, robots that have AI pathfinding that can run through mazes, you compete which ones get through to the end of the maze as quick as possible.

People think that AI is just ChatGPT, you talk about digital, but AI is actually very broad. What a lot of people know today, and they call AI, is actually generative AI. ChatGPT, Gemini, DeepSeek, all that is generative AI. Now what is generative AI? Generative AI is basically AI that creates content.
430 It creates text, it can create images, it can create videos, it can create code, but it basically stays within one application? That has been widely used around the world, including Guernsey.

Next we are talking about agentic AI. What is agentic AI? Agentic AI is an AI that transcends an application. An example would be Manus. Manus is an agentic AI created by a Chinese company that is now bought by Facebook. Then, a few days ago, if you guys followed AI, you would know
435 that ClawdBot has been released. ClawdBot, basically, is an agentic AI. I will tell you a funny story. So someone used ClawdBot to give it a high-level instruction. It tells ClawdBot, 'I am going to go to sleep tonight, I will leave the computer with you, here is my password, here is my account, I would like you to give me a strategy to make £1,000 a day' or something like that. So he wakes up in the morning and ClawdBot has actually said, 'I have watched a how-to-get-rich-quick video. I am very convinced the mathematics all works out. So I signed you up, I bought the course for £4,000,
440 I signed you up for it and I have blocked out your calendar, three hours a day, and all of Saturday,

and you are going to do this. Then I have also put a deposit on a Porsche for you, because you need to look good doing it'. That is all ClawdBot, and that happened a few days ago. That is agentic AI.

445 That kind of AI transcends application. You could imagine what this AI can do. It can actually take over a lot of the work that is currently being done on a computer. So someone doing it on the computer that AI can take over it. You can tell the AI to – Revenue Service, for example, 'I want you to go through all of the outstanding tax returns. I want you to craft an email to apologise, work out what is the date that we can respond positively by, and I want you to send out these emails' and it will do all of that for you. That is coming. That is agentic AI.

450 There is another AI that we do not really talk about and that is AI robots. Last year, I went back home to visit my father for Chinese New Year. We went to a restaurant, and one of the waiters is a robot. It – I will not say 'he' because I do not know what is the gender – is very cute looking, it is very smiley, it brought us our rice, it brought us our tea, and then afterwards it brought us our bill.

455 Now, in China today, robots are as cheap as between US\$2,000 to US\$5,000. Chinese parents are buying these robots and these are AI-imbued robots. So imagine ChatGPT having arms and legs and moving around and walking about, but it is the Chinese model, so it is DeepSeek and K1 and Kimi from Moonshot.

So these AI robots are now roaming the streets of China, they are carrying children's school bags, they are playing tag with children.

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Deputy Inder: Point of order, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of order, Deputy Inder.

465 **Deputy Inder:** This is great stuff, but has this got absolutely anything to do with the amendment at all?

Deputy Goy: I am actually coming to it, if you have a bit of patience. I have a point.

470 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Goy, just wait, please.

What Deputy Goy is explaining is about artificial intelligence and therefore is directly relevant to the amendment. He has only got a limited amount of time to speak for and therefore I am not going to rule that the point of order is valid. It is relevant to this amendment and Deputy Goy has explained that he is just about to get on to the relevance of this amendment.

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Deputy Goy: Thank you, sir.

So what is the point of all this? Robots are getting really affordable in the East. It is just a matter of time they will come to Guernsey. We are not even talking about just generative AI or agentic AI, we are talking about robots that is imbued with AI. For all you know, you might go to a restaurant one day in Guernsey and you find one of the waiters being a robot. Then it could be a novelty thing at first, and the press would come and take a few photos, and then they got a second robot. Before you know it, another restaurant got another robot.

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I have jokingly said to some of the Members here before, if we were to have the privilege to live to an old age and be in an old folks home or care, it is very likely that the people, 'caring for us' could be robots.

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With this amendment, Deputy Rylatt's amendment is actually quite gentle. It does not demand for an AI office to be set up. It does not really, to be honest, demand anything. I would have gone a bit further with this amendment. It basically is saying that put focus on AI, and I think that is a very good thing to do because there are 75 countries in the world that already has a national AI strategy. China has it, the UAE has it, the US has it, EU has it, India has it, Singapore of course has it, it is National AI Strategy 2.0 already; so 1.0 has gone, 2.0 now.

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So we are behind. AI transcends beyond the screen and it touches everything, so I would highly recommend that we support this amendment because it starts the ball rolling. Like I said, this

495 amendment is very gentle, it does not really demand anything of financial substance. It is basically saying, 'Hey, there is a difference between understanding the impact, which is what the workstream of the GWP is, and governing'. We need to look at governing of AI as fast and as soon as possible. Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Camp.

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Deputy Camp: Thank you.

I find myself agreeing with Deputy Goy, although I was not quite sure where we were going at the start, but I think that is absolutely the point. I asked AI exactly what this amendment was seeking to do, because I was not entirely sure at first, and it says, and ChatGPT tells me in plain English, 'P&R, please think seriously about how Government should organise itself around AI, look at how others do it and come back to us with options by the end of 2026'.

I felt, you know what, that is not a bad idea. I found myself yesterday agreeing with Deputy Inder. I think where AI and commerciality come into contact, I do not want Government anywhere near that. In fact, a lot of feedback I am getting from the AI world in Guernsey, is that actually they would rather get ahead and do this without Government interference and delay. I think there is a need to look at that.

I also found myself listening to debates around cost. I did want to rise, really, to make this point. I really worry when we talk about a £1 million price tag, as if the cost of Government and the cost of using officers and the cost of using government buildings is somehow free. I think we have got to stop thinking this is a £1 million price tag that potentially Deputy Rylatt is asking for. It is not. We do not know what the cost is, we do not know what that cost differential is because we have this really bad habit of thinking that Government costs absolutely nothing, and we can tell from the fact that we are going to be asking tax payers for more money that that is in fact a complete fallacy.

I would like to support this because I think what it does do is it helps to concentrate minds on something that, like Deputy Goy has said, is coming, it is coming thick and fast, it is coming thicker and faster than I think even our current forums and strategies are considering. I think we really do need to just get on with it.

Thank you.

525 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Helyar.

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

Excellent speech from Deputy Camp. I use AI extensively. It is very much taking over in the world of drafting for lawyers, it is very useful, it speeds things up, it should make them cheaper but probably will not. (*Laughter*) There is a free prediction there, if you could bet on that I would put some money on it but you probably cannot.

I just think we need to put a wet towel around our heads here and look objectively at what the issue is. AI is going to happen, whatever we do and say in here today. It will help, no doubt. But the way to implement it in a large government structure is to change the culture, a culture that accepts change and allows it to adapt to new working practices. That would be my focus in terms of AI.

It would not be strategising it and trying to get ahead of it and spending money on it at all. I would very much echo the comments of Deputy Camp, which is that we should allow the private sector to carry on and develop it. When Government is finally willing to accept that change needs to happen, allow it to open its doors to those who know better. Because let us be honest with ourselves, our IT system is a burning platform.

We have got a lot of people running around with bits of string and cables, trying to keep it all running. It is a mess. It was a burning platform, almost really a burning platform, when I was on P&R, because it almost caught fire. Because we could not even look after the air-conditioning system properly to keep it cool. Rapidly reached 50 degrees in the server room at Frossard House, and none of it failsafe. At the same time, the generator, which is supposed to back up at Frossard

House, had not been started for years and did not work. None of the interruptible power supplies at Frossard House had had their firmware updated so they could not even – not Frossard House, apologies, Edward Wheadon House, had been updated. It was not even known whether if everything was shut down it would come back on again.

550 There was no power supply backup to Edward T. Wheadon House. A lot of this has been filled in, in the meantime. We do not have a structure which is capable of strategising AI at this time. We simply do not.

While I really do think it is the answer to many of our problems in the future, we simply do not have the capacity as a Government to do this work. There is nobody to do it. The people that are
555 doing the work are trying very hard just to keep everything up and running. I am sure that if Deputy Laine wants to speak on this subject, he will reiterate that, because that is what everybody who has looked into this or has worked in the Department know. It is all held together by bits of sticking plaster and sticking tape.

We just need to be really realistic about this. I think putting £1 million into this – it is a great
560 idea – would be a total waste of time and money. Nothing will come of it. For that reason, unfortunately, I cannot support this.

The Bailiff: Deputy Laine then, please.

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

Sorry for the wardrobe dilemma this morning, but I now have a tie on, thank you for that; for the tie that was kindly provided by the officers. They have got an emergency stash apparently, which is great if anyone forgets their tie.

I find myself agreeing to a large extent with Deputy Goy, Deputy Helyar, Deputy Camp, and
570 Deputy Kazantseva-Miller. Just responding to what Deputy Helyar was saying about the IT within the States; absolutely, the team is incredibly busy and under-resourced and we are still in a stabilisation programme.

However, the way I see this, if we are ever going to exploit AI, it is not the technical guys that we need to exploit it. It is here, it is the officers; we all need to use the tools. If you think of when
575 electricity was first invented, it relied on applications. We need senior leadership and the rank and file in the States to get familiar with AI, to use it, to imagine it, to create huge efficiencies.

My daughter works for a company who had a GRC platform for governance, risk and compliance. Pre-AI, they would take the Guernsey handbook, the Financial Services handbook, the Registry and everything, and it would take two years to put those rules and regs into a platform in a way that
580 would provide some automation.

When AI came along, that was condensed down to three months, and that was early AI. When my daughter joined the company, she got it down to doing it herself in three days. It is not perfect, there is a massive amount of work, but she has not got a computer science degree, she has got a young, acute mind and sets to solve problems, and that is the mentality that we are going to need
585 if we are going to exploit AI. Yes, there are technical applications. So, sure, we could write code, we could do plans, design things but it is actually the rank and file and management using all the tools. Last night I had to do some Customs paperwork for something that I am sending away, it is an electricity generator, but it is going to a country where the border agency said, 'Well it could be dual use here, what is its military application?' I looked at the forms and I was daunted. I am just
590 someone trying to help, I am not a lawyer. Actually, I filled those forms with AI in five minutes last night, so it is exportation.

My own personal view is that the Digital Greenhouse has not been a great success in terms of the amount that we invested in it and what we got out of it and what we otherwise would have. I do not know what the numbers are today but over the years that it has been running we have probably
595 put £4 million or £5 million in, I do not know, something like that. We have not had that much value out of the Digital Greenhouse. We have had that value in the economy, but I would argue the Digital Greenhouse did not play much of a role in that.

Now, ED are on this and that is Innovate Guernsey, the report on the future of the Digital Greenhouse. Who knows, the good work that it was already pointed out that is being done around AI, there may be a suggestion that a new-looking Digital Greenhouse will embrace both AI and let us get rid of the digital, let us make it a business hub, why can it not support Financial Services?

I definitely do not support the idea of this work leading to the setup of an office. I could imagine it sitting somewhere else, maybe it is with whatever the new Digital Greenhouse is, if there is a cost model. Guernsey is also setting up a cyber advisory body that is going to cost £1 million in its first year and was agreed by the last States; there is going to be some good technical resource in there.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller spoke about all the initiatives happening across Government and I get that. I think that one of the biggest challenges for P&R is we all know we have not got any money. We have got 6,000 employees across the estate, does P&R need to understand and figure out how to exploit AI as an employer? How are they going to make savings? How are they going to drive adoption?

So I think this exercise and P&R's involvement in it would be good. I will only support a model – if someone can make a case for an office, then great – but I want it to lead to a hybrid that does not cost a lot. There are other places that we can sit that expert in. There are roles, for instance, technical roles, that we need in Government that could be well-served by the cyber security, the service being set up. That is not going to happen probably for three years but there are pockets of expertise.

I have also said that if we think about what the former Deputy Kevin Stewart did for putting digital on the agenda, a massive supporter and sponsor of that, there is a place in Government or within politicians for a Deputy to champion AI and could achieve so much. So it can be within someone's work that they do.

Relating to the amendment that I passed yesterday and the relationships with the Senior Leadership Team and Chief Officers, when I spoke to a senior officer a little while ago, they spoke about vacancies that they have and that they are going to fill, almost a belief that they can employ themselves out of the challenge that they have, so we just hire a smart person. Actually, unless the philosophy and culture, we change the criteria for what we expect out of a senior leader, we might say, 'Well this position works for someone from the Civil Service reporting to this.'

Actually, maybe we should say, 'Well this position, an MBA is mandatory and 15 years in experience in XYZ.' The reason I am saying that is we should not be employing anyone that is not super-familiar with AI and exploiting it and has got a plan on how they are going to exploit it and get more productivity out of the Departments that they are running.

So I do support it, I want a different outcome, but P&R need to develop familiarity and this will help them in doing that and so do the officers. I would also add that I cannot be a fig leaf in terms of the advisory role with P&R. I make comments and give some advice; sometimes it is taken and sometimes it is not. As someone said, I have got the ear whenever I need it, so that is all right. The focus is on the stabilisation of the estate and where the estate is going to be; it is not on how the Government is going to adopt AI, etc.

That is on you guys at least for the moment. We are concentrating on that stabilisation and where we are going to and, of course, AI will touch that. Generally, I think we should be thinking not about technology and something that information technology simply do but it is about how the individuals, us as States' Members, how the Departments and Chief Officers and everyone else exploit it. Let the work that ED are doing on its promotion, exploitation and the new team's impact on the workforce and the economy, let them do that.

So I am going to give this amendment the benefit of the doubt for the reasons I outlined but I certainly would not support pouring huge amounts of money into a new office. I think we can accommodate it within the work that ED and others are doing and do it well.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Curgenvén.

650 **Deputy Curgenvén:** Thank you, sir.

I will be brief. I am still trying to process the image of Deputy Gollop eating a virtual sausage. (*Laughter*) and Deputy Goy racing robots through a maze. Sounds amazing. Deputy Helyar makes a very valid point about our limited resources. I think in this instance he is talking about tangible resources, things like hard drives, cable ties, zip ties and of course £1 million.

655 I do not think – unless I have interpreted this amendment incorrectly and Deputy Rylatt can correct me if I am wrong – it is not really asking for anything like this, it is really just about getting the conversation going and getting the ball rolling about AI. I do not think anyone in this room would necessarily disagree we are way behind the curve when it comes to AI and technology more generally, which is why I will be supporting this amendment. I encourage Members to do so too.

660 Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Alderney Representative Hill.

665 **Alderney Representative Hill:** I welcome this amendment. I think it is extremely important that we all acknowledge that AI is here and it is here in many more ways than you might think. I actually went through one company quite recently and they showed me a room that used to have 30 employees here; it has now got six.

670 I think when you go back to Deputy Goy's very well-observed – and thank you for your technical knowledge – that if you go to San Francisco, for instance, it is perfectly normal to get into a driverless taxi. So these things are there and they will come here. However, I think we also need to look at this from a slightly different angle. While I totally get what Deputy Rylatt is saying, I also pick up on what Deputy Gollop said, was that the job opportunities for the young at entry level will be shelf stacking. I find that not a very encouraging message for the younger people.

675 We were at a presentation yesterday from the Guernsey Finance and the question of AI was raised. It was sort of agreed that the people who are going to be most affected by AI are entry-level people but the higher levels will be able to exploit it and indeed use it to the best advantages. So my question to this Assembly is: what are we as the Bailiwick going to offer our younger generations who will probably be the victims of AI?

680 What are our plans to encourage industries here which would attract the young and are hopefully a lot more attractive for them than shelf stacking. So that is an aspect that we must look at because if we want to encourage the young to stay here, we have got to come up with some solutions and career opportunities for that level, otherwise we will not have a younger generation.

685 I would also like just to say that I want to defend the Guernsey Digital Greenhouse because I went to their graduation evening; I think it was about a month ago. I think apart from two people here there was no one else there and I was seriously impressed with the presentations made. There were about 15 of them and they were really interesting businesses.

690 So I am a little bit sad to hear that people think that it was a waste of money because in fact they were coming up with solutions that would answer the question I just asked you: what are we going to offer the young entry level more than shelf stacking or care? We need to have things like the Digital Greenhouse that come up with good ideas. Indeed, that should be part of this discussion. I could not support Deputy Rylatt's amendment, and I thank you for bringing it to the Assembly.

The Bailiff: Deputy Blin.

695 **Deputy Blin:** Thank you, sir.

I am very focused and interested in all the developments of AI and thanking Deputy Goy because he really took us on a bit of a journey with a bit of reality checking what is going on in China, etc. There is also talk of AGI and ASI. Now AGI and ASI, they are versions or developments as they transcend further and further.

700 For example, the furthest level would be the ASI. That is when there will be prompt engineering to say, 'This is a problem that has easily happened'. The answer is going to be, 'We are going to

build you the cure, we are going to build you the technology'. Now that was meant to be some 10, 11 years away, all of that is accelerating. I think this conversation has started to pick up a momentum to realise the seriousness and the drive.

705 I do not necessarily agree with the last Deputy speaking about the victims because actually part of this whole process is we are going to create the opportunities, so the shelf stacker at the start would be robots, that is the idea of everything else. If we had spent the amount of time we have been sitting in here debating AI so far and a group of us of interested parties had sat down and said, 'What is the solution to this? What could we do to improve this?' I can bet your bottom dollar
710 that we would actually have some really good results.

Last year I had the privilege of sitting on the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly Steering Committee for AI; it was the first one they did. It was very interesting because they broke into three categories. They broke into the first category which was private sector largescale, as in the large businesses, not the SMEs. There is no problem there, they are throwing hundreds of millions or more at developments within technology within the main ones.
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Then we have the SMEs and the small businesses and they are the ones who are actually quite nimble, quite agile if they are receptive enough and open enough to develop certain [*Inaudible 10:43:55*] and other opportunities to do that. That is the one where it gets left, they are not quite sure what to do. That could do with a little bit of Government support, a grant or, for example, training in prompt engineering.
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Now, I do not know if we all know what prompt engineering is but actually it is the clever way in the sense that we were talking about we need specialists. Well if everyone who is in this room, in this Assembly, studied prompt engineering and looked at models like Context, Role, Interview, Task (CRIT) you could put in information and develop really strong solutions for almost anything you want.
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Another example of this live to see how prompt engineering could help is I attended a meeting with Home Affairs, it was Population Management and Immigration with industry. It was also attended on behalf of the tourist leads; we had Deputy van Katwyk as well. There was an interesting conversation about population management for things there. What I observed during that meeting was when the administrator of Population Management put a slide up and one of the slides up said that there are 12,000 emails per annum and 12,000 phone calls per annum dealing with the issues of Population Management and Immigration, I was flabbergasted.
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They are a team. I hope our President for Home Affairs will not mind me sharing this, but they are doing a huge amount of work in there, a team of six which was meant to be eight; they are two people short. Now if you do the maths and work out the length of the calls and the emails though, you are talking 1.5-plus FTEs, as in full-term person, to deal with the volume of quantity taking between eight minutes and 12 minutes and mapping it out.
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In my mind – and I did share it at the time – with the opportunity you could build something which could deal with all those queries to lower that and take it forward that you have then the individuals focusing on their job. It is not losing a job, it is being more efficient with a job, with actually your use and the structure of using the AI to our advantage.
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So I would like to also raise what Deputy Laine was saying, it is a really important point. In fact, that is what brought me to my feet, I am realising the drive there is to say what we do. So, one of the comments Deputy Laine said was we would need to have specialists in there. Now the thing is, what is a specialist in AI? Because it is either an AI engineer who actually puts in the coding structure, it is a prompt engineer, it is a person focused on it.
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What I have assimilated is, I was having several conversations with Deputy Rylatt over this and there were phone calls and talks and conversations. I was saying, 'Look, this is fairly innocuous. I do not think it is going to make much difference'. When Deputy Rylatt told me the point that we could complete or we could actually get to finishing this report could not be the date he wanted, which was around July, it was to be December, I felt deflated. I thought if we are going to do something, we need to do it fast.
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755 The time I have been most impressed with Government has been during COVID, the speed we reacted, and this is the same sort of situation which needs the same sort of input and drive. It does not need the large funding and monies to make all these things happen, what it needs is a team working within each Committee, for example. So, for example, whether it be Economic Development or Home Affairs or Planning, every single aspect there – I will give way to Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

760 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** I thank Deputy Blin for giving way but it is exactly what currently occurs. There are all sorts of work for us exactly to do that, to understand how to apply AI today for specifically these cases that will make a difference today. So all the things that he is talking about in terms of enabling practical application of new spaces with AI is being undertaken today through this kind of cross-Committee work to meet targets.

765 **Deputy Blin:** I thank Deputy Kazantseva-Miller for her interjection.

Actually, I am aware of that. I had not reached the point of saying the other aspect of this is we have Digital Innovate Guernsey, we have the States of Guernsey Central is working on a centralised system. So, yes, that is all in play, which was one of the reasons why I was hesitating to support this amendment; we are adding another one to it at the pace that Government works, so that was my concern.

770 However, if what Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is saying is correct – I am sure it is correct – what I am concerned about is why is that not translating into our minutes of each of our meetings discussing what is happening right now? I know on any aspect I have been working on, including on the work with the wind farm, I have been talking with the officers about having what I call a 'corralled data' of all the data from all the consultants, all the areas there, so that we can basically interview it, question it, get information and move on from there.

775 So, I am hugely focused, I am seeing what the potential or the changes AI is bringing. I am just a little bit struggling to say do I support this particular element. I am leaning towards supporting it. For another reason as well is that I have noticed all the amendments we have been doing so far on the Government Work Plan, I have been very impressed with how Policy & Resources have been dealing with all of this. Because the amendments and working together is a collegiate way of trying to say, 'Let us get this through and make it work'.

780 I have been supporting the amendments so far, so it will be obviously a standout that on a subject I thoroughly believe in and have a lot of drive and passion and I want to see this go further, it would be wrong of me to then not support this. So on that basis I will be supporting this amendment.

I really do urge that we do not just let us continue in the usual way that Government works on AI because there are two camps: do it with Government and get on or just do not, stay out of the way, let the private sector, let the people do it, let them bring the solutions to us. Of the two options I think well at least this one is bringing something from the aspect of Government.

790 I would like to make a last comment. The other aspect was what Deputy Rylatt convinced me on, was that this is also to ensure that we are protecting it, a bit like Representative Hill has said, that we are trying to make sure that we look after all the people on the Island as we go through.

So, thank you, sir.

795 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Niles.

Deputy Niles: On balance I think I am going to support this amendment, but I am very conscious that we should not end up in a muddle where we have various strands of digital and AI exploration across Committees with independent boards that have been established to look at innovation where we have a States' Digital Strategy or we have a Guernsey Strategy.

800 However, somehow we need to ensure that we embed AI in everything that we do from this point onwards, if we have not done it already. We are an Island and an economy that is constrained by the sci-fi workforce. We compete for resources every day of the week across industry and across

805 Government. I will give you an example where we get confused about the benefits of AI. AI works best when – certainly generative AI works best when it has a defined universe of information that it can interrogate and provide the information relating to that.

Last term of Government I was on the project board for the new registry system that we embedded to look after all of our corporate structures that are quite complex. They have a lot of rules relating to them, the various structures. The vendor that installed the system asked us whether we wanted an AI component that would be able to answer all questions that anybody wanted about what form they needed to complete, how they needed to progress to get an outcome.

815 Our officers said that they were concerned about incorporating AI into the system because they would need extra resources to check all of the answers that it gave, and so it was not installed. So we now need to think about that, think about it more progressively, and be able to integrate it so that we do not have to check everything that it does, but we have to define universes in which it operates. So, on balance, I will vote for this.

The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater.

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Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

Yes, I find myself in a similar position to Deputy Niles because the concern I have, I think the same as Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, that all of these pieces of work were joined up. So if Deputy Rylatt could articulate that when he sums up, that would be appreciated.

825 Now I know that some people are concerned about AI, they are concerned about the loss of jobs, they are concerned about robots taking over the world. I am not concerned about that in Guernsey, I am concerned about Government having too much influence and making a mess of it. *(Laughter)* We have not got a good track record with IT so why are we going to have a good track record with AI? So it is just that one word of warning, we do not want to have far too much influence because business generally do these things far better than we ever can. So that is my word of warning.

830 A good example from Deputy Blin about the issues down at Population Management and Immigration. We have a brilliant team down there, a very small team, but the work they get through is absolutely incredible. Thousands and thousands of permits on an annual basis and they do that, a really small team, and dealing with 1,000 calls and 1,000 emails a month. So we could make that team far more efficient and streamline the work they do if we could have some AI to assist in the administration of those communications.

840 Rule 4 says there are no financial implications but I think there will be because it is an expansion of the AI workstream, as pointed out by P&R. So there will be some opportunity cost factored into there. I am not quite sure if that would go through Rule 4 or not; that is just a comment I am going to make. I am going to support this, just with my word of warning that I do not want Government to meddle in it too much and make a complete hash of it.

Thank you.

845 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen.

Deputy Vermeulen: Thank you, sir.

850 Sir, we have heard about the Isle of Man spending £1 million to look into the opportunities AI can assist with. If we look at other places around the world, I notice that Australia have recently banned mobile phones for school children. I notice that France is hoping to bring in legislation for this September term this year banning under-16s. Their President, Emmanuel Macron, has said that the French children's brains are not for sale to Chinese algorithms and American platforms.

855 So the way I see AI, sir, is that there is good AI and there is bad AI. Already we are trying to automate things in the Home Department such as the work permits, digitise it to make it quicker. That work is progressing all the time. I am also seeing that we are having to bring in laws to deal with some of the bad AI – and that is out there – that is in the news where there are platforms that

can do stuff which can basically undress people, children, men, women, put a photograph of their face, so we are having to legislate.

860 I suppose as Deputies we are all going to have to, whether it is considering banning telephones to our school children in the future and protecting them – they are still able to use it under parental supervision of course – you are going to have to have some sort of input into that as well yourselves. Certainly, we are strengthening our legislation, not just for AI, but for other things which are happening which really should not happen; they have happened here on the Island, they are happening in the UK and around the world. So, yes, we are having to deal with the bad AI.

865 Now, the good AI has been compared, in its infancy, to the iPhone, the first iPhone which came out. If you have a look at what the iPhone 1 – it was not called the '1' it was called the iPhone – but if you have a look at the features that it had then and compare it to the features that the iPhone now has, we would never have imagined all the things that our phones can do, so it is a little bit like AI.

870 There are opportunities within Government to streamline and make efficiencies. Also we have seen it ironically used in making a mistake in collating minutes and circulating minutes automatically to people. I have got to say that has happened too. I do scratch my head and wonder why we do have somebody religiously taking down the minutes longhand, at each meeting writes minutes, when it automates a better system. We would have to behave ourselves in our meetings. Our meetings might finish up quicker. We would have to be far more focused, which is probably a good thing. We could not go off wandering on tangents and grumbling; we would have to stick to the business in hand.

875 Now, it has definitely arrived, AI, and it is being used in the business world. As a research tool I am led to believe it is fantastic, but it does have to be fact-checked. Industry experts with years of experience will always have a place. Of course, as good as AI is, I am not sure that it is going to have that depth of experience that those years do and all the rest of it. So it is not gospel when it comes out, it is not always accurate, it does have to be fact-checked. But it is a useful tool that the Government could harness.

885 I do not think that we should be at leading edge, sir. I do not think Guernsey should be throwing millions of pounds at it and putting its way ahead of other Governments, but I think we can learn from other Governments how they are utilising it. I think the future of it in Government will be processing, dare I say it, tax forms, dare I say, immigration forms and that sort of thing, speeding up that process and perhaps making savings on some staff. There will always be other jobs which are needed on the Island but, yes, we must not really stand in the way of progress. We have to be aware of the pitfalls of bad AI.

890 The steer the last Assembly gave was that we were not to use AI in Government, but I believe I am going to support this amendment. Of course we should be aware of what other Governments are doing and whether we could use it to positive benefit. But I want you all to be aware of that bad AI that is out there and that we do have to change some rules as well.

895 Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: It is time to turn to the President, Deputy de Sausmarez, to comment on Amendment 8.

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

I think there was one particular question from Deputy Strachan, and I think she asked essentially what mechanisms do we have to make sure that resolutions are fulfilled, but I will give way to her if she wants to correct my interpretation of her question.

905 **Deputy Strachan:** Sorry, it was less that I wanted to make sure we have mechanisms that we could use that. We just wanted to make sure that the efforts that this amendment can actually enact is done and is carried out and we actually have the results of those, and that it did not just get stuck under a paperweight.

Thank you.

910

Deputy de Sausmarez: I thank Deputy Strachan for the clarification. I am sorry I did not catch it as accurately as that at the time it was posed, but I think it does dovetail into one of the points that I wanted to make about this amendment.

915

This amendment, as many Members have noted, or some have – and by the way I think it has been a genuinely very interesting debate – that this is not to add a workstream. It is essentially, to reframe it a little bit, to potentially expand it. But one of the most important aspects of it is it actually provides a date. That can be interpreted as impetus I think. It does provide or put an onus on us to make sure that we do bring recommendations forward within that time period.

920

To do that there were some discussions ahead of Deputy Rylatt lodging this debate. I think initially he had been keener to have a shorter timeline than that, but we talked through some of the practicalities and Deputy Rylatt was good enough to accept our advice that his initial timeframe would not have been achievable realistically. So this does not add in a workstream; it does redirect it a little or expand it, but one of the key aspects is that it does provide a date.

925

To Deputy Strachan's broader question, essentially it is a matter of political will and this Assembly holding people who have been tasked with certain jobs to account. But contrary to maybe some of the popular opinion out there, we can get things done when we put our minds to it, and I think a date to bring something back is a helpful stimulus in that respect. So hopefully I have headed off the one question that I think was directed to P&R specifically.

930

But in more general terms, I think there have been some very interesting points raised. I am going to try to keep mine fairly general. The Policy & Resources Committee certainly does not oppose this amendment in any way. I do not know exactly how each individual Member will vote. I will be voting in support of it, partly because I think it does provide additional impetus, but also really because of something that has not been drawn out in debate. There, and has rightly been, a lot of focus about how AI has the potential to affect the workings of Government, if you like.

935

On Deputy Vermeulen's point, the AI minutes, I am a bit of a bore on this issue. There is actually a pilot going on and it is something that is co-ordinated across all the Committees about AI minute-taking. It works better in some circumstance than others, and I think if it is going to be rolled out and broadly embraced it will mean that meetings will have to be chaired very well because that is one of the things. But far from his impression that there was some sort of diktat that AI should not be used; quite the opposite. I have been involved in an AI pilot, I know other Members in the States have as well and certainly across the organisation, and I love hearing the updates on how that is going.

945

I think all those Members who have talked about the various potential efficiencies and impacts are absolutely spot on. I also think those Members that have spoken about private sector and the fact that innovation and all the rest of it is better led by the private sector are also absolutely right. I have been lucky enough to be invited to a couple of discussions with local industry about how AI is already impacting business here and how they see that progression over the next few years. I would absolutely underscore the message that other people have imparted, which is this is moving at a pace that I think few people have quite got their heads around in the broader public, or certainly even maybe within the States.

950

Those that have talked about the impact on entry level employees and those who have raised – Alderney Representative Hill was one of them – the impacts on future generations, absolutely. But it is not just that shelf stacking will be their only option, it is actually changing the profile of what employers are looking at. Certainly from the conversations that I have had with local businesses it is more about the fact that those entry level jobs were often data input, data entry-type of roles. AI can do that better than a human being. So what is really interesting is that they are now looking for a different skillset in the young people. They realise they are still going to need the senior lawyers or the accountants or whatever in the future, so while they do not need the entry level roles to be doing the same thing they still do need to be having that pipeline for their future business resilience and the existence of that business in future.

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965 So they are still bringing young people in. This is what local industry is telling me; I appreciate it might be a little bit different globally. But what is particularly interesting – and I have heard this from a number of different organisations – is that they are now much more interested in those soft skills, the human interaction, things that AI cannot do. So it has changed. They are no longer just looking at the technical ability of the graduates or young people, school leavers; they are now looking at their ability to form human relationships because that – to date at least, and notwithstanding some of the examples that Deputy Goy shared with us – is the one thing that AI has not managed to do. So it is already having a material impact on the profile of our employment landscape, and that really brings me to the bigger point.

970 I think much of the discussion has been about the adoption of AI, the potential for efficiencies and potential for other kinds of impacts, and that is right, but to me one of the reasons that Government – Deputy Inder said there are some things Government just should not be involved in. I do not disagree with that but I think there is a flip side to that coin as well, and that is that there are some things that only Government can be involved in. If we take as a given that AI is going to have a profound impact on the employment of this Island and change that employment profile and all the rest of it, that is going to have knock-on effects to us in a number of different ways.

975 I just used the example of skills; it is going to affect how we educate our students and what we educate them with. But more profoundly, if it is going to have – I think Alderney Representative Hill gave an example of somewhere which used to have 30 employees that is now down to 6. If you have got a tax system which is based predominantly on Income Tax or whatever and we are looking for that income, and we need that income for all the reasons that we are aware of, if that kind of effect is replicated – and I am not saying it will be but if it is – that is going to have a profound and fundamental effect on our tax system and a knock-on commensurate effect on our benefit system and all the public services that we are able to provide as a Government. I cannot overstate the importance of us as a Government getting to grips with this and getting on the front foot.

980 Now, I might be wrong, and Deputy Rylatt can correct me if I am when he replies to the debate, but my reading of the amendment is that it is broad enough for us to consider all of those things. The wording specifically – I know the explanatory note gives a few example and some people have touched on some of those, but the workstream itself, and this is the workstream that is already in the GWP, I should add, is that it is Artificial Intelligence Strategy – Understanding Island Impact. The amendment broadens it out to the Bailiwick, I am pleased to see. My interpretation is this is not to come up with a plan, it is not to come up with a strategy, it is a plan for a plan. It is how we are going to do that; the kinds of things that we need to consider.

990 I think all the things that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has talked about, all the work she is doing – I was very happy to be taking part in the Digital Steering Group that she chaired last week. It was a very interesting discussion and there is some great work going on across the organisation. I would say that all of the relevant work that she has rightly highlighted would form an integral part of this, but I would also say – with respect to one of her concerns about the facilitating role that P&R can play – is that because it is about that broad impact on us as a Government I do think it is helpful to not see it primarily through an Economic Development lens. I know that there is so much work that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is doing – I will give way.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: A point of correction.

1005 **The Bailiff:** Point of correct, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

1010 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Sir, I think it is very important to stress that what we are doing does not sit through the lens of Economic Development only, and actually what we have been saying in this whole Government Work Plan debate is – the other side of the argument – we need to see everything we are doing through the Economic Development lens.

So I really would like to stress that I think we are going into dangerous territory when we are saying that only P&R can somehow take the big picture perspective and no other Committee can

1015 consider the joined-up approach. Again, I really would like to counter the suggestion that the Digital Steering Group is somehow only seeing everything through the lens of Economic Development. It is fundamentally actually the opposite. We have brought together a cross-Government group for the purposes of exactly seeing and being able to understand the whole holistic impact. This is why the Innovate Guernsey is also. So I really would like to counter that it is somehow an issue of Economic Development even though the whole GWP debate, actually everything should be through the plans of this.

1020

The Bailiff: All right, a point of correction under the Rules is to correct an inaccurate or misleading statement; it is not an opportunity for a second speech.

Deputy de Sausmarez to continue please.

1025 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Thanks.

Well, really the point I was making was that all of the relevant work in the Digital Steering Group is much broader. Deputy Kazantseva-Miller was talking about how it was impossible to distinguish from an AI economy, from a digital economy in laying those foundations, they are one and the same thing. I think all of that work is highly relevant, but what I am saying is I think that the strategy needs to have a broader lens. I totally accept, because I have seen it first-hand, the breadth of scope that is encompassed under the Digital Steering Group, but I think it is a helpful thing – I mean, it is an individual workstream in the Government Work Plan anyway but I think what this amendment does is give it that helpful additional impetus by giving it an accelerated – for want of a better word – timeline. It does provide a deadline and I think that is one of the key strengths of the amendment.

1030

I will be very happy to support it, and I would say I do not think it is about P&R doing the work; it is about that co-ordination. The policy co-ordination is something that is very clearly central to our mandate, and so it would really just be about facilitation. But certainly if the Assembly decides to support this amendment and then supports it as the substantive proposition, I believe that P&R would obviously undertake that work with the seriousness and speed with which the Assembly would like to see it done.

1040

I personally will support it. I do not have a clear view on every other Member of P&R but they certainly do not oppose it.

Thank you.

1045

The Bailiff: Now I will invite the proposer of Amendment 8, Deputy Rylatt, to reply to the debate please.

Deputy Rylatt: Thank you, sir.

1050 I am very grateful to Members for what I think has been a genuinely fascinating debate. I apologise to Deputy Camp and Deputy Laine for breaking their streak of seemingly universally beloved amendments. I think this is a debate which has been well overdue within the Assembly. When we began the debate last night I think Deputy Inder came out firmly against it but, as far as I could tell, he was opposing an amendment which I have not actually lodged. He talked about costs and obviously this is something that would use existing officer resources within P&R's remit. The recommendations that P&R would be directed to return with obviously could carry a price tag, but that will be for us to scrutinise and debate when they do come by the latest in December.

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1060 He has pointed out this should not be within Government, and I think that is exactly the kind of opinion that is likely to be considered by P&R as part of this exploratory work. I think Deputy Inder is exactly correct; there are certain aspects of AI and where it converges with commercial spheres where, to be honest, we need to get out of the way. I absolutely agree. The idea which Deputy Inder seemed to allude to that our only concern with AI relates to aspects of innovation I think portrays a common misunderstanding of the impacts of this technology.

1065 For example, I was watching a lecture a few days ago by Yuval Noah Harari who was speaking at Davos last week, and he said that one of the fundamental decisions that countries will eventually have to make in the future is whether AI agents will be considered legally as legal persons. That is the exact kind of decision that may seem way off but that is a decision that can only fundamentally sit within Government.

1070 Deputy Matthews, I was grateful for his support on the amendment. I would echo what he said; the past failures of MyGov, I do not think mean we should not try to understand the impacts, prepare for this and strategise when we consider the way, so I fully agree with him.

1075 I am grateful to Deputy Strachan for her support on this amendment. We have had several conversations leading up to this, so I fully acknowledge her concerns. She raised the question of what is the mechanism by which something actually happens and a report does not just gather dust on the shelf like has happened so many times before or, as Deputy de Sausmarez alluded to, the mechanism is that P&R has to return to this Assembly by December 2026 with recommendations, which will then be scrutinised by the Assembly.

1080 I think she also raised a very valid point in that, yes, the Isle of Man are planning to spend £1 million on their new AI office, but obviously they have identified £2 million worth of savings. I think that speaks to the wisdom of Deputy Laine and Deputy Helyar's amendment from yesterday when the exact same argument was made to justify that spending.

1085 Obviously I have tried to keep track of Deputy Kazantseva-Miller's points on this; many they were. She said she adopted the role of Scrooge for this GWP debate. I completely disagree, I think the contributions have been an extremely useful contrast that have forced me to think more about how this would work. She has made a very valuable contribution. She obviously talked about the Digital Steering Group and work that is currently ongoing. My issue with the Digital Steering Group; it is an extremely valuable forum for sharing updates, it is a valuable forum for creating a level of co-ordination within the digital sphere. My worry with the group is the way it is set up maybe does not reflect the impetus or focus on AI that I would perhaps like to see. That might be a difference of opinion between the two of us.

1090 For example, I think the fact that we have only met twice in almost seven months and that AI is not something within the terms of reference are things that raise concerns to me that this needs to be considered at a more overarching strategic level within Policy & Resources, whose remit obviously is policy co-ordination.

1095 Deputy Kazantseva-Miller also raised the fact that we cannot split digital from AI. I would stress that this amendment really is not about putting up a wall between Digital and AI. As Deputy Goy raised, almost every other jurisdiction who has considered this point has found cause to split the two out because the strategic and governance considerations for digital and AI are similar but not the same. That is something that Deputy Humphreys raised in her speech as well.

1100 I would also like to echo what Deputy de Sausmarez said as well, that this does not create a new workstream, this does not rearrange deck chairs; this is building on a workstream that is explicitly within P&R's remit already, the AI Strategy – Understanding Island Impacts. I would also acknowledge the point that has been made that we risk overcentralising things within Policy & Resources. I absolutely share that concern. Deputy Kazantseva-Miller raised some examples of that in conversations that we have had. However, I do not think the answer to that issue is withholding a workstream from P&R that should sit within their policy co-ordination remit. I think it is about having an honest conversation about what should and should not be within that remit, and is there scope for delegation. I think that would be the better way forward, in my view.

1110 I would also object to her point about creating an additional layer of bureaucracy. This is a pre-existing workstream and this is directing the use of existing resources. As Deputy de Sausmarez said, that current work that is going on with the Digital Steering Group and with Economic Development will be considered within this exploratory work. My hope is that this work, if it receives the support of the Assembly, will not work against current workstreams but very much with them in mind.

1115 Deputy Ozanne, I am very grateful for her support on the amendment. I echo essentially everything she said. I think the name of the game here is impetus, urgency and accountability, and I hope this amendment brings us to a place where we actually have a little bit more of that.

Deputy Gollop said he did not fully understand some of the technology that we are talking about, and I think he can join the 99% of us who do not fully understand it. But that is part of the point. As Deputy Laine raised, if this exercise brings P&R and its officers more familiar with this technology and its implications and impacts, that can only be a good thing. I think the fact that we have all had – I have certainly learnt a lot today just by virtue of the fact that we have had this conversation for a couple of hours in this Assembly this morning.

1120 Deputy Gollop raised the point that Economic Development was not mentioned in the Explanatory Note and I have to say, not mentioning Economic Development was an oversight and, as you say, it was including and not limited to, but I know that Economic Development will obviously have a fundamental role to play in this area.

I think Deputy Goy brought an incredibly useful and fresh perspective to this debate. I think it is very easy for us to let ourselves into the trap that the world begins and ends at our shore sometimes. Understanding how AI is progressing in other jurisdictions underscores the need to add urgency and real priority to the area. He talked about agentic AI. I have been told on pretty good authority that agentic AI is already changing the game in terms of software development, even locally, just unleashing productivity that they had not seen before.

1130 He also raised an interesting point about 75 countries that already have an AI strategy, and I would just emphasise again to the Assembly, if that number is correct – and I am sure it is – that is 75 countries that have found cause to separate out AI from digital in some way.

Deputy Camp I thought made a really good speech, and I would acknowledge all of the concerns that she has as well. I think her citing of AI's explanation of my amendment captured the amendment much better than I actually did. She obviously raised the point of cost. As I know Deputy Camp knows, I am not asking for an AI office. That may be the recommendation and that is what we will debate come December, but I am asking for the consideration of that or an equivalent operating model, which of course may build on or use existing structures.

1140 Deputy Helyar raised the point that we have to change the culture within the organisation to adapt to better working practices. I do not disagree with that, but again this amendment is not just about the internal use of AI within the States of Guernsey. It is much more about the broader ethical, labour market, all the other considerations that go beyond the bubble of the States of Guernsey. He also raised the point that he would not support pouring £1 million into it. I would just clarify again, that is not what the amendment is saying.

Deputy Laine, I was really grateful for his perspective on the amendment and he obviously outlined his concern that he does not support the work leading to a new office. I think that is a completely valid concern and his representations I am sure would be very welcome to P&R if they are directed to carry out this work via the amendment. I think his point about helping P&R gain familiarity with the technology is extremely important and one that I should have probably made in my opening speech yesterday. I think he is absolutely right to differentiate out the stabilisation of the estate and this work, which is exploratory and understanding how we approach this technology in the medium to long term. With his expertise he was able to explain that much more articulately than I would have been able to.

1150 I would like to thank Alderney Representative Hill and Deputy Curgenvin for their support on the amendment. I think Representative Hill made a very good point about young people may be disproportionately affected by this transition. I would also add to that – which I think Deputy Blin said – if we manage this right they can also be the beneficiaries of it. But it is about making sure our approach is joined up, strategic, and our workstreams are talking to each other, which is what this amendment is trying to achieve.

1160 Deputy Blin, I have enjoyed our conversations leading up to this debate. They really helped focus my thinking. I appreciate his concerns about the deadline but again I think ... this amendment is not exactly what I would have liked but again I think we are in a position of not letting perfect be the

1170 enemy of hopefully the good, which is where I am at with the deadline. I am directing what is achievable rather than what I would ideally like. I think he also raises a very good point about all the current ongoing workstreams. I am sure there is fantastic work being done but where is that translating into our Committee work and to the actions we are doing? I think with forums that have a little bit more accountability and visibility that would maybe come to the fore a little bit more.

1175 Deputy Leadbeater made the point about how does this all work together. I absolutely share those concerns. My point would be that separating out these workstreams, digital and AI, leads to the general approach, as Deputy Goy talked about. This cannot be beyond the wit of man to consider AI as a policy area, but we do have to ensure that the work can go on in parallel with each other. I think Deputy de Sausmarez raised that she is also very aware of making sure that the two streams do not work against each other. I would also say Digital Government is a category within the GWP so it is in our interest to ensure the work complements each other.

1180 Deputy Vermeulen I think raised a really interesting perspective. He has seen first-hand in Home Affairs the bad AI, as he called it, the impacts of AI coming to the fore. I hope that this work will – if it receives support – allow those perspectives to have greater prominence in our wider considerations.

1185 Finally, I would like to thank Deputy de Sausmarez for her support and contributions. I think her reading of the amendment is exactly correct in that it is broad enough for all of the suggestions that have been brought forward today to be considered. It is not prescriptive, precisely because we may have feelings, but I do not think any of us really know how this should be managed going forward. Again, this is the plan for the plan. I think she is absolutely right in saying this is a matter of political will and adding impetus.

1190 Her point about talking with industry and seeing that a different skillset is already being looked for I think is particularly important because that is the exact kind of information that should be used to better inform our skills offering, to better inform our curriculum design and education system, and that pipeline of information I think will be best enabled and applied by having an overarching strategic approach to this issue.

1195 So I cannot stress enough how grateful I am for Members' contributions to this debate and I welcome their hopeful support for it.

Thank you.

1200 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 8, proposed by Deputy Rylatt and seconded by Deputy Humphreys. I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 8 please.

There was a recorded vote.

1205 *Carried – Pour 33, Contre 4, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 1, Absent 1*

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Gabriel, Adrian	None	Bury, Tina	Williams, Steve
Burford, Yvonne	Helyar, Mark			
Cameron, Andy	Inder, Neil			
Camp, Haley	Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha			
Collins, Garry				
Curgenven, Rob				
de Sausmarez, Lindsay				
Dorrity, David				
Falla, Steve				
Gollop, John				
Goy, David				
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah				
Hill, Edward				
Humphreys, Rhona				
Kay-Mouat, Bruno				

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

1210 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Amendment 8, proposed by Deputy Rylatt, seconded by Deputy Humphreys, there voted in favour 33 Members, 4 Members voted against, no Member abstained, 2 Members not participating in the vote and, therefore, I will declare Amendment 8 carried. The next amendment to which we will turn is numbered 4. Deputy Goy, do you wish to move Amendment 4?

[Amendment 4.](#)

To insert an additional proposition as follows:

"6. To direct the Policy & Resources Committee to publish progress of the Government Work Plan in a manner that is publicly available and easily accessible (for example, via a dedicated and regularly updated web page) no later than 1st July 2026 and updated at least every six months thereafter, containing clear, concrete targets, leading indicators, milestones, and both qualitative and quantitative metrics against which progress can be tracked, audited, and measured; and further, to include these specific criteria in the mid-term and end-of-term Government Work Plan reports, ensuring any significant deviations from original priorities are fully explained."

1215 **Deputy Goy:** Yes, sir.

The Bailiff: Then please do so now.

Deputy Goy: Thank you, sir.

1220 My sincerest apologies, dear colleagues, for the coughing. I do not know what got over me. Please excuse me if I cough.

This amendment is for those of you who are crying out for something more meaty. You wish that the Government Work Plan has KPIs; this amendment is for you. The end of this amendment is simple, to turn the Government Work Plan from a list of good intentions into a clear and honest roadmap that the public and the Assembly can actually follow.

1225 To achieve that, the amendment asks for the KPIs for each priority in the Government Work Plan to be made publicly accessible and updated at least once every six months so the public can track their progress and measure their success. I think of each priority as a journey in a car. The KPIs I am talking about are (1) targets: the destination. Where are we going? (2) Leading indicators: the speedometer. Are we moving fast enough to get there? (3) Milestones: the signpost. Have we passed the key points along the way? (4) Metrics: the odometer. How far have we actually travelled?

1230 Take for example the priority to reduce hospital waiting times. What does that mean in practice? We might say the target is to open 50 extra hospital beds by 2029. A milestone could be the contract for the new building has been signed. A metric could be we have opened five of the 50 beds so far.

1235 A leading indicator might be we need 20 more nurses to open the next ward but only have five applied so far. Something like that.

I want to be clear, this is not about creating more work, it is about disclosing management data that already exists within Committees and presenting it in a format that the public can see and understand. Any priority in the Government Work Plan should already have these KPIs, or at the very least have a KPI template. We should all be very concerned if they do not.

1240 What this amendment asks is that Committees provide these KPIs to P&R every six months so that P&R can publish them in a public facing, easy to understand format. This could be a webpage on gov.gg or a pdf that the public can download, so there is no additional material cost. Having all the Government Work Plan priorities and KPIs in one place, updated every six months, will not only benefit the public but will also make it much easier for this Assembly to monitor the GWP's progress.

1245 That level of visibility will help us use our resources more wisely, provide timely oversight, and perform a course correction if projects stall or slip. More importantly, this will give the public confidence that when we make a promise we actually deliver on it. So I urge you to support this amendment.

1250 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Curgenvén, do you formally second Amendment 4?

Deputy Curgenvén: I do, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you.

1255 Deputy van Katwyk.

Deputy van Katwyk: Thank you, sir.

1260 I thank Deputy Goy for bringing this amendment because it does have some really good intentions, but I would like to question why he did not feel the need to consult with Policy & Resources on this. Policy & Resources have done a really good job of telling us all that their door is always open. Not only that but Deputy de Sausmarez is quite often shouting out that door, 'Come and see me'.

So although I commend Deputy Goy for the intention of this amendment I would just like to know why he did not feel the need to consult with P&R on a Government Work Plan amendment.

1265 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel: Thank you, sir.

1270 I want to speak against this amendment, not because I am opposed to transparency but because I am concerned that where we choose to place our most limited and valuable resource – officer time – and where this amendment genuinely helps us deliver what we have agreed matters most. The States are required under our Rules of Procedure to debate policy planning and the Government Work Plan on a regular basis. I was here when this approach was first introduced in
1275 2016 following the change of the Machinery of Government and the creation of the Policy & Resources Committee.

1280 That first experience is important. Policy & Resources was established in May 2016 and at the time the plan was called the Policy & Resources Plan. As Deputy de Sausmarez rightly pointed out yesterday in her opening speech, this is not the Committee's plan, it is very much the Assembly's plan. That first phase of the Policy & Resources plan did not appear until several months into the term. It then took more than a year from the creation of the Committee for the main consolidated plan to come before the States to debate. That was not through lack of effort or ambition but because cross-Government planning at that scale is complex, resource intensive, and demanding of officer capacity.

1285 That early period taught us something very valuable. The more time and structure we put around
planning and reporting, the more capacity we consume simply keeping the plan alive as a product.
There is a tipping point where the organisation starts optimising for reporting rather than delivery.
We saw a similar pattern again in 2020-25 with the Government Work Plan. Although the election
was in 2020, the Government Work Plan did not truly bed in until 2021 with a staged process
1290 culminating in a full debate mid-term.

From that point an annual cycle of monitoring, reporting and refreshing became established.
While that brought consistency and visibility it also absorbed significant officer time producing
updates, narratives, and assurance documents. A great deal of energy was going on proving that
work was being rather than doing the work itself. This amendment is well-intentioned. I understand
1295 the desire for clarity, milestones, metrics and public visibility, but in practice what it does is introduce
another formal reporting layer on top of a system that already contains multiple layers of scrutiny.

The Government Work Plan before us already proposes mid-term and end-of-term reports and
explicitly recognises that overly prescriptive reporting requirements can be restrictive and resource
intensive. It also asks us to move away from rigid reporting obligations in the Rules of Procedure
1300 precisely because of the lessons learned over the past two terms. SACC will be bringing a policy
letter to amend those rules.

What concerns me most is that by hardcoding six-monthly public updates with defined targets,
leading indicators and metrics, we risk freezing the plan in time. Government does not operate in a
stable environment. Circumstances change, economically, socially, legally, and geopolitically –
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Deputy Goy: Point of correction.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Goy.

1310 **Deputy Goy:** The amendment does not call for a six-monthly update; it says at the minimum
six-monthly. So if P&R wishes to update it even more frequently that is absolutely within the
amendment. I prefer the dashboard or whatever KPIs to be updated even more frequently but at
the minimum once every two years.

Thank you.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Hansmann Rouxel to continue.

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel: Thank you.

1320 That may be the intent but what will happen by passing this amendment is it starts to hardcode
bureaucracy into the system.

Government does not operate in a stable environment. A plan that is too rigid becomes harder
to adapt, not easy to hold to account, and when plans cannot flex reporting frameworks start to
drive behaviour in unhelpful ways, shaping activity to fit the template rather than responding to real
world need. That is crucial because that is a lesson that we have learnt from previous iterations of
1325 the Government Work Plan.

Deputy Goy: Point of correction.

The Bailiff: All right, Deputy Goy, if you want to raise a point of correction you stand up –

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Deputy Goy: Sorry.

The Bailiff: – you then say, ‘Point of correction’ you then wait to be called.
Deputy Goy, point of correction.

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Deputy Goy: Thank you, sir. Apologies.

1340 The amendment does not actually call for any policy changes, any fixing of policies, none whatsoever. It is just basically calling for KPIs or basically things that we can measure, so key performance indexes. Nothing to do with policy at all, nothing to do with freezing policies, nothing to do with rigidity of policies. It is just basically provide the KPIs so the public can actually track the progress of the Government Work Plan and their priorities.

Thank you.

1345 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Goy, you will of course have the opportunity to reply to the debate on this amendment and these are points that potentially you could save until your reply rather than points of correction and interrupting Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel to continue.

1350 **Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** Thank you.

1350 The point that I am trying to make – which is not in conflict to the points that Deputy Goy is feeling are points of correction – the intention that Deputy Goy with this amendment is not the effect that it will have because of how Government works. So pulling together data, validating it and explaining deviations and presenting it coherently is not cost free. That time comes from the same people we are relying to unblock housing delivery, progress health and care reform, design
1355 infrastructure solutions and responding to emergency pressures that no work plan can fully anticipate.

Transparency is not absent from our system. Accountability already exists through States' debates, budget processes, Committee reporting, legislative programmes, and the mid-term and end-term reports already processed. We can collectively and as each Committee do better to be
1360 more transparent in our working, publishing our own plans and indicators, not only for the public but for our Deputies. But the question before us is not whether we value transparency but whether this amendment adds meaningful oversight or simply additional process.

I would also gently observe that the proposers of this amendment have not until recently, one of them, served on a principal Committee. Once you have sat at that table and seen how much time
1365 goes into servicing report requirements, alongside trying to deliver complex programmes of work, the trade-offs become very real. Every additional reporting requirement feels reasonable in isolation. Collectively they are how organisations slide into death by bureaucracy. Well-intentioned, highly visible, and ultimately distracting from delivery.

1370 My plea to Members is this: if we genuinely want progress and the priorities we have agreed matter most, we must protect the space for delivery. I would much rather see officer time directed towards fulfilling the workstreams in this plan than towards servicing an additional reporting architecture which risks becoming performative rather than productive. For those reasons, sir, I cannot support the amendment.

1375 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Oswald.

Deputy Oswald: Thank you, sir, and Members.

In the commentary we received from the Policy & Resources Committee on the proposed amendment, and I quote:

1380 Whilst the Policy & Resources Committee will consolidate and publish the data, the resource burden would fall primarily on States' Committees. It will, therefore, be important to understand Committees' views during the debate.

I echo Deputy Hansmann Rouxel's thoughts on this, and the HSC Committee has a very large part of the Government Work Plan to try and achieve results during this term of office. The response from our officers on this requirement for six-monthly reporting on the basis of what is quoted in
1385 this amendment would divert considerable resources away from the prime aim of our Committee, which is to achieve results in the Government Work Plan. So I cannot support this amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Vermeulen.

1390 **Deputy Vermeulen:** Thank you, sir.

You will be aware I ran a business for many years and we did a business plan each year. We knew our figures. We knew how much money we had made, how much money we had to spend, we knew what we had to do. Typically the plan would be done around September time using the nine months actual figures with three months estimate.

1395 Sir, we ran our business very successfully and part of that was having the brilliant plan and we monitored it frequently. Every month. We knew exactly where we were.

Talking in general about what – it might be a bit out of date but the smart technology was our accountants some years ago said that when you are coming up with a business plan it should be smart. It should be specific. It should be measurable. It is quite funny because he forgot something that is quite central; it should be achievable. It should be relevant, and it should be time bound. That was probably 20 years ago. Those same principles still hold strong today.

1400 I hold the two Deputies that have brought this amendment in high regard actually. They have put their head above the parapet. One is a qualified accountant so he believes in transparency and figures. It is everything that is our missing from our Work Plan. We are going to be told, 'We will not probably know what the figures were for last year until September time. We will have the accounts to you by then'. How timely does that feel to you? It does not feel timely to me at all.

1405 We are making decisions Leale's Yard. We do not know how much money we have got to spare, but we have bought it. We do not know how much it is going to cost because it has not been costed, but we have still got it, and we are not letting anybody else develop it; the States are going to do it because we can build the houses. We are going to do that.

1410 I am being asked to vote on stuff which is not measured. It is not costed. We do not know how much we are going to generate, how much we have got. We are carrying a deficit but we are still doing all these things. I was really keen to see Leale's Yard develop quickly and provide houses for the Island because we desperately need new houses. We are not currently measuring these and I think that they have come up with a very good point. There are people that give Committees regular financial updates but what this would do would be framing it in more detail, it would be more transparent.

1415 There is lots of calls for more open Government, more transparency. I think that these things included in this amendment are sadly missing and I have no hesitation in supporting what you are trying to incorporate to improve what is missing in the Government Work Plan, particularly after what was said at a recent hearing that everything else is just wallpaper without these metrics. So I am going to support it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

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Deputy Gollop: We have had some good speeches. Deputy Hansmann Rouxel and Deputy Oswald put the case powerfully for how Committees with scant resources want to prioritise on what they consider understandably core delivery of services. But I am a bit of an old dog here, a bit of a character, and one of the people who we often meet on the parochial line, is the former Deputy and in those days Minister for Commerce and Employment, Deputy McNulty Bauer, who now serves St Martin's very ably.

1430 I remember the day, several Presiding Officers ago, and I think you, sir, were Her Majesty's Comptroller, Deputy McNulty Bauer made a strong argument for more measurements, more key performance indicators, more analysis, more of a data-driven Guernsey you could say, so we have real knowledge. I enjoyed and appreciated attending the Planning inquiry but there was some unusual session when even the well-understood strategic housing indicator got very confusing when you heard, for example, Health and Social Care, Deputy Strachan and others saying that perhaps we need additional accommodation for 800 key workers. That is the kind of thing.

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1440 Many people in the community, across the political spectrum, but especially I would say the
business organisations, they would agree I think with Deputy Vermeulen that we need more – not
just feeding them information, but more awareness of how Guernsey is doing and how the economy
is doing. Yes, I know we may have an amendment about cutting expenditure, which I will contribute
to in due course, but although we may have too many officers I sometimes think we do not have
1445 officers in the right places. We are deficient compared to other places for the quantity of statistics
that we get, and to a certain extent economics and analysis, so that we can make well-informed
decisions. Therefore, if this is updated regularly that would be great.

Maybe there are other ways of doing it. Perhaps we could outsource some of this material.
Perhaps we could use some of the graduates and post-graduates that Deputy Montague and the
Committees on the Island support. Maybe, just maybe – and Deputy Goy would probably know the
1450 answer to this more than I would – we could use artificial intelligence to update us. That would not
get into the problems that I understand Deputy Hansmann Rouxel and Deputy Oswald are
concerned about, losing valuable people who are more useful doing health services or children's
services or in other areas.

Therefore, I think to get concrete targets, indicators, milestones, quantitative measures – I am
1455 less sure about qualitative – and thematic analysis would be useful in tracking progress and
measurement. It would make us more informed. Deputy Hansmann Rouxel rightly reminded us of
the planning process. I was once on the Strategic Review Committee that I think Deputy Parkinson
chaired, a Strategic Policy Plan. I have been a little disappointed to see the policy planning debate
move from its summer cycle to winter, maybe it will be only twice a term with one update. One of
1460 the more depressing elements of being on Policy & Resources – and thank goodness Deputy Rylatt
succeeded today – was we would have a bonfire of all the resolutions Members had made, and
amendments that never got carried forward, that never got implemented. Some dating back 15 to
20 years.

We do not want to do that. We want continuous improvement, we want continuous
1465 measurement, and all of us and the people that support us outside the Chamber, non-States'
Members and others, would find it really useful if we had more accuracy that is updated regularly.
Increasingly the media has changed as well. They used to like to have politicians come in to a studio
and I would have a nice chat and that would be reassuring. They do not seem to want that so much
now. They are constantly asking for facts and what is going on, especially if they are from a Jersey
1470 studio, and I think, therefore, we need to be prepared. So I will give this amendment the chance
I think and see what comes of it.

The Bailiff: Deputy St Pier.

1475 **Deputy St Pier:** Thank you, sir.

I am grateful to Deputy van Katwyk for drawing attention to the fact that the Committee was
not consulted on this amendment. As Deputy de Sausmarez has said on a number of occasions, the
Committee's view is that this is the States' and therefore the Government's Work Plan, not Policy &
Resources. So we are very minded that the will of the States in response to amendments is the
1480 priority.

However, had we been consulted I think we would have taken the opportunity to express some
concerns about the impact on the Government Work Plan's delivery. I think
Deputy Hansmann Rouxel's very helpful historical analysis of the evolution of the Policy &
Resources Plan in 2016 up to its current date does inform the position that the Committee has. The
1485 other thing that we may have had an opportunity to do, had Deputy Goy consulted with us, is
actually to share with him the dashboards which do exist across the organisation, and the KPIs and
the data that is already collated and monitored on a regular basis. Now, the Committee themselves
are seeking to get to grips with that and to understand what is useful for us in the discharge of our
role, but I think the concern clearly is this amendment could create a whole industry of new
1490 information.

I think, as others have said, that in itself could become a significant drain on resources in the delivery of the plan. I think that the prior experience for Members who were in the last States from 2020 to 2025, where the experience of the annual updates of the plan became a self-licking lollipop, a collation of information to present to the States before the whole process began again. That, as
1495 our note to Members indicated, was the rationale for the Committee's conscious decision to recommend the removal of the annual debate of the plan in order to focus resources where we believe they need to be focused, which is actually in delivering the plan themselves.

Whilst Deputy Vermeulen has described his experience in his business, I think we have to recognise the limitations of the States. The States, frankly, is not mature enough as an organisation
1500 to make the leap to deliver the kind of information which is requested, I suggest, here. It is a perfectly rational and understandable request, which underpins – and it is a logical one from those of the moving this amendment. But I think understanding the very real complications in delivering it and the constraints that we put on the deliberation, and actually ultimately on the delivery of the plan, are some of the concerns which the Committee have.

I am also grateful to Deputy Oswald for drawing attention to the point made, which is ultimately
1505 this is a matter which Committees should concern themselves because it would be they, their officers and their resources, which will largely be responsible for collating and importing this into Policy & Resources to subsequently consolidate and publish.

Returning to the beginning of my speech, it is a matter for the States. If the States clearly wish it
1510 to be that way, then it will obviously be our responsibility to discharge the amendment. But we do wish to take the opportunity to draw the States' attention to the issues and concerns which we believe would arise in its practical implementation. I am also grateful to others who have already spoken expressing those concerns in their own way.

1515 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: Thank you very much.

Sir, I strongly support this amendment. In fact, I think it is the best amendment we have before
1520 us. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) When I first saw it, I did briefly wonder whether we were going to be treated to arguments against it on the grounds it was all simply too much like hard work. Sure enough, that is what we have been treated to.

But let us be clear about what this actually proposes. This is a very loose, very modest
1525 requirement to report against KPIs every six months. It is not onerous, it is not prescriptive, and it is not some vast new bureaucratic order. If anything, it is the bare minimum one would expect of a serious Government. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

The idea that parts of our administration would have a nervous breakdown at the prospect of
1530 some straightforward, periodic reporting really does beggar belief. I said yesterday in my Scrutiny speech that I believe one of our persistent problems is a cultural lack of transparency, a lack of performance measurement. In layman's terms, the good habit of saying what we are going to do and then knowing and saying we know whether we are actually doing it. I am pinching myself as to whether anyone has been listening or learning to hear about how our IT got in such a mess. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

KPIs are not a silver bullet but without them we are flying blind. It is worth reminding ourselves
1535 that this is not alien territory. I will actually claim institutional knowledge of a bit further back than has already been claimed today in this debate. Back in the days of 2010 and 2015, when we had a States' Strategic Plan, we reported against a reasonably large number of KPIs, 64 across three different policy areas. Whatever one thought of that plan, the principle that Government should be able to say what success looks like and then report against it was not controversial.

Sir, this amendment does not ask too much, maybe it asks a bit too little, but it is a step in the
1540 right direction towards clarity, accountability and credibility. For those reasons, I am very happy to support it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Ozanne.

1545 **Deputy Ozanne:** Thank you, sir.

I am afraid I cannot support this amendment, and I do say that with a heavy heart in many ways. Because as a former management consultant, I truly believe in KPIs, in having milestones and having reporting. Having worked in business like Deputy Vermeulen and others, I recognise the importance of being able to track progress. But one of our big differences to business is that businesses do not publish their KPIs and their indicators on a regular basis for everybody to scrutinise. They do not do that for many competitive reasons, some choose to perhaps –

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Deputy Vermeulen: Point of correction.

1555 **The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Vermeulen.

Deputy Vermeulen: Businesses do publish to their directors information such as this. So it is very important we bear that in mind.

1560 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne.

Deputy Ozanne: Thank you, Deputy Vermeulen, but they do not publish them publicly. They do to their shareholders, yes, but there is an element of confidentiality and that is the point that I want to move on to, if I may.

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We may need to agree to differ on that point, but the point I am trying to make is that transparency is a valuable, important and, frankly, critical value when we have issues of trust, but not everything should be transparent. There are moments and there are issues that are necessarily confidential, particularly when we are looking at the healthcare sector, particularly when we are looking at change. There are things which have a timely part of the communication process that we may need to hold back about communicating for very good reasons. Now that is an element of judgement. Those who are cynical will say that is because we are trying to hide the truth. That is about secrecy. But confidentiality is something that we have all had to buy into in our Committees, because we know it is important that we can do our business without – I think you can hear what I am trying to say – the problems of people jumping to conclusions or undermining what we are trying to do. We need to keep certain parts of our business confidential.

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My concern with this amendment, as well-intentioned as it is, is that it will come in the form of a website or whatever. I do not think that is what is being proposed, but in other ways that will mean that the public will be looking and judging what we are doing without all the facts. There will be many projects and workstreams that are going on that we cannot report on because they are confidential. It will therefore not lead to an accurate picture of all the work that our civil servants and our Committees are doing. That, to me, will be unhelpful and will undermine the very thing you are trying to do, which is to build trust.

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Now, I think, had you consulted – we have just heard from Deputy St Pier that there are metrics that will be communicated, that each Committee, each part of the Work Plan, will have, in good project management terms, their internal metrics. When they are appropriate to be communicated to the broader public, that will be done so, I assume, and perhaps we will hear from the Deputy de Sausmarez later, through Update Statements. But it will be at a time and in a manner that will help the process, not undermine it.

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For those reasons, and in particular the difference as I see it between our work as a Government versus that of a business, I do not think it would be wise to support this amendment.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

1595 I will support this amendment and for largely the reasons that Deputy Sloan very well expressed during his speech. It strikes me as quite amazing that we would have a list of items that we want to complete and not want to report on the progress that we are achieving towards that goal.

1600 Now, in terms of the effort that is required to report that progress, well, I think you would define that as you were defining the workstream that you were working on. You would, up front, think about, 'Well, this is what we want to do and how can we measure the progress to demonstrate that we have done it'. It might vary by workstream about how you actually would go about measuring progress. Workstreams are different metrics. But it would seem entirely reasonable to me to think about that and to think about how you can report that you are moving towards your goal.

1605 Deputy Vermeulen, I am sure, would be very familiar with those sorts of things from his time in business. When I was listening to – I do appreciate the arguments that have been made by Deputies Oswald, St Pier and Ozanne about the difficulty in reporting it and the administrative difficulty in how it can take an awful lot of work to actually report this progress. This is where I think at the outset of the project it should be thought about, 'Well, what is involved in reporting the progress, how are we going to do that and how do we need to improve our system so that we can efficiently report it?'

1610 If you were genuinely in a case where you said, 'Well, we are going to build a school or we are going to build a hospital but, I am sorry, we really cannot measure the number of bricks that we have actually laid so far', then you would have to be upfront about that at the beginning and say, 'You are just going to have to trust us that we are building it. We will tell you when it is done'.

1615 Listening to the comments from Deputy Hansmann Rouxel about the administrative difficulty in putting together the reports and collating all of the information – and I know that the systems are very manual – that, to me, is a prompt to actually improve the systems and improve the reporting so that they are much better than they are. Because what I think we are really describing, it sounded a bit to me like sort of Schrodinger's workstream. It is either alive or dead, you just do not really know, and if you observe it you might change the state of it.

1620 We have to have some visibility on what is happening. Actually, a Member mentioned that this amendment was brought by two Deputies who were not on Committees, and perhaps if they were on Committees they would have much better visibility of – I know Deputy Curgenvin now sits with me on the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture. I think the point that the Member was trying to make was that perhaps the Deputies did not realise the volume of reporting that comes into Committees.

1630 Having sat on three principal Committees of the States, I can say that there are an awful lot of occasions where even as a Committee member you are not entirely sure how well projects are progressing. I think that it would be a very useful thing, whenever projects are undertaken, to do the hard work up front to think about how we are going to report the progress on this, how can we report this up so that the public can see what we are doing? I do accept there are occasions when for certain projects it might not be easy to do. You might just have to say, 'Well, we cannot tell you until we are halfway through, I am very sorry but that cannot be done'. Whereas other projects, perhaps you can have much better granularity in how you report it.

1635 Really this is what we should be doing as a Government, and if we do not have the systems in order to implement it, then we need to be thinking about how we need to get to that point so that we can. Because, honestly, to have a situation where we are proposing spending many millions of pounds and we simply cannot report how far along we have got in doing it is not a good state of affairs.

1640 So I will support this amendment and I urge Members to do so as well.
Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Camp.

1645 **Deputy Camp:** Thank you.

I know I am saying a lot of what people have said before. Deputy Sloan stole a lot of what was in my head, so maybe that is a scrutiny issue that we are having that we are thinking alike, and that is very dangerous and worrying for me.

1650 However, I have sat here and I think the one word I want to say is, 'Wow'. I am not a Committee President, I am a humble member of a principal Committee, and a small principal Committee at that. So in the hierarchy of things, which I do not believe really exists, but others do, there we are. But that is who I am and where I am.

1655 Now, when things are done, I want management information. If I do not get management information, I am going to be pretty darned cross. In fact, that is what Deputy Goy spoke to in the beginning. This is about translating management information that we as Committee members utilise to understand whether we are doing the job we are paid to do by the public who put us in this office is actually translating into action. If we cannot turn that – and if we are saying that actually Government is saying, as Deputy St Pier said, that we are just not mature enough, that is where the wow moment came for me quite frankly just, 'Wow, wow, wow, I am not surprised that people are bringing this amendment, I am not surprised the public are worried about where their money is going' because the one thing this Government does need to be is mature with the money it is taking from taxpayers, mature with the way it is spending it and mature with the way it is demonstrating that there is some kind of value.

1660 Deputy Sloan stole my example. If you do not have measurements to work out how you do, that is how you lose £42 million. We are going to continue to do that if we continue to say, 'Actually, it is too hard, officers do not want it, we create an industry of reporting'. While we hear all the time, 'Turkeys do not vote for Christmas', that sounds like all of those excuses coming into this argument. I think we have got to cut the excuses and give transparency for us and for the people that we serve.

1670 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Curgenvén.

Deputy Curgenvén: Thank you, sir.

1675 Sir, I am losing some weight so I need to pull my trousers up. It is all the stress. Lord Kelvin famously said:

When you can measure what you are speaking about, and express it in numbers, you know something about it ...

1680 This amendment is not asking for much. It does not require new teams, new systems or more staff. We already have a Government Work Plan. We already have officers working on it and we already have officers regularly updating P&R on the progress of the Government Work Plan. This amendment simply asks that some of that information be structured clearly and be made public just twice a year. That is all.

1685 Numbers have an important story to tell, but they do not speak for themselves. They rely on us to give them a clear and convincing voice. A vision, a plan, a Government Work Plan on its own, is not enough. To truly succeed, Government must also agree on what success looks like. That means identifying key performance indicators, using the data that has already been produced and measuring progress in a consistent and transparent way.

1690 Key performance indicators, benchmarks, yardsticks, KPIs, however you prefer to describe them, matter because they give us an objective way to understand how we are making progress. They act as a dashboard, if you like, making sure we are heading in the right direction, ensuring we can make rapid, thought-out corrections along the way, ultimately ensuring we reach our final destination as planned, on time and safe.

1695 It is also about recognising the hard work of officers by clearly showing what is being delivered. It is about improving accountability within Government. This is about giving the public a clear and honest picture of what we said we would do, what we are doing and how well it is going. I would also like to respectfully reiterate what Deputy de Sausmarez said yesterday, which – and I apologise

in advance to her as I do not have her rate of recall – is that we need to know what goes on in *[Inaudible 12:18:54]* and why, and we need to ensure that people understand the processes that they are involved in and that they are held to account, which, of course, is the aim of this amendment.

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I also thank Deputy Inder, who has gone again, *(Laughter)* for pointing out that one of our roles is as a scrutineer, which, of course, simply means more is accomplished. I also believe this amendment supports Deputy Laine's and Deputy Helyar's efforts towards a fit, accountable and high-performing leadership within the public service. In response to statements around Government being open and accountable, and also in response to valid concerns around the cost and purported drain on resources, can anyone please tell me where the £18 million spent on MyGov has gone? Or the £24 million on a new system of revenue sales?

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We cannot answer these questions because we are only now investigating what went wrong. I wonder what would have happened if the Government had, just twice a year, made its progress public? Could we have saved the taxpayer tens and tens of millions?

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In response to Deputy St Pier's statement that the States of Guernsey is not mature enough to make already available data public, well, according to, ironically, AI, Guernsey is over 800 years old, making it one of the oldest continuous democratic institutions in the world. If we cannot get this right after 800 years, there is not much hope for us.

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We often speak in this Assembly about openness, transparency and accountability; well this amendment just gives us the opportunity to demonstrate these principles in practice, not just in words.

For those reasons, I encourage Members to please support this amendment.

Thank you, sir.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

I think we all recognise that there is a place for key performance indicators, certainly in business and in large or small or even medium businesses and they do track where everything is going. But Government is not necessarily a business and for some cannot be treated like a business because again some things are not necessarily measurable. But saying that and listening to the debate today, I understand that, yes, there is a place for measurement, and for transparency, and for reporting.

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To use Deputy Goy's metaphor of the car, which was quite well received by me, around where we are going, the direction, the signposts, etc., he neglected to rule one thing out or he did not mention, there we go *(Laughter)* – with my double negatives – the speed the engine was working at and how much fuel was being burnt to get to where we are going, to get to those milestones, because the reporting in the commentary by P&R, they were interested in the Committee's views, and because the resource burden would fall to Committees. In my view, there would be significant engine wear with the resource burden of creating these measurement criteria at this stage.

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So I think while well-intentioned, this amendment is not necessarily here at the right time, because it is all about culture change. Is this the right tool to force that culture change? I do not think it is. We do definitely need a culture change and I recognise P&R's views and the update statement that culture does need to change across the organisation. I am not saying that there are abject failures everywhere. We have had certain items pointed out to us, the MyGov failure is one of those.

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Definitely a culture change is needed, but I am not sure that this amendment is here doing the right job at the right time. For that reason I will not be supporting it.

Thank you.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater.

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

1750 Yes, the Rule 4 information, in Rule 4(1)(b) clearly there was no consultation, Rule 4(1)(d) as well said there no direct financial implication to the States carrying out proposal into effect. Again, opportunity costs, it is staff time pointed out by Deputy Gabriel, and that is if you go to the Letter of Comment from P&R, it says:

Whilst the Policy & Resources Committee would consolidate and publish the data, the resource burden would fall primarily on States' Committees. It would therefore be important to understand the Committee's views during debate.

1755 We do not have the resources, and we are snowed under with Rule 14s and FOIs, and we have got BAU. We have got a very small team in Home Affairs and we just would not be able to keep up. We are struggling as it is to try and keep up with the current workload and everything that is coming to us as a Committee, so for us to be expected to be able to find the time to be able to prepare this, I think is poor judgement.

1760 The Committee is already going to come to this Assembly twice a year and an update on their Committee work plans and what they are doing – and for my mind, the Committee work plans are far more important pieces of work and the ones we need to focus on more than the GWP. I think that was the thinking behind P&R's decision to be able to remove this. All the resources that go into this regular reporting, and you are getting updates anyway, and our Committee is certainly going to be proactive and updating people as we make progress and as we go along. I think every other Committee will probably be doing similar things, because that is the way to keep the public and the rest of the Assembly up to speed with what you are doing and to take them along with the process that you are going through.

1770 When it comes to reporting on the work that we will be doing this term, that is the correct way to do it, in my opinion. I do not think we need this. We are going to have to have a website, someone is going to have to update the website every six months. As I said, we have one policy officer who does this, that and the other, all the FOIs, all of the other bits and bobs, still working on the PCC review as well. All of these pieces of work, they just have not got the time to do it.

1775 I can understand Deputy Goy's thought process because, in his mind, he wants KPIs and this, that and the other, but it is not going to work in practice, unfortunately. I think that we are going to be getting regular reporting, people are going to be updated, people are going to be taken along with the process, and we do not need this extra bit of work to get involved in and add more resources that we do not have. We have scarce resources in Committees going around finding all this information that very few people are going to read anyway.

1780 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Rochester.

1785 **Deputy Rochester:** I am grateful for this amendment. It is a worthwhile debate and it raises an excellent point about transparency, measurement and accountability. But, I think there is theory to balance against reality. I am reflecting in the comments that are made about a desire to report data and metrics and I think that is, in my experience as a business person, easy to do with operational delivery.

1790 We talk about systems and data, we talk about operational delivery, of course that is possible and achievable. Anybody that sits on a Committee with me, and any civil servant that has worked with me in that context, will be bitterly aware of my focus on setting measurable targets for operational delivery. But a lot of what sits in the Government Work Plan is not about operational delivery. This is where I think consultation could have created amendments that would have met our collective objectives.

1795 I give you, by way of example, the transformation of healthcare. This is a personal view, not one shared by the Committee, I hope. But I find that piece of work overwhelmingly large. We are going from a place which we know we are at to a place that we do not yet define. We are going to have to explore a number of different avenues. We are going to have to imagine a future which will have

1800 elements that are not necessarily being delivered in our healthcare currently. That is a huge, visionary and necessary piece of work that I cannot begin to tell you how we will measure, but it must be done and we will do it.

1805 So, if this amendment says that there are requirements for qualitative commentary in relation to that piece of work, I would be voting for it right now but it says qualitative and quantitative and clear concrete targets in the amendment that is laid. For that reason, because I know I cannot deliver that, I am afraid I cannot support it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Blin.

Deputy Blin: Thank you, sir.

1810 I would like to thank both Deputies for bringing this amendment forward, and I think they do it for the right reasons. Transparency, accountability and public confidence particularly in delivery are essential, so I very much support that. However, my modus operandi and listening to a couple of other Deputies is that we have to take everything into account. Right now, everyone wants to do the transparency. I also took into account the document provided by Policy & Resources that are common for each one, and I read through the commentary for why they thought they would not be supporting it.

1815 This is where the dilemma comes in, and I have reflected pretty carefully on the concerns raised by P&R about the reporting burden and the delivery capacity. These concerns are legitimate and we need the level of reporting. But then, of course, the commentary from a few other Deputies, started by Deputy Sloan, refer to the excess of the £42 million loss. That is the cost of insufficient visibility, without adequate scrutiny, without early warning and without accountability until after the fact.

1825 I was still interested that Policy & Resources stood up and expressed that this has happened literally under our noses. I am leading towards the direction of that, I see this amendment not as unnecessary bureaucracy, but actually as an early warning system, a mechanism. I know we discussed it would be six months or longer, etc., and that would have to be clarified with clear milestones and indicators. Like Deputy Rochester, I have the same issue with the actual wording.

1830 In the Explanatory Notes, it explains the leading indicators, the speedometer, the milestones of signposts, the metrics, the odometer, and then when we look at the actual wording of it, it is – well, I say it is specific, it just says a lot of consultant or KPI-type terms, containing clear, concrete targets, leading indicators, milestones, both qualitative and quantitative metrics against which progress can be tracked, audited, measured. I truly suspect, like many of the other amendments, if this had gone to P&R, it would have probably been joined up, I think, through the metrics structure down a little bit, save it for the qualitative, the reporting, because what I can 100% state with this is that given –

1835 actually I think with both Deputies in mind, given their drive towards transparency, which they have stated from the beginning, sometimes it is complex, as I think we have mentioned in corporations and companies, there is a difficulty with that.

I suppose the way I am feeling is that we need to restore public confidence in some of the things that we have seen under our shift or term. I would hope that this would be the beginning of a continual approach, not just within the Government Work Plan, but about more visibility and accountability so that we oversee that in major programmes. I am very much leaning to supporting this, for the reason that even though I know there are some proper complications, and I would really like to hear in the summing up, if this were to succeed, how would this burden have to be implemented? Because the way it has been written is so strong and I can see, therefore, the concerns

1840 of trying to deliver this. I am not going to just say that it is – I accept that it is – a big burden on the officers, etc. But enough is enough. After what we have seen recently with the IT and the cost overspend there, we cannot just sit back.

1845 If we are saying the Government work is actually the super priority for the States of Guernsey, surely, for that reason alone, there has to be proper reporting as this goes along. I do not care if it is six months or nine months or whatever, but it has to be shared. Enough is enough. Already I am

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a little bit concerned one of our super priorities is Leale's Yard, to clear the site; it does not strike me as the super priority. At least this way give us all a chance and try to have all that information out there for us.

1855 I am literally on the verge of supporting this, I would really like to hear what is said. I am very aware and I do listen very carefully to the words of Deputy Leadbeater, P&R and Deputy Ozanne who have been making the right comments, but I am now really torn in the position because I know when we go forward we have to make real change. This is one of the strongest ones. I believe it was mentioned earlier, that this is quite a strong one.

Thank you, very much.

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The Bailiff: The States will now stand adjourned until 2.30.

*The Assembly adjourned at 12.34 p.m.
and resumed its sitting at 2.30 p.m.*

**Government Work Plan 2026-2029 –
Debate continued**

The Bailiff: Deputy Helyar.

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Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

1870 Hopefully avoiding any after-lunch difficulties with postprandial nourishment and processing. I am in a bit of a Dr Dolittle position on this one, I am afraid, a push-me-pull-you, because I spent the last 18 months of the last term on the back bench and it is quite a long way away from where stuff is happening. It is quite a nice place to be if you play golf, (*Laughter*) which I do, and it improved remarkably during that period. But, really, it is very difficult to see what is going on with any clarity.

1875 On the one hand, like those on P&R I know are extremely busy and faced week in, week out with disasters they were not told about, which have suddenly occurred and need funding, it is extremely difficult to see and it is extremely difficult to find the time, and for officers to find the time, to be able to communicate what is really going on adequately to everybody else. It is a consistent thing for those that are new to the States, and this frustration that you have probably already will only grow, I can promise, as the term goes on, because more things will be happening that you do not know about.

1880 So I can completely understand the need for reporting on this, but at the same time, sitting on top as I do, it is very difficult to run through all of the things that we look after at STSB, but to report on all of those in the manner which this amendment seeks to do would be very difficult.

1885 Now, on the other hand, *en revanche*, this is why I am in a bit of a push-me-pull-me position. I can direct Members – and this is not audience participation, which I know you have told me off for, so I am not going to ask for audience participation. But there is a website you can go to if you have got any machines open, called data.gg. This was a website that was created several years ago by a couple of entrepreneurial locals who decided that they would offer the States of Guernsey the opportunity to scrape – and for those of you who do not know what that means, that means a robot that goes into a website, scrapes all the data in it, and then organises it into a really usable format.

1890 So if you go to data.gg, there is a page there with all of the data of the States on one page. You can press a button, you can go to buses on the top left and you can see all of the movements of bus usage by month from 2011 to 2024. This was all done at the flick of a switch, with no human intervention. All of the data was simply lifted off the site and produced in this format. It can be done every day of the week, every month, every year, in whatever format you want it to, provided that your website produces data that can be scraped.

1895 Many of you, I am sure, all use gov.gg all the time. It is impossible to find anything. It is impossible
to find *Hansard*. It is impossible to find data. It is impossible to find PDFs. Well, that is perhaps a
1900 little bit hyperbolic, it is not impossible, it is just very difficult and time-consuming because the site
is not properly indexed. We do not need to go into technical detail but if the site was properly
indexed it would be much easier using its search capacity to find everything that is on it. There is a
huge amount of data on there, which we are not sharing with anybody because they cannot find it.

I completely appreciate that it is very difficult, and I probably will vote against the amendment
because I just do not think it is possible to comply with it practically. But I do think there are better
ways of us producing our data in a simpler format that people could access easily. We do not do
that properly and it is much simpler and much less expensive than we are constantly told by many
1905 of those responsible as guardians of the data. Over a period of time, one does get to thinking
slightly, 'Why is this not being shared? Is there a reason for it? Is it because somebody is going to
ask difficult questions about it?' That lack of communication does not help.

I appreciate the need for reporting. We definitely need to have KPIs. We must get on with what
we need to do in the work plan, but I just do not think it is possible to comply. But solutions like
1910 this, which two entrepreneurs produced for the States and it did not take up, these are the things
that we should be doing, because the private sector could then produce our data for us for nothing
and provide access to it.

I am sorry I am not supporting it, but I do understand the fundamental reason why it has been
brought.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: Thank you, sir.

I am going to try and persuade the Deputy to change his mind, I know that is not a no, but I am
1920 genuinely surprised that the P&R are not supporting this amendment, as it aligns with the present
Policy & Resources stated commitment to openness, transparency and effective delivery of the
Government Work Plan. She is nodding so hopefully we will get a response at some point.

P&R has been clear, the work plan is intended to provide clarity on priorities, improved co-
ordination across Government, strengthen accountability and submitting it the public. Surely
1925 members of P&R should not be afraid of this. If we take the Deputy Helyar argument, effectively all
they have to do is, in short, submit at the front end the data and allow that to update on a regular
basis. Or taking the STSB's example, I genuinely cannot remember what happened to the harbour
last time. I genuinely cannot remember and I think this is one of the super priorities.

From a planning point of view, I suppose we will get a note at some point but the public do not
1930 know where it is. They actually do not know what the cost is at all and they do not know what the
scheme is. They do not know if there has been a change. They do not know anything at all. So I do
not think it is unreasonable for the life of this Government, for someone like STSB to say, 'We are
at this stage of the thinking.' We know we spent £2.1 million, I think it was, on the surveying of the
marina. So they could state, 'Right, we spent £2.1 million on surveying the marine floor area, as
1935 stated.' What are you going to do next? 'Well, as a consequence of this being approved, being not
approved, our next effort is going to be –' I do not know, get other people in the room, get the
plans out and decide what this harbour is going to look like. There is nothing wrong with saying
that. It is just a rolling project. It does worry me sometimes.

Deputy Helyar, I think this, to a degree, falls into the problem that he stated, the sort of culture
1940 that happens in the States of Guernsey. Tell you absolutely nothing. That is effectively the culture.
I think it was Deputy Camp and Deputy Vermeulen who spoke coming from two different sectors
in the Island, this would be normal standard business practice anywhere else, certainly within their
own companies, that they would talk to themselves and ultimately the shareholders in that area are
the public who voted for us. If we are spending significant amounts of money, of public money,
1945 I think it is fair and reasonable, we should be able to tell them the progress of those jobs. There is
nothing wrong with that.

1950 Now I have been in a room before, where I thought I had a really good idea. Well, all five of us did, it was called Education. It was absolutely brilliant. Policy Letter was ready, we walked out in the cold light of day, and my God had we not screwed up. We were dead within a week and a half. It worries me sometimes. I think what happened to me, that miserable year in Education, I made the fatal error of being captured by the Civil Service. You sit in that room, you work with these people on an absolutely regular basis, in those four walls you think everything is right, everything is glorious, and then you go out to the public and you realise what an awful mess of things that you have made or it is not quite as you thought it was.

1955 I am going to refer back to my original speech that I mentioned at the election, what the election told us, I think, to be honest with you, those of you who were successful, was that they wanted more transparency. That is what the public demanded. They wanted a smaller administration.

1960 Then we have got the first significant policy in this term, why would you not want to be transparent? Why would you not want to tell people what you do? This is an uncoded project. The last time we had a Government Work Plan, it was £560 million, which Deputy Helyar told us we could not afford and was spot on. We now have a Government Work Plan and we do not know whether we can afford it at all, which I am pretty sure £300 million or £400 million of that is actually related to the harbour from memory. I genuinely do not know why P&R are railing against this.

1965 By asking for progress to be published in a single, publicly accessible place, and updated on a regular basis, it should help ensure that the work plan remains a living document, rather than a static statement of intent, an uncoded statement of intent. That benefits Members, scrutiny, and the public alike. I genuinely do not know why P&R are saying no to this. It sounds like it is being overly complicated to me. It really is. We got told by Deputy Sloan that one of the problems we have in Government is that there is never enough data. It is often called hiding evidence. So I would be careful.

1970 As you travel your path over the next three or four years, never forget where you came from. You came from the public of this Island. There is not a pound that you spend that is not given to you by the people that elected you. Please, do not go native. I went native for a year, it was the biggest mistake of my life and I have never gone native again.

1975 Now, what this amendment appears to do is just – sorry, I mentioned Deputy Camp earlier. I said similar things [*Inaudible 2:42:17*] in different sectors. It does not appear to limit flexibility, from what I can see is it simply asks that where significant changes occur, those changes are explained. What is wrong with that? Why would you not explain the progress? It reinforces the trust, all the things that Deputy de Sausmarez wanted to talk about when she took the position, it focuses on transparency, all the things Deputy de Sausmarez wanted when she took the position. The new openness, us getting together, the great – well, I will not go that far. Anyway, in that sense, this proposition should be seen as enabling. It should be seen as enabling.

1985 It is standard business practice everywhere else. You are the directors of the company and you should be informing your shareholders, the people of this Island, what you are doing with their money. What on earth are you afraid of? You are committed to transparency, we are committed to transparency, Deputy de Sausmarez, when she took the position, she was committed to that transparency. This is not an additional burden. I suspect that one of the reasons P&R are railing against it is because they have been captured to a degree by the people that surround them.

1990 In my general debate, [*Inaudible 2:43:40*] I reconcile our role as scrutineers. I will repeat it again, we are elected by the people of this Island as Deputies, not badly paid civil servants who go native within three months of getting a job.

Please support this amendment, you have got nothing to be afraid of.

1995 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Montague.

Deputy Montague: Thank you, sir.

I am very sorry that Deputy Inder did not enjoy his time on Education, Sport & Culture. I have been involved for six months and I am having a whale of a time. But I suppose things were very different back in the late 1990s (*Laughter*) or whenever it was.

2000 Earlier on, we heard Deputy Sloan say this was the best amendment he had ever read and he was tremendously excited. I just have to warn him now that when he reads Amendment 9 from Deputy Rochester, he needs to make sure he has sat down and very calm, because that is absolutely amazing.

2005 I am in a very similar position, both geographically but also with regard to this amendment, as my colleague, Deputy Helyar. Absolutely do believe that we do need to be a lot more open with the public but I think there is an awful lot of information out there and we are just not very good at getting it across. I am looking right now with regard to ESC at the Annual Report from 2024 where we can see some metrics, and it is in the public domain, but the public would not know where to find it.

2010 Now, it is our job as a Committee for ESC to ensure that this report is properly scrutinised before it goes public and we really interrogate it, but that is our responsibility. I give way, Deputy.

Deputy Inder: Thank you for giving way, Deputy Montague.

2015 He is probably right, what we find is a lot of information is actually spread across the internet so by adopting this, if he actually agrees to this, effectively you have got your six super priorities, whatever they are going to be at the end of the day, all in one place. Actually, you are making the argument – through you, sir, Deputy Montague is making the argument to actually adopt this. Because he said it already exists, it is just not where it should be.

2020 All Deputy Goy and Deputy Curgenvin are asking is to compile it, put it into one place, in one web page, and let you know what you are doing. You will not. I am afraid for the first time in history, he has actually argued himself out of his own position.

2025 **Deputy Montague:** I think most of us who have listened quite carefully might be quite surprised you said that. Because, in fact, the amendment is not referring to what I was just referring to. The amendment is about the Government Work Plan. So let me get to that point in a minute.

2030 I am worried about a dashboard. In my previous area of work and education, and I am sure in many of yours, people have really enjoyed the idea that we have some metrics. We have got RAG rates, we have got numbers and we can put them out there. I have seen time and time again that become entirely cosmetic. It becomes rather similar to weighing the pig. There is no point weighing the pig unless you are going to feed the pig, in the same way that we do all the scrutiny we want but we have to actually have something that we are doing in order for us to scrutinise it.

2035 This goes back to something that my colleague, Deputy Curgenvin said. He quoted Kelvin about knowledge is meaningless unless we can measure it. But, in fact, the data alone does not make a lot of sense. How many people in this room have been the subject of an FOI request where a member of the public is asking for some numbers? We know we can give them the numbers but they will not know what they mean unless we do an awful lot of work to put it into context.

2040 That brings me to my problem with this dashboard. In the way the amendment is written, and not in its intention or motivation but in the way the amendment is written, it will not work. It will be counterproductive, because it will produce a dashboard where we are having to create metrics for – and this is an area of concern for me if I look down here – the Higher Education Funding Review or the Primary Education Review. How are we going to develop very clear metrics that can be understood by the public alongside something, as Deputy Goy was saying, about how many bricks we have got to build a wall or how many nurses we have recruited? Deputy Matthews was right – half right – when he said that we are going to be comparing apples and pears.

2045 If we try to do that and do it in this artificial way, we will not make any clarity for the public. But where I do agree with the Deputy, is absolutely we all have an obligation to make what we do here much more clear to the public. Now, in a month's time, I am really looking forward, sir, to doing the Education, Sport & Culture Update Statement in February. It is something I have been looking

2050 forward to for a long time, I had such a good time back in September, six months ago, when I did
the last one. In fact, every six months, I would remind Deputy Goy, we do these Update Statements.

The problem there is, yes, they are a public document and, yes, they are reported by the media,
but we, as a Government, are not very good at making that information really packageable to the
public. I think that is where we need to go and we need to focus on that.

2055 The information, sir, I was referring to before I was interrupted by my colleague, Deputy Inder,
was about other things that are not to do with the Government Work Plan, they are to do with our
own Committee responsibilities. We also need to be much better at making sure that data is
available. Every year, we have very high levels of accountability with regard to the educational
outcomes in our schools. We absolutely have no problem communicating that to the public. But
2060 I absolutely agree, the mechanisms at the moment are not correct. However, I do not believe that
this amendment will solve that problem.

I would like to finish by saying I am not, I believe, able to vote for this amendment unless I hear
a speech that makes it very clear to myself that I was wrong in some of the things I have just said.
But I do want to say very clearly, we have an obligation to be a lot more clear about what we do, to
celebrate the successes and be open about the failures that we have over the next three-and-a-half
2065 years.

But, sir, I will say, through you to the Assembly, that I am afraid I am not able to support this
amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Strachan.

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Deputy Strachan: Thank you, sir.

I like the aims of this amendment. I would love to see the data dashboard with colour codes as
to where we are, which would guide us to where we can focus to course correct, if necessary. I would
love to see more transparency with the public as to what that information is.

2075 However, on HSC, I see the furious pace at which our officers work. I know to be true, as
Deputy Oswald mentioned, that this would create an additional burden on HSC officers. I also know
that we have already charged them to get more data, which they are working hard to do. The
problem is we do not have the bandwidth to improve our efficiency. So this just adds another layer
of work. This is the key to me.

2080 Given the way we work now, this will just add a further layer of bureaucracy and we do not have
the time and scope to stand back and examine the way officers work, so we cannot identify those
ways of working that would make them more efficient. I am not talking about process failures, like
the Agilisys debacle, I am talking about those civil servants plugging away, delivering the stack of
work with the tools and processes they currently have. One point I just wanted to pick up on in
2085 Deputy Helyar's comment, the issue with scraping data, such as the data.gg website and how it
works, is that the data has to be available on a website somewhere.

This amendment is proposing to create new KPIs, which will require officer time, *[Inaudible
2:51:28]*, and then reporting on those KPIs where the data is probably on loads of spreadsheets
somewhere, if indeed it is collected and reported at all. So I am agreeing with Deputy Gabriel that
2090 this is the wrong time, but I agree with the aims of the amendment.

As Deputy Curgenvin reminded us, we have agreed to empower the CEO of the Government to
shift the culture and structure of the Civil Service leadership. So I will be voting against this
amendment. If this amendment does not succeed, I would like to add this challenge to P&R to put
together Amendment 3 from Deputy Laine and Amendment 8 from Deputy Rylatt, and report back
2095 to us into how the Civil Service reforms and efficiency tools from AI can help us to rethink the way
our Civil Service works, to deliver a Government system that can easily obtain data that someone
seeks, and thereby embracing data to achieve the aim of the amendment as soon as possible.

The Bailiff: As no one else is rising to speak on Amendment 4, I will turn to the President to add
2100 her comments. Deputy de Sausmarez, please.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

2105 I would like to echo there is a great variety, I will go through everyone individually, but there have been all sorts of very legitimate comments that have been made both in support and indeed against this amendment.

2110 I would like to correct Deputy Inder that P&R is not railing against this. P&R have flagged some concerns, especially in relation to what this would mean in practical effect, especially for some of the Committees involved. They indeed have explained some of those practicalities. But I too, like I think pretty much everyone else, very much agree with the intent of what this amendment is seeking to do. I did have an opportunity to have a discussion with Deputy Goy in the lunch break and I will come back to that a little later. But, actually, that was quite a good opportunity for us to have a more nuanced conversation about what might be able to achieve those outcomes potentially in a slightly different way.

2115 Deputy Rochester was, I think, the first person to make a really critical distinction here, and that is the distinction between projects and policy development. That is a key point. Because in the world of projects, it is absolutely reasonable, and I would be horrified if we did not – and for everyone's reassurance, we do – to expect to have a Gantt chart, or however you want to format it, with all of these things in really quite a lot of detail about what we are seeking to do, what we are building, for example. Deputy Matthews, I think, talked about a school or a hospital build.

2120 Absolutely, these projects lend themselves absolutely brilliantly to that style of reporting. It is very easy to know what your targets are, what your leading indicators are, what your milestones are, what your metrics are, and it is very easy to report on that, and I think that is something that we should be seeking to do, and I will come back to that, but it is a very different kettle of fish when it comes to policy development. Actually, Deputy Inder gave us a really good example and I am going to use that example. No, in a really good way, and it is face value because I think actually he was not the only one that learnt from that experience, and I am glad I did not have to live through it at the same time as he does. I felt his pain. He made it very obvious.

2125 But actually I very much learnt from that, and similar mistakes, and Committees that I have been on in my first term have done a similar thing. In the term that we have just had, the immediately previous political term, I was absolutely determined not to fall into the trap that Deputy Inder very well-articulated. I was determined that we would not sit in a dark, soulless room in Sir Charles Frossard House and chew our pencils a bit and then come out with this Policy Letter and go, 'Da-da, we have solved the problem'. Then it hits reality and it gets ripped apart brutally by people who actually can tell you how it is going to meet reality and how it is going to work or, more to the point, not work on the ground.

2135 So, actually, that was a very informative role for me as well and that is why, in the previous political term as President of the Committee *for the Environment & Infrastructure* – and also it was the way that the Committee *for Employment & Social Security* like to work as well – we were very careful not to take that 'decide and defend' approach. We were very careful instead to work with the relevant stakeholders, go and talk with them, include them in the policy development and when they told us what was not going to work, listen, take that on board and change it.

2140 That has been my guiding philosophy because, in my experience, you get yes, it can take longer, yes, you can end up in a place that is very different from the one you thought you would go, the direction you thought you were going in and the destination you thought you were going to get to. But my goodness me, I can guarantee we are going to have a more robust and more workable policy at the end of the day than with the 'just lock yourselves in a room with a function with several people' approach, so I do very much agree with Deputy Inder. But when we try to apply those lessons to the metrics that we are talking about here, the targets and the destination we are going, well, Deputy Rochester gave a really good example of that as well.

2150 Quite often, even though you think you know where you are going in policy development, you end up somewhere very different so, if the destination is we want to have a finished policy, okay, great, but it is not going to tell the public very much. You are going to be read, read, read, read,

2155 read working on it, working on it, working on it, working on it, working on it. It is not there. So that is not particularly helpful. Your leading indicators, your speedometers, well, I can say from practical experience here that when you are talking this approach – which I agree with Deputy Inder is a lesser one than the ‘lock yourself in a room’ approach – it can take a lot longer than it would if you just think you have got all the answers to begin with.

2160 So with the speed, you can set out a timeline but it is not necessarily a good idea to stick to that timeline if the process demands that you look into things in greater depth. The milestones is a very difficult thing with policy development – bless, Deputy Niles. I am not really sure how to say this in the third person; I think that is it. And the odometer, how far have we actually travelled? Well, again, in terms of policy development, you can put a couple of metrics in there. You can say, ‘We have carried out a consultation and we are drafting a Policy Letter’.

2165 But at the end of the day, what the public really care about is what is the policy going to say? They want to know where it is, is it late, are we going to have it and when are we going to be able to see it? But at the end of the day, it is what is in that policy that really matters and if I take Deputy Inder’s example again, he could have been reporting his Committee – throughout that experience could have been reporting and it might have all been very jolly. It might have all been green light status. We are doing a blindingly good job on this policy development. Here we are. We are on track. We are on target. We are doing such a fantastic job. We will be publishing on the due date. We will be debating it then.

2170 But that has not told us anything about the genuine progress, has it? In fact, it might be driving behaviours that are actually counterproductive to what we are trying to do, which is develop really good policy. So the problem is that the majority of workstreams in the GWP relate to policy development and just to give a couple of examples, this was the conversation I had briefly with Deputy Goy in the lunch hour, was what kind of metric, quantitative as well and qualitative, are we looking for in the six-monthly at least reporting on, for example, the update Economic Development Strategy, the Finance Sector Policy Framework, the Digital Framework, Skills for Work, Productivity and Participation in Work, the implementation of the Discrimination Ordinance and the CRPD, the Future Air and Sea Link Policy, the Offshore Wind Project and the next step?

2180 That is actually one that we could do slightly more metrics on but, again, as Deputy Blin will support me, there are a lot of unknowns in terms of when we are going to get certain bits of information from, for example, the UK Government, and some things depend on their legislative programme. So even though that is a project, it is still in the development stage and therefore it is very difficult to fit into this kind of framework. The Review of Population Policy and then I suppose its implementation would be an easier thing to report on, but it is the first section of the first area of voters within the GDP and I am not sure how useful reporting on that in the way prescribed in this amendment is necessarily going to be.

2185 So Deputy Goy, I am very grateful for his time over the lunch hour. I did ask him and he said, ‘No, well, it can be a much higher level than that’. I think, first of all, he suggested that actually we did not report on these individual workstreams within the GWP, but that is not what the amendment says.

2195 **Deputy Goy:** A point of correction.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Goy.

2200 **Deputy Goy:** I have actually said we do not have to report on every detail. The KPI does not mean all the details of the entire project. KPI is KPI. It can be a high-level data, milestones, targets and metrics. These can be high-level. You do not have to go into deep detail. That is not what the public is asking for when it comes to accountability.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

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Deputy de Sausmarez: Yes, that was the point I was coming to because if we can just pick and choose which KPIs suit us, which ones to report on, it comes back to this question of comparability for a start. We are going to be having to report on each of these in very different ways because they are going to be very different features. If it is up to us to decide which ones we are going to report on and how we are going to report on them and how high a level to take it, it brings me back to the experience that Deputy Inder used. Their reporting could have been quite high level, it could have been a bit more granular but, at the end of the day, is it telling anyone anything? It is not really.

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So there is an awful lot of work that goes into this but is it going to give other Members of this Assembly, and members of the public more generally, any useful and meaningful data, information or insight? I totally wholeheartedly agree with those, and most recently Deputy Montague, who has said that we have to get much better at this and actually the GWP – my main issue with this amendment, to be honest, is I think it is a really good amendment if it was directed at something else or other areas. I think the GWP is the least useful thing that could be focused on. There are certain projects within it – and I will come on to that – where I think we could be and should be more usefully reporting.

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But, actually, the examples that were cited by the likes of Deputy Curgenvin and Deputy Camp are very good examples, but they are not in the GWP. MyGov was not in the GWP, Agilysys was not in the GWP, so this is why it is the right solution but a genuine problem but pointed in the wrong direction. The GWP is not the appropriate thing to apply it to, and I will come back to that in a second as well because another area – and this is something that Deputy Montague touched on – is that actually a lot of the things that matter to the public are the things that are actually contained in the Committee's BAU, business as usual, and I was a big fan as President of the Committee *for the Environment & Infrastructure*.

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My goodness me, any civil servant that has ever worked with me – I am like Deputy Rochester. We may have special dartboards of our own for civil servants to chuck at our faces because I am with her on the demanding nerdy side of this thing about wanting to see the data and the reporting within the Committee. Deputy Gabriel will agree with me, I know, the reporting is an awful lot better because, as a Committee, we were very demanding about it. It did require a lot of work and it did require a lot of input to get that structure right.

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But, actually, I think the next step is not just internal reporting. I think the intent of the amendment is absolutely spot on. We need to make sure that we can, if we got to that stage when that reporting – as Deputy Helyar said, we should actually find ways ideally automated of just making sure that is in a place that is easily accessible and available to the public because, actually, things like, 'How long am I going to need to wait before I can book a driving test?' That is the kind of – I am sorry, Deputy Garbriel is giving me death stares now, but that is exactly the kind of data that people care about and it is Government business.

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You are not going to find it in the GWP. The reporting done in the GWP, if we are going to talk about that, is mainly this reporting, which is mainly going to be on work in progress on development a policy. It is not going to give them – I am so supportive of what Deputy Goy and Deputy Curgenvin are trying to achieve with this and I just said, as Deputy van Katwyk has said at the beginning, that we had had this conversation ahead of this because I think we could have got somewhere.

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I come on to what I think the solution is apart from what Committees can do themselves, what they can publish, and I would like to be able – as Deputy Strachan said, I think we need to move that on and it is incumbent on all of us in the Committee to make sure that we can do that and we should have that conversation in terms of the Committees' work. Actually, there is nothing to stop the Committees publishing progress against the Committee plans, which is obviously one of the aspects that we are proposing in this GWP. But actually a lot of the concerns that have been cited, and I think in fact exclusively the examples that have been used, have been about major projects.

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2260 So I think actually if this amendment were pointed not at the GWP but at reporting for the major project portfolio, that would be serious, useful and meaningful information and a really good step in the right direction because that is where the tens of millions of pounds go astray. Those are the things that we need to sort out. It is difficult because I am now obviously at the stage where I am replying to debate, and no one has got an opportunity to pop up, but I really would encourage Members.

2265 I am very prepared to bring in or put forward a proposition about requiring reporting on the major property portfolio and indeed the aspects within the operations sphere. So Deputy Inder is quite right. I have made a big deal, including in this States' meeting, about the need for greater transparency and openness, and I lost count of the number of times yesterday when I underscored my commitment to making sure that our investigations were going to be put into the public domain.

2270 One of the things that we have agreed is going to happen is that the Chief Executive is going to be publishing his report, so that is another aspect. In terms of all those things that we are really worried about, the vital work that Deputy Laine was kind enough to be very involved in, all of that work sorting out our IT, the work looking into how we govern major projects and things, all of this really important stuff that, my goodness me, we have not got right and we really need to get right, those are the things that I think we can and should be reporting.

2275 So I think this is a very well-intentioned amendment. I think it is just focused in the wrong area, and I think it is unworkable in its current form at the GWP, but I would be happy to bring forward a proposition that enables the Assembly to require reporting on the major projects, which I think is actually where people's major concerns lie and also support Committees in terms of reporting alongside their work plan or anything to do with BAE. But I do appreciate the comments that – Deputy Leadbeater was very articulate about, especially in a Committee where you do not have huge amounts of resource, we should not underestimate the amount of officer time and effort that this diverts away from delivering what we are here to do.

2280 So with the greatest of respect and actually gratitude, because I think this has been a very helpful debate to the movers of this amendment, I would urge colleagues to vote against it, but in order to enable us to vote on something that can be more meaningful and more targeted.

2285 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Finally, I will turn to the proposer of the amendment, Deputy Goy, to reply to the debate, please.

Deputy Goy.

2290 **Deputy Goy:** Thank you very much, sir.

2295 Phew. (*Laughter*) Okay, first of all, let me just say this. A lot of word salad is not the same as having hard numbers, KPIs, that the public can measure and track the progress. I have read numerous Government Work Plans from different countries including Singapore. I have not seen a single work plan that does not have KPIs. This is the first one that I have seen that has almost zero KPIs. It is almost like it is written by HR in a HR handbook. This document is supposed to be public facing. It is supposed to be a document that the public can see.

2300 What are the priorities and what is the plan to get there? A plan must always have KPIs. If you do not have KPI, it is a Government wish list, so I will go on a bit further than that. Let me just answer a few questions first. Deputy van Katwyk said, 'Why did I not consult P&R beforehand?' Two reasons: the first reason, timing. The second reason, I actually already predict what P&R's reaction would be and my prediction is correct.

2305 If I were to bring this amendment to P&R, I can guarantee you that this amendment will lose all its teeth, it will be like gums, and it will be a floppy creature (*Laughter*), and I might get it passed but you know what, it will be a useless amendment. So this is the reason why I did not bring it to P&R in the first place because I have read enough plans of other countries who know that a Government Work Plan should not look like this. This is why we are in the trouble that we are in.

2310 Deputy Hansmann Rouxel, it is taking too much officers' time, it is result intensive and data is already in Committees. We are living in 2025. You have got AI, you have got Copilot, you have ChatGPT, you have got Gemini. These things would have crunched these for you in seconds. You feed it data, you give it raw data and it gives it some prompts. A lot the officers know how to use this. It is an insult to the intelligence to say that it takes too much time. We are not living 30 years ago. It is 2025. *(Laughter)* 2026, sorry. Only a few days off. Please forgive me. I have a lot of things to cover here.

2315 Data is already in Committees. Great. Take this data and give it to P&R to publish. You need to put in one webpage. It is not that difficult. If you have got the data already, just give it to P&R. Deputy Ozanne, divert considerable resources from Committees. First of all, AI is going to help you with a lot of this and I know for sure that HSC's officers know how to use it. Do you know why? Because I worked in Agilisys. I have helped HSC officers do their stuff all the time with their SharePoint and with their data. If you need help, IT can even help them.

2320 We have built websites before. I personally was involved in the OISS website. I do not know if you guys remember. This was before the privatisation. We built for P&R. P&R gave us the data, we make it nice and, do you know what, we did not have AI at that time, and it was not hard at all, seriously?

2325 Deputy St Pier says we did not consult P&R. I have addressed that and a dashboard already exists. I am not sure what the dashboard is that Deputy St Pier is talking about, but if it is a dashboard that encompasses the areas that is about the GWP, then just publish it and make it publicly available. So I am unsure what is that.

2330 Significant drain on resources. You are living in 2026, not 2025, you have all the tools that you need and the officers are competent enough, I believe, to be able to produce that information in no time and at very little cost. I do not think we should actually speak on behalf of the competency of these officers. It is an insult to the officers. Deputy Ozanne talked about confidentiality. Of course, when you put data out in the public, the amendment does not ask for every single detail of it to be put out there. If they are details that are not relevant or basically it is a too-defined detail and it is confidential, there is no need to put it out there.

2335 Deputy Gabriel talked about burning fuel and engine wear. Do you know what, if you do not look at your odometer or your speedometer, if you do not know where you are going, of course you are going to burn fuel. Of course, you burn fuel. If you drive around our Island around 200 times, yes, of course you are going to burn fuel and go nowhere. This is why we need KPIs.

2340 Deputy Leadbeater, we do not have resources. I do not know how many millions he is thinking, but there is not much money required to get this thing done. It is a single webpage. The information should already be with the Committees. If you do not have this high-level information, I will be very worried. The public will be very worried. Maybe this is the reason why some of the Members here are so worried about this amendment because they do not have the data. That is worrying. You better come up with this. You have got six months' time.

2345 Deputy Rochester said there are things that we do not know yet and we need to explore. That is fine. You can explore things. When you have workstreams, you can break your workstreams down into plans and projects. If there are things you are not sure of, you can put 'TBA'. You can have KPI and can have KPI templates, but at least you know what you are measuring. If you at least have a KPI template, you know who you are trying to measure. You might not have the numbers, you might not have the details, but at least you know what you are measuring. That is the most basic and if any projects does not have those basic templates, that is very concerning.

2350 Deputy Helyar, data.gg. Excellent, it proves my point. If two guys from the public can do it, the States have got 5,000 people or something like that, and we cannot produce a website with all this basic information, come on. You have got D&T. **(A Member: Hear, hear.)** I have got engineers in there that I know are very competent who can do that. Just get their help. Give them a project. We got that all the time when I was working at Agilisys. Make use of them. You might not even need to do any work yourself.

2360 Deputy Montague talking about it being cosmetic. A dashboard is never just cosmetic. It is never that. It is not that. If you want cosmetic, just have nice pretty images and wallpaper. It is there for the public to be able to actually measure and track the Government's progress. It is not cosmetic. We talked about context. If you have workstreams and you are not sure how to do it, break it down into projects. I apologise if anyone here is a project manager and you already know these things, but if you have a big chunk and you are not sure what to do with, it is you break it into small chunks, you break it into projects and plans so that you can attach KPIs to them. There is no excuse for that.

2365 Deputy Strachan; additional burden, another layer of bureaucracy. I have addressed this before. In 2026, you have AI. There is no additional burden. Your Committee might not even need to do it. Your Committee might just need to compile a few data. Send it to D&T. Maybe they can help you. Do you know what the cost is of not doing this? You might have another multi-million pound IT debacle which Deputy Strachan has questioned the Assembly about. Here is the thing. We lost
2370 £42 million and we do not even know where it went. This is very troubling. This is an Island of 65,000 people and we are projecting a £98 million deficit this year, okay.

If you tracked all this with KPIs, I can tell you that we will not be in this situation today because you would have been able to arrest that problem before it became a £42 million blackhole, so this is a warning. There is no way the public can accept another debacle like this. This is our time to be able to reassure the public and be accountable so that we can actually give them – sorry, I will give
2375 Deputy de Sausmarez –

Deputy de Sausmarez: I am really grateful to Deputy Goy for giving way. I am actually sorry to interrupt him, but it is a really important point because – and I know the rest of the Committee and
2380 I very much hope the rest of the Assembly – I could not agree more on the importance of accountability and clarity and transparency and openness so that we can make sure that we are never in a situation again where we experience that kind of failure. But it is an important point that those projects are not in the GWP, and this was really what I was saying. We are committed to bringing reporting on those projects absolutely, but this amendment will do absolutely nothing in
2385 relation to them because they are not part of the GWP, so I am really sorry to interrupt, but I think it is such an important point.

I am very grateful for Deputy Goy to give way, but I could not agree with him more about the importance of reporting those things, but that is not what this amendment does.

2390 **Deputy Goy:** I read all 36 pages of the GWP. I identified all the priorities that the GWP is saying that it is going to do. I can tell you that these parties can be broken down into projects. Those workstreams that you have can be broken down into projects and plans and you can attach KPIs to them and, yes, it is important for the public to know. If it is not important, why is it not – the GWP, you have five priorities. You call this super priorities. This is how important it is. So why is it not
2395 important for the public to know how these priorities are progressing. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

Let me just continue. I have addressed all the opposing points so I would like to thank Deputy Vermeulen. He says, 'Good plans must have KPIs. The current GWP is not time bound. Not even high-level targets and numbers'. You are absolutely right. This is unacceptable. This is a Government Work Plan and we have super priorities with none of these things. Come on.

2400 Deputy Gollops says, 'Previous plans lack measurement' and that is true. I looked at the past GWP. It created much word salad as well. This is the time to make the change and this Assembly can make that change happen today. Deputy Gollop also says, 'Use AI'. That is it. We have got all the tools that we need to make this happen, to make this Government more accountable, and so that the people can trust this Government better. Deputy Gollop also mentioned about continuous
2405 improvement. Without KPIs, how can we have continuous improvement? How do you know how far you have travelled? You do not know. KPI is how you can have continuous improvement, but I guess I do not have to explain that.

Deputy Sloan said, 'This is not alien territory'. I guess what he means is that, for other jurisdictions, it is not unusual. It might be the first time for Guernsey, but I can tell you for other

2410 jurisdictions, KPIs in their Government Work Plan is not alien territory so, yes, thank you very much for that.

Deputy Matthews says, 'It is strange that we have a list of goals but not one that can be reported to the public how we are progressing'. That is an extremely good point. If you already have those things, why do you not just report it? Is there anything to hide? That is what the public will be asking.

2415 If you vote down this amendment and you do not have KPIs in your Government Work Plan, this is what the public will be thinking. 'What are they trying to hide?'

The Bailiff: Deputy Goy, I am afraid your time for speaking has expired, but you have dealt with those who sought to argue against the amendment. You now seem to be on those who are supporting it.

2420

It is time now to vote on Amendment 4, Members of the States, which is proposed by Deputy Goy, seconded by Deputy Curgenvin, and I am going to invite the Greffier to open the voting.

2425 *There was a recorded vote.*

Not carried – Pour 12, Contre 23, Ne vote pas 2, Did not vote 1, Absent 1

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	DID NOT VOTE	ABSENT
Blin, Chris	Burford, Yvonne	Hill, Edward	Malik, Munazza	Williams, Steve
Camp, Haley	Bury, Tina	Snowdon, Alexander		
Curgenvin, Rob	Cameron, Andy			
Gollop, John	Collins, Garry			
Goy, David	de Sausmarez, Lindsay			
Inder, Neil	Dorrity, David			
Kay-Mouat, Bruno	Falla, Steve			
Matthews, Aidan	Gabriel, Adrian			
McKenna, Liam	Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah			
Niles, Andrew	Helyar, Mark			
Sloan, Andy	Humphreys, Rhona			
Vermeulen, Simon	Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha			
	Laine, Marc			
	Leadbeater, Marc			
	Montague, Paul			
	Oswald, George			
	Ozanne, Jayne			
	Parkinson, Charles			
	Rochester, Sally			
	Rylatt, Tom			
	St Pier, Gavin			
	Strachan, Jennifer			
	Van Katwyk, Lee			

The Bailiff: In respect of Amendment 4 proposed by Deputy Goy and seconded by Deputy Curgenvin, there voted in favour 12 Members, 23 Members voted against, 2 Members abstained, 2 Members did not participate in the vote and therefore I will declare that amendment lost.

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The next amendment that we are going to turn to is Amendment 7, if Deputy Humphreys wishes to move that amendment now.

[Amendment 7.](#)

1. To insert an additional proposition as follows:

"To direct the Policy & Resources Committee to incorporate into the Funding and Investment Plan, in consultation with all Committees, a structured public service efficiency programme that targets a 1% real-terms annual reduction in baseline public expenditure for the years 2027,2028, and 2029 (with 2026 as the baseline year)."

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Deputy Humphreys: Thank you, sir.

This amendment directs the Policy & Resources Committee to incorporate into the Funding and Investment Plan a structure of public service efficiency programme. Specifically it targets a modest 1% real-term annual reduction from baseline public expenditure for the years 2027, 2028 and 2029 using the 2026 Budget as the baseline. This amendment builds on work already underway in many areas but, importantly, it sets a published and explicit target.

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We want to be upfront. We fully acknowledge that, in an ideal world, this kind of detailed efficiency target would sit more directly within the Funding and Investment Plan itself where multi-year budgeting and resourcing of problem work flows. However, the debate on the Government Work Plan comes before the substantive discussions on tax reform. By bringing this proposition forward now, we send a clear unambiguous signal to the public that fiscal discipline and targeted savings are a key consideration of this Assembly before another conversation about tax reform begins. That sequencing matters, in my opinion, enormously for public confidence. This is not the first time we have heard that in debate yesterday and today. This is another clarification of emphasis.

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Why only 1%? We firmly believe we have to start somewhere and perhaps 1% will not prove to be ambitious enough, but it establishes a base on which further efficiencies could be investigated and implemented. We settled on 1% not just because it is in our manifesto, as some of you chose to remind us during our Budget debate, but because if you exclude and discount cuts from the public-facing services and the locked-in uplift from some of our budgets based in law, any greater number potentially puts a disproportionate and unachievable target in other areas.

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We have therefore approached the matter with caution, carefully considering what representatives are saying about the level of savings over the course of the term at a level where we hope no Committee will give up proper *[Inaudible 3.30.35]*.

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I hope I am clear that public-facing budgets should not be ignored. Everybody needs to consider the contribution they can make but we are determined that focus should be on targeting cuts where they are most achievable, where public services will not suffer unnecessarily and to achieve savings for the long-term and repeatable. The last thing I want is for it to be brutal and damaging and something that meets the highest *[Inaudible 3.31.02]* for years. How will good will it be if we overachieve? Please do not stop at 1% if you can achieve more. **(A Member:** Hear, hear.)

2465

I am inspired by one of our most powerful examples of implementing improvement anywhere. The British Cycling team's aggregation of marginal gains led by Sir Dave Brailsford. When he took charge, British Cycling had won just one Olympic gold in nearly a century. His method was to identify every tiny area for improvement. It included bike design, tyre pressure, riding nutrition and even, would you believe, the ergonomics of the team bus, and pursue a 1% gain in each. Individually, each change seemed small, perhaps trivial, but together, they encountered its dominance. Sixty per cent of track cycling gold medals at Beijing 2008, repeating success in London 2012, multiple world records and several Tour de France victories.

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Our 1% annual efficiency target works on the same principle. Small, consistent evidence-based improvements across public services to navigate into two substantial critical headroom. One per cent off every band width. One less pencil for every staff member. One more light turned off at night. I am being slightly ironic but it all adds up and contributes to the saving target.

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Our Fulfilment Team are already working on these types of savings and bigger ones too. This amendment is about signalling as much as it is about delivery. In my experience in business, I can tell you that all of this is absolutely achievable without unnecessarily affecting services, staff levels or changing staff terms and conditions. When I gave 20 staff a pen amnesty, I was returned with 150 usable biros. That is a small saving but it all adds up.

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Following my question to Deputy de Sausmarez yesterday, I want to be clear, I would not like to see any of these sweeping cuts just targeting the short-term. I stand by my mantra when considering capital assets. A stitch in time saves nine. We still need to spend, just in the right place, the right

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amount at the right time. This is intentionally incredibly simple. Take one for efficiency not harmful cuts.

2490 Now for the numbers. Using the approved 2026 Committee net expenditure of £678.04 million as the baseline, we are looking at roughly £6.78 million in 2027, £6.71 million in 2028 and £6.64 million in 2029; cumulative and repeatable savings of around £20 million over three years. Please bear in mind here that part of the £678 million is £320 million operating costs, 90% of which [Inaudible 3.34.06] spends. Not the procurement processes focused on value for money and appropriate attention to reducing waste in notable practices can deliver a significant amount of these savings without affecting the staff and the infrastructure.

2495 Add to this the adoption of new working practices, including the advancement of AI and other business efficiencies, we would like to think that we can even possibly over achieve in this department. That is meaningful progress. Enough to cover one-fourth of the structural deficit, reduced reliance of one-off borrowing and create a genuine space for Corporate Tax reform, all while protecting high priorities provided the savings are targeted intelligently. We have heard and already voted for amendments, which I could put growing our economy at the centre of the Work Plan, and I welcome this.

2500 With my colleagues on the Economic Development Committee, we are going to support it, but in addition to that, if we are to contemplate tax reform, we must first demonstrate openly and transparently that we are tackling our own costs. Approving this amendment today is the responsible, proportionate step that commits us all to that firmly and signals to the public that we are listening to and acting on their concerns.

Thank you.

2510 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Rylatt, do you formally second Amendment 7?

Deputy Rylatt: Yes, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you.
Deputy Niles.

2515 **Deputy Niles:** I will have a go. Good speech. I think that the direction of marginal gains is a good one for us to try and achieve. I will be voting for this. However, I do not think it is enough and perhaps we will have another go when we look at the fiscal policy in more detail, but I think we should be aiming – if we want a balanced budget, which I believe we should do and I think what the electorate told us that we should have at election together with tax reform, we should be looking at a 3% improvement on our costs. That is why my thinking is it is a start and I would like marginal gains, which is not enough, but I hope we get there.

Thank you.

2525 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Camp.

Deputy Camp: Thank you.

2530 I hope by now everyone knows that I am all for anything that tries to stop Government from spending more money than it ought to. My difficulty with this, and my question to Deputy Humphreys, is really the same one I had after the 2020 Budget where spending more but £2.5 million less than the more we could have spent was categorised as a saving. So I worry when we are talking about efficiencies and savings and we are confusing the language. Is there a saving to be made here or is this just about spending a little less more, which I am not so comfortable with.

Thank you.

2535 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

2540 **Deputy Gollop:** Actually, Deputy Camp is persuading me more to support this because it is quite woolly. When Future Guernsey launched and Forward Guernsey [*Inaudible 3.37.41*] election adjunct to it, there were quite a lot of policy streams and principles and values that I think I broadly supported. I could tell people honestly that I supported 75%, 80% of its mandate but the parts I did not like, some of which were about healthcare and some of which were about the baseline public expenditure, because there were a lot of suggestions that you could have a 1% cut, which would compound into a quite significant sum of money over a full term. I saw that as both wishful thinking
2545 which, as you know, did not even work out in the last Budget. But also I am probably in a minority here, in that the growing of the States, perhaps to my surprise, has been quite conservative, rife with meaning in terms of the people. Whereas I think we should look left, to be honest, in certain areas.

2550 That is why we have had the satisfaction problems in the Island is because we are often trying to combat market failure and that also, like ostriches, not seeing the demographic issues that are coming down the line and we are not being honest that there is increasing demand for healthcare and other things that we have to cater for by a combination of increased taxation, and hopefully economic growth and using AI and so on. But I think the idea that we can go back to the good old days when we had balanced budgets and a lower tax structure is wishful thinking.

2555 I have been saying ever since this process started 20 years ago – I was in the Guernsey fold, I remember going there – I mean the one person who said 'higher', would then have to fill in the dots on the donkeys, as you do with these exercises, because I knew that the savings that [*Inaudible 3.39.52*] would never happen and they have not happened.

2560 But why I am kind of tempted to support this amendment is it does put Policy & Resources and all of us on the spot to actually do what a substantial number of the electorate want, and the business community, to restrain ourselves particularly at a time when we have not got a long-term fiscal strategy that is clear.

2565 The other part about it that I like is Deputy Camp raised a nuance point that this dances around a little bit perhaps about where cuts begin and where real reductions begin and where efficiencies begin. We yesterday gave a rousing vote of support for Policy & Resources on their new style and their Senior Leadership Team and the Chief Executive Officer and people were saying, 'Well, let us get on with the job'. Then we get to the propositions of being more efficient not just for the economy but, as Deputy Laine said, a cultural change, a reorganisation in the Civil Service.

2570 I have a vague memory when I was on P&R that the former Chief Executive Officer who retired and the then Committee were very keen on an innovation unit and then Deputy Soulsby spoke strongly on that.

2575 So innovation has been part of our thinking. How far we have got with that and how far we need to go are good things, but this target of 1% real-terms annual reduction in the baseline public expenditure for the next three years is based on efficiency. One area where I think I do agree with Deputy St Pier and his Treasury colleagues is we all should seek greater efficiencies. We all should look for the key performance indicators, and Deputy Goy might be a bit disappointed with his support.

2580 I was one of his supporters but he has had a good word from the Chief Minister on bringing something like that back as an amendment integrated into other capital programmes and things. If we are going to look at doing things smarter, blue sky thinking, working less like an individual public sector institution but more perhaps agile, nimble – whatever the buzz word is – then let us give this a chance and see where we go with it. But if you are asking me to support cuts to services, whether they be health, children and young people or buses or tourism, no, that will not be for me. I will resist that.

2585 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne.

Deputy Ozanne: Thank you, sir.

2590 I had the good fortune of having this amendment shared with me by Deputy Humphreys a little while ago, and I must admit I was not supportive of it and I was in fact very critical. I have changed my mind on this amendment for various reasons, one of which the Deputy has made clear, that there is a desire to protect frontline services, which would mean actually a higher increase among other groups around 3.5%, and that is obviously for P&R and the Committees to decide among themselves.

2595 But for me, the real reason I have changed my mind is that I suppose it boils down to what we believe the Government Work Plan is all about and, for me, it is about setting our vision, setting our super priorities, as Deputy de Sausmarez has explained, setting our stall out for the Guernsey people about what we want to do and how we want to do it. That is why we had the various debates yesterday about the importance of economic growth. That is why we agreed the various
2600 amendments particularly about ensuring that that was front and centre of all we do.

I believe that front and centre of what we are trying to do here as a Chamber is also show that we can cut our cloth accordingly, that we know that we are in a time when we need to be seen to looking at doing things differently, that we need to be more efficient and – I think Deputy Humphreys puts this in her piece – that we cannot go to the public and ask for tax reform unless we are prepared to reform ourselves. So, for all those reasons, I think this amendment signals our commitment to trying to do things in a more efficient way in a way that will ensure that we have sustainable savings but one that does not impact frontline services and, therefore, I will be supporting it.

2610 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: This is quite clearly a – what is it? Is it Forward, Future; I never remember. Or Forward – I genuinely do not know. The party with the glorious leader in the corner has not made a mention.

2615 I am just intrigued. I take it Deputy St Pier is behind this as well, as the leader, by which it was proposed and seconded a minute ago. So I am expecting to hear from him at some point because, quite clearly, this must come through the movement/parties. *(Laughter)* The reason I mention that is that, strangely enough, the commentary from P&R is really quite strange because it is as neutral as anything. Personally, I would have gone for 2% or 3%. I would be a lot braver because that is
2620 what I really would have done. I think we could have gone for a lot more, but I will support it like I said to Deputy – well, to you as Members, I will not be supporting the Government Work Plan for all the reasons I have mentioned before.

It will quite probably get through this Assembly. This is certainly an improvement but I would really – I know Deputy Leadbeater – sorry, Deputy de Sausmarez is leading the Government Work
2625 Plan but I would like to hear from the party leader if this is actually something that is driven by him. I think that is important. As the Treasury lead, he should be able to tell you, as party members, whether 1% is achievable. When Deputy Rylatt does get a chance to speak to it – I have been here before. I am looking for savings, and everyone wants savings, but not here. Over there. So as a member of ESS with a budget of £13 million or £14 million – I will give way.

2630 **Deputy Collins:** Thank you for giving way. Just to remind us the ESS budget has got two arms which add up to £340 million.

Deputy Inder: Okay. But I would like to see, as we progress this, does the party membership
2635 believe this is 1% across the whole piece? Is it 1% for SACC and 1% for the TLA? That will not save much. Is it 1% on Health? Health spends in two weeks what Economic Development spends in a whole year. Is it 1% of the massive Health budget? So I would really like to hear from the party member who is seconding this that he will accept that, if this does go through, he is going to have some tough conversations with his Committee wanting 1%, if not more, of this Committee's budget
2640 but, thank you, I will support it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Burford.

Deputy Burford: Thank you, sir.

2645 I can hopefully put Deputy Inder one-fifth of the way of his mind at rest on the basis that I am happy to say I will be supporting this amendment. Additionally, he is asking whether it is 1% across or anything. There is a helpful Explanatory Note, and Deputy Inder often makes much of the fact that he does not always read things, but it does actually say in bold on the last page:

This is not intended to be a uniform 1% reduction imposed across all budgets.

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So the answer is in the amendment. In fact, it was part of the Explanatory Note that I want to address my comments to. The first part of it also mentions about how the 1% should be spread saying:

This amendment seeks to build on the momentum of the savings achieved this year targeting a 1% annual real-terms reduction. It is acknowledged that, if the budgets of Health, Education, Blue Light Services, and Income Support are somewhat protected, although not ignored, this translates into a potentially more challenging 3.5% reduction across other budgets before inflation adjustments.

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Explanatory Notes do not actually form part of the proposition clearly but the intention is there. I do not think this is doable if we do protect Health to that extent, and I think if Health is spending 40% of our annual budget, it is really going to have to play its part. Therefore, I am supporting this, but I think anybody supporting it has to realise that it implicates the Committee that they sit on even though the proposition does say it is a direction to P&R because P&R does the budget setting. It is the responsibility of Committees and with those policing it and comments in mind, I will be supporting this amendment.

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Thank you.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Oswald.

Deputy Oswald: Thank you, sir.

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As Deputy Burford pointed out, as has Deputy Inder, that Health is the biggest spender of the taxpayers' burden on this Island, and I view this amendment as a nuance version of a Sloan amendment to the Budget debate back last year. At the time, I think I stood up and said, 'We have taken that as a shot across our bows'. We have to take note of the fact that healthcare spending is a very high proportion of our taxation burden and we need to do something about it. We think we can tackle this on a holistic basis by efficiency savings that actually produce a 1% drop in real-terms in the demographic challenges we face and the increasing demand for healthcare requirements is going to be very difficult indeed.

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That does not mean to say that we are ignoring what we have discussed on this floor. We are about to undertake a major exercise in developing a sustainable healthcare plan, and one of the questions which I would like the proposers of this amendment to consider is that, if we manage to achieve extra income through basically user payment, which undoubtedly in some way or other is going to come, this will not count as a saving under the amendment as it is currently phrased. Yet, it might actually reduce the burdens of the taxpayer as a whole, and I think if we are going to reduce health spend and the way that this Assembly clearly wants us to do, we are going to have to look at alternative means of funding for those who can afford it.

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I want to emphasise that we are not talking about going back to the bad days, which I remember only too well, pre the healthcare contract, so I do not want to raise fears among the general public. But I think we all recognise that user pay is something which is coming in some form or other. It will be debated extensively by the public and by the States in due course and this Assembly will have to make a decision about it. But if we want to control health costs – and when I talk about controlling

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2690 health costs, it is probably restricting it to medical inflation which, as you know, exceeds general inflation, but if we manage to mitigate it to that, that will be in terms of a reduction in spending over the long-term but it will have to be payable by somebody.

The Bailiff: Deputy Blin.

2695 **Deputy Blin:** Thank you, sir.

I think from the Government Work Plan, it is recognising the need for the efficiencies and the States' sustainability, but it does not really translate that intent into a clear expectation. I very much like this amendment. I very much take into account also Deputy Oswald's comments on it, but I also like the analogies that Deputy Humphreys uses, the British Cycling team, and even more so when she made her – I do not know what she called it but the thing with biros. I have heard of guns amnesty but not with biros. I would like to refer to that analogy first because whenever we have these conversations of cutting, there is an immediate thing.

2700 I know in my personal case when I think about tax reform and GST – all of last term I said the same thing – is if we can prove that, if the public can believe that the Government is being as efficient as it can, then the people will come with us and then give support to actually say, 'Well, we now have to take that step.' That would include all the very – I will say 'costly', that is the wrong term, but expensive in monetary value for ESS, HSC, etc.

2705 So we always look at it straightaway with Committees. There is always this immediate threat that we are going to cut down some of the key services but actually the essence of this was 1% real-terms annual reduction. If I remember correctly – correct me if not – that Deputy Humphreys always said if it had to be higher it will be higher, which means that, across the board, it does not have to be equal, it just has to be done. But every time we have these conversations, I always think it goes on this Committee level of all the aspects, etc., but we sometimes forget – and I will come back to the amendment from Deputy Humphreys, is if we go from the bottom up, in my several years as being a Deputy, I have had loads of communication from people who work for the States of Guernsey Government. They messaged me saying, 'Oh, I cannot believe we just spent this much on that' or, 'We just brought that in' or, 'We have just replaced all the desks with new ones', all these sort of areas where it is just done on a level, that is where some of those savings come.

2715 In the same way it could be linked with even AI, if right now we sat in each Committee or each Department, or each section, and we said, 'Right, what can we cut together' and go from the bottom up, not the Committee saying we have got to take a per cent off here, etc. Do it the other way around. Do it like we do it in a business or at home even. Find out what it is we have to do.

2720 So although it could easily be misconstrued, as can happen in these debates, to turn this into a cut across the services, etc., actually, it is not radical, it is not sweeping, it is not shrinking everything, it is just recognising that if we do small, sustained improvements in how we operate, we can make a material difference over time. Those figures, as was already mentioned, even though it does not form part of the amendment, the essence of it is there and it is not only one year, but it is over the term.

2725 A personal anecdote is I use a device, Remarkable, which is paper-free, etc., it cost a few hundred pounds, and I also have heard that we spend over £70,000 a year with the printing of documents and papers we receive. When you think about that over four years, close to £250,000 if those figures are accurate – and I will stand down if it is challenged as it is information I had a long time ago. It is every little step counts. I have noticed the public always ask the same thing. It is always, 'Why can you not demonstrate some more of the savings so it does not have to be purely at this Committee level. It is every single Department.' Many people have actually shared that, that they could make some savings. These are people working in specific Departments.

2730 We have the figure of what that would say. It is not blunt, it is across the board. It should be ideally sustainable and repeatable. That is a part there. Actually, ironically, it falls right into the hands of the previous amendments, the penultimate one, on AI. Because, actually, there is another chance. Immediately, you could start showing those efficiencies. Just to take into account my personal

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relationship with a number of people I know working for the States of Guernsey, I am sure they would jump up and say, 'You could save here, you could save here, you could save it here. We have had them all the way. There is a bottom-up approach.

2745 Then, I suppose, the other point is, if we do not take these steps now, it is going to get more painful and deeper. At the end of the day, if we have these small savings – and I say small, I think they mean quite a large part, it is not insignificant anymore if we look at the structural deficit. It contributes towards it, so that shows that we are trying to make things work in the right way.

2750 I was almost hoping after Deputy Humphreys proposed new amendment there was going to be no comment at all. Everyone was just going to go for it. For a moment I felt that was a possibility. But I very much endorse and support this. I take into account the comments made, especially by Deputy Oswald, of the impacts on it. But I know we can do better if we just take it from the ground up and ask everyone to contribute and help, and contribute the ideas.

Thank you.

2755 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

2760 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Sir, I just tried to do a little bit of mental maths right now to calculate what Deputy Blin thinks will be small savings here and there and, if my calculations are correct, what a 1% real-terms savings will be on next year's Budget versus what we have got today, assuming the inflation forecasts remain the same, which is about 3.3%. That means we can only grow the expenditure by – assuming the inflation peaks at 3.3% – up to 2.3%. This year's expenditure in the Budget is £748.5 million. Effectively delivering 1% savings on that expenditure equates to £7.7 million.

2765 So just for reference, so that everyone is aware, this is the kind of volume of calculations we will be signing up to. Whether Deputy Blin and others think by coming up with an AI office proposal in December that is going to deliver us £7.7 million savings, I think this is the quantum of numbers we are talking about. I think it is important, and actually I am going to be supporting this amendment, because we have been talking about savings programmes forever. But I do want Members to realise that when they vote for amendments like this, that what you are voting for is this level of savings.
2770 So when we are going as Committees towards the budgeting process, these are the things we need to be thinking about. When you bring amendments which have expenditure attached to them, you will be contributing to additional expenditure, not removing expenditure.

2775 I think the Assembly really has to be realistic about the quantum of challenge that is in front of us and if you are genuinely signing up to this amendment you need to realise what you are signing up to. You need to put on your big boy and big girl pants if you really want to support it. If you are not committed to doing it through your Committee budgets, do not approve this amendment.

So, if you are approving this amendment be serious about trying to do it. I hope my maths is correct, but I am usually right, so I will let you decide.

2780 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Bury.

Deputy Bury: Thank you, sir.

2785 I find myself in a similar position to Deputy Oswald, this feels like Groundhog Day, just in slightly different packaging. It is very similar, slightly differently packaged to the Deputy Sloan amendment and then we have seen previous ones in previous terms that are very similar as well. I do commend Deputy Humphreys on the targeted way that she has tried to bring this to us but I am afraid from my point of view it brings me to the same arguments that I gave against the Sloan amendment, which I think are always going to be strongest from those in delivery, operational delivery service Committees.

2790 This one in particular is quite fluffy. I realise there is some sentiment to give us some direction in the Explanatory Note but there is a sentiment that some budgets might be protected, not totally ignored but it is not exactly clear how. So that leaves me a bit lost, if I am honest. I do wish, when

2795 people brought these amendments, they actually would go round to maybe the Committees first and say, 'What do you think you could do?' I would be interested to hear from Deputy Rylatt, if he is going to speak as the seconder of this amendment, his thinking around this amendment and in respect to the Committee we sit on together, where he has thought that our savings would come from.

2800 I do not mean to sound abrasive or challenging, but I really wish when people did bring these amendments, that is the idea that they have. Go and sit with each Committee, whether it is Health, Home, ESS, and say, 'What is it? We can really talk to you about should we cut carers' allowance, should we cut disability benefit?' I know that this is targeting efficiencies, and I really rate that, but I think one of the big issues that we have as Committees around this is our lack of control over the biggest part of our budgets, which is often staffing and pay. That is an area that I feel is still very grey as to our political involvement.

2805 I got the impression from our new Chief Executive that he thinks that we should have more involvement than we do, which I think is a good start, but I do not think it is clear yet how we go about that in practice without potentially crossing the boundaries of the States of Guernsey as an employer. That needs to be bottomed out before I feel, as a President of a Committee, that we can safely start moving into that realm.

2810 That was probably one of the key points I wanted to make. There were some suggestions within the Explanatory Note of widespread adoption of artificial intelligence within the States of Guernsey. Well, absolutely. But that is going to take an investment first, surely. We cannot just magic the savings. Sometimes you have to invest to save. I sometimes think that that is an issue with our budgeting process.

2815 I know annual budgeting is obviously the standard but I think the Guernsey community, rightly so, is often focused on the spend, and when you can only see that in the year, the annual budget, and you cannot see the savings that might come down the line in three years' time, it is hard to justify that expenditure. Electric buses will possibly come under that. They are going to make savings but they cost a bit upfront.

2820 Requiring Committees to bring forward cost savings as part of the budgeting process. Well, absolutely, but I would hope that is happening as a matter of course in BAU. Just to a point I think Deputy Camp was making about spending slightly less more than we might, that she does not see that as savings. I think in some areas of our Government, we have to accept that that is going to be the case. We might be able to flatten the curve and invest to save, but spend will increase. We have to accept that in Health. Where our demographics are right now, it is only going in one direction. We can make efficiencies, we can invest to save, we can do things better, but our demographics, where they are right now, and inflation, particularly around Health, you cannot just stem that tide with – well, you could, but it would be very unpalatable for the community, and most of us in here, I think. So I think there has to be some acceptance.

2830 Sometimes it would just be about flattening and stemming the tide, rather than actually going backwards in terms of what we have to save.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater.

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Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

Like Deputy Bury, the Home Affairs budget is 90% there. This is what it comes down to, we are carrying vacancies right the way across the services, law enforcement, prison and the fire so if we had full compliments our budget would be even bigger than it is now.

2840 I am going to support this. I am going to support it as a target, but I do not think it is realistic that in the years 2027, 2028 and 2029 we are going to achieve the savings through the recommended areas of a rolling programme and rigorous service reviews with operational spending. I cannot see that happening in time to achieve savings next year. Also we have to factor in things like statutory reviews of services that come along and generally say we have to invest

2845 more. We will get a dozen recommendations that say you need to put more staff in here, more money here, and more there, so that is going to completely flip this piece of work. So we have to make allowances to still be able to invest in these recommendations to keep our services up to modern standards in order to keep the community safe and secure.

2850 It is the same as widespread adoption of AI in the States of Guernsey. I cannot see that having an effect next year or the year after. This is going to take some time and some investment, as has just been pointed out. Again, prioritising sustainable long-term structural changes to operational models of long-term, short-term, creating achievable efficiencies, blah, blah, blah. But, that is long-term, it even says it in itself, some of the structural changes.

2855 I am not sure we are going to be able to introduce or realise 1% savings next year, 2028 and 2029 if we are looking to achieve them through these avenues, because I do not really think we have enough time but that does not mean we should not try. I like the direction requiring all Committees to bring forward cost savings for the next round of the Budget; I think it is great. The Sloan amendment for this Budget, for me, was too soon. I do not think Committees had the chance to really understand and get a handle on their budget in the first instance, let alone agree to any cuts like that. Certainly that was the position I was at when we debated the Budget.

2860 But I will support this because I think the optics are right, I think we need to demonstrate to the public that we are going to get some savings. I am not convinced we are going to get any. One thing I do not want is us to push for these savings just to try and reach these targets, because that is what they are in the proposition, it is a target. We can aim for that but we do not necessarily say we are going to get there. We have to ensure that in our quest to find these savings, that we do not start cutting services at the detriment to the public, and then it costs us more to try and reinvest it to bring these services back to where we were in the first place.

2865 That is my word of warning, but I will be supporting this amendment and I would caution that I do not think it will provide us with the savings that we need.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Montague.

Deputy Montague: Thank you, sir.

2875 I feel obliged to speak as President of one of the big spending Committees. I find myself in a very similar position to Deputy Leadbeater, and I want to reiterate something that Deputy Inder said a short while ago, something I have been very clear about since I started this role, the public keep asking us to save money. When we try to save money, they say, 'Not like that, not like that'.

2880 The previous Committee has attempted to save money and they brought plans to the States to do that for Education, but have been knocked back. They were attempts that we have made. I am going to support this because we will look for efficiencies. I think it is a really good idea that we now have members of every Committee who are the lead on our financial oversight. I think that there will be a genuine attempt throughout this term for every Committee to really drill down and find those savings.

2885 I am a dreadfully thrifty person. When I used to run ski trips with a companion at school, another teacher, I was always trying to cut costs to the minimum. He would say to me, 'Monty, why are we doing this? This is not our money'. I usually won and we would usually go for very cheap ski trips. It was still very good. But I think it is the same that we have to do now. We have to absolutely find every efficiency that we can.

2890 But, as with many other Committees, our pay, our salary is a major contribution to the money that we use from the taxpayer. When we look at the problems we have with recruitment on this Island, there are going to be no easy fixes. For anyone who thinks that we can radically restructure our pay scales and cut costs, then we will not recruit. We will not recruit and parents will be saying, 'What have you done to our schools? Why are we not able to get those teachers?' However, if we can get good teachers and keep them, we will save money in the expenses that we get with turnover, 2895 with investing in the relocation allowance, and, as we have seen over the past few years, it is less

now in education than it was, the money wasted on short-term staff coming to Guernsey. So we can make savings in that way.

2900 When I look back at the Budget conversations we had in August, it was clear that we did ask for more money and we were knocked back. We will look for savings but we cannot cut our services for Communication, Interaction and Autism in Schools. We cannot really cut our attempt to raise the attendance levels in our schools. That requires personnel, it requires effort and we will have to spend that money. But I can guarantee that we, as a Committee, will do everything we can to find those efficiencies.

2905 I am in the same position as Deputy Leadbeater, we will do our very best but at the end of the day we have an obligation, and I will say it is not just about education but we cannot keep cutting back on the provision of those other important parts of what makes Guernsey life so good, and that is culture and sport. We have that obligation and we will try to do that balance but I want to pick up again what Deputy Leadbeater said, this is a very important message and it is not talk, we have to really try and walk the walk on this. We will be judged in a few years' time as to how we manage to keep the finances down but we cannot overpromise.

2910 So, on this occasion I am going to support this amendment but I am very wary.
Thank you sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Laine.

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Deputy Laine: +

I am going to support this amendment but I am pretty certain that we are doomed to fail. Part of the reason for that is we do not understand what we inherited. I remember there was a Labour Home Secretary once that when he took office basically said he had inherited a mess, and it was great to get it all out there. He could not go wrong from then because he could just blame for a number of years those that came before him. But we have inherited a unique situation and the COVID pandemic no doubt had a role in that. If we look at the Agilisys deal that was supposed to be £200 million over 10 years? *(Interjection)* Well, it was supposed to cost us £200 million over 10 years, that was the cost. Now, I do not know what it cost us but I suspect – and I have got no inside information – it cost us nearly £200 million over half the time. We will see with the work that P&R are doing. I doubt it cost us half over half the time.

2920 As we get to know that, as the Internal Audit Team progress, we will be able to make better judgements. I like truisms and there is one that to a hammer everything looks like a nail. It is true of States' Members, 'Oh, we will just shave off 1% or whatever it is a year. We will just do that'. But we do not have the benefit of a three-year horizon scan and, therefore, we are kind of shooting from the hip. There are a lot of unknowns that are probably going to come and bite us on the ankle that will mean that we cannot achieve this.

2930 It has been said that we have a revenue services system that is suboptimal, spent £24 million. I cannot tell you if we are going to have to replace it just because it is suboptimal or we are going to have to replace it because it is not going to be able to cope with GST, or we are going to have to spend another £10 million moving it to the Cloud. I cannot tell you yet, but it will be one of the three, or we will just hop along with it as it is.

2940 We have no choice in this, and when I talk about numbers, do not forget we have an IT budget. I am not saying this is all a surprise, there is an IT budget, so if I mention £10 million here or £10 million there, it does not mean that that is unaccounted for. But, collectively, there are some big numbers coming down the road.

2945 We have a SAP migration, so SAP is an on-premises application, it is the backbone of everything we do. The manufacturer, SAP, has gone Cloud only so we have got to migrate it to the Cloud. It is a two-year project. It is going to cost millions of pounds to do that, let alone how well we manage that process.

We are going live soon, hopefully, at HSC with the medical records system, electronic patient record (EPR). That is phase one, there is a phase two and I certainly would vote for that phase two.

I know some of the benefits that that will bring. I am not going to speculate on the price, but it is significant.

2950 As has been mentioned, we are going through a stabilisation phase at the moment around IT. There is going to be a significant cost to that stabilisation phase. Again, I am not going to give you numbers, because they are just out of my head and they are rough. But we are talking about serious magnitude. Once we finish stabilisation, then there is transformation. Again, we are looking at tens of millions along the way to do that transformation.

2955 Now, again, do not get this wrong and do not report it wrong, there is budget. There is an IT budget. What I am not saying is that we have £100 million coming down the road that we are not expecting. That is not the case. But whatever the deficit is between what we can accommodate in our slimmed budget, there is going to be extra that we cannot do.

2960 MyGov2, that is happening now. Now, it is gated, which is great, so there are £5 million tranches. There are three £5 million tranches, so it is going to cost about £15 million. We are still on the first tranche and it is already behind schedule, approved by the last States, something that I am trying to look at now. But there is another £10 million that is coming down the road. It will not be this year, it will be next year.

2965 We have heard a lot of talk about things like AI. Someone said it is going to cut the workforce by half, etc. I do not think it will any time soon. The States, for all its sins, is a good employer and needs to treat its staff really well. I am not advocating getting rid of civil servants or otherwise. But, just to be clear, the terms and conditions that we have with our employees, and they are long-term employees, is, in the event of redundancy, they are entitled to two weeks' pay for every year that they have been here, and that usually works out to about two years' salary for every one you get
2970 rid of. So do not think that we are going to have some AI revolution and we are going to get rid of a load of people and there is zero cost, that is not the case at all. I think we would be more likely to get better productivity and not replace people over the years.

I have just spoken about some of the technology areas – I do not want to go too far, because after all, I am supposed to be advising P&R and I do not want to put a cat among the pigeons – and
2975 clearly I am aware that there is a lot coming down the road that you are not aware of and, to some extent, people in P&R are not aware of it. These things are just floating around and they do not have any accountable execs at the moment. But it is not just an IT thing.

I know that Education at the moment are doing a review on our leisure facilities, that whole
2980 piece. There are going to be a lot of big projects that are coming down the road from one. But, ultimately, we do not have any choice but to do this, but I think realistically we are back to needing to grow the economy, we need to deal with the tax deficit and we need to get on with that. We absolutely need growth, because in reality I think what we have inherited to make the savings that this amendment puts forward, to do that we may have to make closer to double digit cuts to achieve those savings in real terms. But, ultimately, it is a noble suggestion but it is done without any of us
2985 here having any three to five-year view of what is coming down the road. We have no idea what is coming down the road.

I would argue that there are people in the States whose job it should be. If you are running a large company or a large enterprise, you should be able to give a five-year financial outlook across different aspects of a company or the States, and hopefully with our new Chief Executive, in the
2990 years to come, we can get that better view. We rely on people like the President of Health to give us the good information he has given us today around the fact that they are a people-based organisation, as are the Home Department. So it is very difficult to make savings, and we know that both of those services are already understaffed and under pressure. I am actually glad to hear that there is likely to be some kind of pay-for-use-type approach, which is inevitable.

2995 Ultimately I will support it, I do recommend it, but I will do it in the full knowledge that I do not think for the next couple of years it is achievable, but we will try.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Goy.

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Deputy Goy: Thank you, sir.

I believe this amendment has gone through P&R, am I right? Correct me if I am wrong. Because, do you know how I know? It has got no teeth and it is fluffy. Also, it looks like it is something that P&R wants to do. It is like P&R directing P&R what P&R wants to do. It is like you asking a kid to

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eat the ice cream that he asked you to buy for him.

I will explain why. Let me read the amendment itself.

To direct the Policy and Resources Committee to incorporate into the funding and investment plan, in consultation with all Committees, a structured public service efficiency programme that targets a 1% real-term annual reduction in baseline public expenditure for the years 2027, 2028, 2029, 2026 as the baseline year.

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Nowhere here does it have any nuances as to what is going to be cut, so that absolutely depends on P&R. Like many of my colleagues here have pointed out, it could be anything. I have worked with Government before and I will tell you what is going to get cut when you have something like that, when you are not nuanced about what you want to cut. You are going to get cut right from the bottom.

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I used to work in IT and I supported Home Affairs, I supported Health, I supported P&R, I supported right across. I was an application engineer. In Home Affairs, there was just me and another guy who is in his 60s; he is about to retire. Previously we had more, we had actually four people in the team who are familiar with Home Affairs. After the two left, guess what, they want to save money, they did not hire any more. So the two of us carried the burden of supporting Home Affairs, which means most of the police actually know my name, because I helped them in their IT?

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Now what happens is when my colleague goes on a holiday, I carry all the burden. When he goes on a holiday, I carry all the burden, and vice versa. What I am trying to say is, when you do not have a nuanced cut, what is going to happen is right at the top, the managers are not going to cut themselves. No senior officers are going to fire themselves and say, 'Oh, do you know what, my salary is a bit too high. I am going to take a salary cut'. No, no, no, no. They are going to stop hiring someone who has left, and that is going to affect services. This is why I say this amendment, like many amendments I have seen, lack nuances and gives too much room for P&R to play with these things.

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I understand how human nature works. Like I said, I have worked with Government. I worked before Agilisys and I worked after Agilisys, supporting the States. I know how Government works. They do not cut from the top; they cut from the bottom. So I am afraid I cannot support this amendment, and I would like to urge Members to think about it, because remember, this is not a nuanced cut.

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Very likely, the things that are going to get cut are those things that what Deputy Montague was saying, that cutting something that the parents will be like, 'Oh, why did you do that?' Do you know what, that is going to happen. That is going to happen. That is what happens when you have a non-nuanced amendment without teeth.

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Thank you very much.

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan.

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Deputy Sloan: Thank you, sir.

I appreciate Deputy Oswald's comments and Deputy Bury's comments, but I do not think this amendment is a version of what we proposed in respect to the Budget. I will explain why. I find this amendment largely meaningless, and I would like to explain. It refers to reductions in baseline expenditure, but as we have already been told explicitly, this baseline is simply a business-as-usual conjecture. The Treasury indeed made this point quite clearly in a podcast at the time of last year's Budget.

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In other words, budgets and spending can still rise quite materially, and yes, this target can still be said to have been met. This makes it less a mechanism for discipline, and more a placebo.

3050 Something that gives the impression of action without necessarily delivering it. If I am honest, that feels rather characteristic of much of what we debate in this Assembly.

I was struck yesterday by the President of Policy & Resources referring to the former Financial Transformation Programme as a slash-and-burn exercise. It was aimed at cutting £32 million worth of expenditure or 10% of the then baseline revenue expenditure using 2009 figures. It was, by States' standards, a very significant programme, with significant project and programme management resources dedicated to it. Yes, it purportedly stripped out around £13 million of annual spending by the end, a five-year project.

3060 But, sir, by that same point, total revenue expenditure had risen by roughly £55 million by the end of the programme. That is the reality of how these things play out. This amendment talks about efficiency savings. These words are easy to use. Everyone loves an efficiency saving. They are pain free, and they give lots of comfort. But they are largely meaningless. The only savings that matter are cashable savings, money that is no longer being spent.

3065 As a former public policy economist, I can say with some confidence that these are extraordinarily difficult to achieve without doing things all together, or hiring less people, adding less people. Budgets, to explain it, can go down, and less people would need to be employed. The uncomfortable truth is this, sir, if we are to be serious about restoring fiscal balance, we have to cut total spending, or at the very least hold it flat in real terms for a prolonged period. That is politically hard, because most of us stood for election promising that Government would do more. Doing more usually costs more.

3070 I have made this point before, and I will continue to make it until the penny drops, even if I go blue in the face, and even if it makes me extraordinarily unpopular in this Chamber. Thank you. That said, I am not going to deny colleagues the comfort of believing that this amendment will effect change. For that reason, I intend to abstain.

3075 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Curgenvén.

Deputy Curgenvén: Thank you, sir.

I do not really know what to say after that, after Deputy Sloan's speech, including the other speeches. I will stick to what I was originally going to say.

3080 I was moved to speak by Deputy Bury, who really knows her stuff, and I feel is an excellent orator. What worried me most is Deputy Bury's phrase or use of the word, it feels like a Groundhog Day. I cannot help but feel, rightly or wrongly, there is seemingly a small reluctance from some of the maybe more experienced Members to work towards ideas brought by some of the newer Members. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) I sincerely apologise if that is not the case.

3085 However, it brings me much comfort that, for example, Deputy Leadbeater – I give way.

Deputy Bury: I am very grateful for Deputy Curgenvén giving way to me.

I would just like to make it very clear that my statement saying it feels like Groundhog Day has absolutely nothing to do with new Members and their bringing of amendments.

3090 Thank you.

Deputy Curgenvén: Thank you for clarifying.

3095 I was just going to say it brings me much comfort that, for example, Deputy Leadbeater expressed his concerns, but is nonetheless supporting this amendment, which is commendable. I myself will be supporting this amendment mainly because, if I could sum it up in a nutshell, the definition of madness is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. It is time to change the script. It is time to move the dialogue. I believe that this amendment helps us do that.

Thank you.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Vermeulen. It takes such a long time to get up.

Deputy Vermeulen: Thank you, sir.

3105 I was struck by Deputy Montague's organising the ski trip. I could not stop thinking that to save money we would book the Belvedere or something, even though it had no snow. But that would be a false economy, and we have got to avoid false economies. Deputy Montague then redeemed himself, hit the nail on the head, and said he is looking at improving wages overall in the States, one of the biggest overheads which we have got.

3110 If we can just improve retention, then that saves on recruitment costs. It saves on giving houses and finances to new people coming in and it is something which we should all be trying to do. Whether you do that via revisiting the contracts of staff and making the retention payment as part of the salary or some other form, I do not know. But we do need to improve retention.

3115 I look at Jersey, usually prompted by a colleague who says, 'Have you seen what they have done in Jersey today?' I have not seen what they have done. Well, they have got rid of the Treasury lead, above-inflation increases, and that is it, they have been fired. When I started to do some research, I saw the Senior States' Officer of Jersey saying the only way we are going to do this, the only way States of Jersey carry deficits – they still carry a deficit – but he says, 'The only way we can do this is to introduce a hiring freeze. It is the only way.'

3120 So other Governments have the same problem that we have. Other Governments take bold and decisive action. If we are having problems made and some people have made those problems, is it fair to expect those problems to go away next term, when we have the same people making the same mistakes in the same departments? So, it is food for thought.

3125 In business, there were years – I went through three year sections – quite serious ones, but there were years where we had to peg our business cuts. We had to peg; there were no pay rises, and that still happens in Guernsey in other businesses. It is tough out there. We should avoid above-inflation pay rises. Because inflation, even though we do not like to admit it, is our biggest enemy. When we put minimum wage up above inflation, start saying it is above inflation, pay rises, and we should just be in line with it. That is what we have got to stick to.

3130 I think there is a hell of an argument to say, 'If we peg this Department at what you spent last year, you did it last year, 12 months, you have got to do it again'. That is probably easier to achieve real savings than just saying, 'You are going to make a 1% savings', and not say exactly where. I do like the idea of making savings, so I am going to support it. But it is more tangible to make those savings based on what you spent last year. I am not sure we do that.

3135 Deputy St Pier, when we had this long debate about pegging budgets, he said, 'Well, Deputy Vermeulen did not tell me that when I met him'. I was fighting for the budget that we were putting forward. As Deputy Bury states, the people on the Home Department, do not do pay rises. So I really urge for strength in these difficult times where there are huge debts, when it comes to pay increases, does the 1% reduction apply to Deputies' wages? I hope it does. I hope it is not false economies that we are chasing. I hope it is real savings that we make. There are savings we can do, but we have got to do it intelligently, and I just hope we do.

3140 So I am going to support this one.

The Bailiff: Deputy Strachan.

3145 **Deputy Strachan:** Just very briefly, I echo a lot of what Deputy Bury said on the Health Committee. But I would just point out that the last time we put our budget in, we were also knocked back. Items that were pulled from the business that we wanted to do were spend on technology and spend on public health. The two ways that we can reduce our Health budget are to invest in efficiencies with technology and to help our Islanders with their health, live healthier, and a lot of that comes from our public health programmes. So it is very difficult at this stage for HSC to find those savings, and it is also difficult for address those.

I take Deputy Kazantseva-Miller's point. I cannot see that we can do this in the first year. Our goal is to be doing this towards the end of our term, but it would be very difficult. So I will be voting against it.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Collins.

Deputy Collins: Thank you, sir.

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I feel a bit old today, I think back to nine years ago, I was in this Assembly and four years before that I got elected. It reminds me of what happened then, that we had a vote of no confidence in the Health Committee because they cut a service. Maybe to my shame, I was one of those that signed that because I felt that they should not have started to cut services instead of going back to the Treasury and saying, 'We just need to do a bit more', because we had transition of leaving all that taxation.

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For me, it was a point well made about finance leads. I am the finance lead for ESS, and this is why I mentioned before I had in my hand the understanding of what a budget is. As I said, we have got two arms to that. So my question to Deputy Humphreys would be, the amendment talks about public expenditure, and I am assuming you were talking about all of the public expenditure. As our Chief Minister pointed out in her speech in the Budget about pensions, we spend quite a lot on pensions. So for me are we looking to cut some of that out? Altogether, ESS is £340 million, as I said, that would be £3.4 million. That is quite a lot to cut from somewhere.

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Another point I wanted to just pick up on was Deputy Niles talked about 3%. But some in this Assembly would think we are spending some money on a Heathrow, is that value for money compared to maybe having to cut back on a service or some expenditure in a Committee in health? So for me those were the key points I picked up, but it does feel a little bit like Groundhog Day that we are looking at do we bring in some more money through extra charges or do we cut services?

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But I do hope that the finance leads will take the opportunity to get together because I am really interested in comparing budget versus budget, going line by line, looking at everything, looking at what we can. Personally, I know in ESS there are some pockets. I am really embarrassed that we have still got some huge postal costs and other things, and I understand we want to invest in technology but we really need to start looking at it line by line. So hopefully that will happen.

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I think I am going to vote for this, but I am waiting for my colleague on ESS to speak because hopefully he will convince me, if he is really passionate about this, that it will also come to the ESS table and when we have these hard discussions, and we have had quite a few over the last six months about what we can possibly do and savings, that is part of his thoughts that when we get together we just cannot continue to spend and we have to make some hard decisions. It is going to be really difficult.

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So, anyway, that is all I wanted to contribute, sir, thank you very much.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Rylatt.

Deputy Rylatt: Just to not let Deputy Collins down on his request and the President of my Committee, Deputy Bury, I suppose in terms of the 1%, I am not sure this is the time or place to interrogate every line of our Committee net expenditure now. I absolutely appreciate that, and that is an exercise that I would be interested to work with Deputy Collins further on as our finance lead. I believe with £89 million net expenditure for 2026, as he said, I believe there are pockets of expenditure and, as the amendment says, it does not mandate a 1% reduction from every single Committee, but it is not necessarily saying it has to come from that, but I would hope and I believe there is scope to do that, and that is what we would be hopefully doing as part of that consultative, investigative process.

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But I understand Deputy Bury's scepticism. I share that scepticism, but I would rather us be doing something rather than nothing.

The Bailiff: As no one else is rising, I will turn to the President of the Policy & Resources Committee to comment on Amendment 7, please.
3205 Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.
I will start by just putting on record that P&R had nothing to do with the drafting of this amendment, so any views about its fluffiness or otherwise can be attributed purely and entirely to its proposer and seconder, Deputies Humphreys and Rylatt.
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There are some amendments, including some that we have already debated, where, as discussed, for example, Deputy Laine went into quite a lot of detail where we did work on the propositions, but this was not one of those. They consulted with us but we had absolutely no input into the wording whatsoever.
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I give way to Deputy Goy.

Deputy Goy: Thank you so much, Deputy de Sausmarez, for giving way.
I have lost my train of thought now. Fluffy amendments can work if you there is KPI. If you enforce KPI then all the teeth lost on that amendment can be regained back by the KPI. But a fluffy amendment does not work when there is no KPI.
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That is all I want to say, thank you.

Deputy de Sausmarez: I am not proposing this amendment and I did not word it, but I do find that quite an odd comment, given that there is a very clear KPI in this. So, of all the criticisms to throw at it, the lack of KPI is probably not one. I am not going to give way again, but anyway.
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Deputy Inder was surprised that we were not maybe a bit more clear about where the Committee was on this, and the answer is we were very keen to hear debate and there were a variety of views. So, from a Committee position perspective, obviously we did not oppose the proposer and seconder bringing it, but we were quite keen to listen to some of the views because again, as many people have pointed out, we would be under direction to do this. But the real impact is on the Committees, and all of the Committees, and ultimately the community.
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I did chuckle when Deputy Humphreys opened with her analogy on the British Cycling incremental gains era. I am a big fan of that and I was ripped throughout it and I know a lot about that. But the reason I was giggling was because British Cycling themselves will attribute a significant proportion of the success of that era to the fact that their budget was significantly increased over time. So I appreciate that was not the angle that her analogy was trying to tap into, but it did strike me as a little bit of an irony that the reason they were so successful is largely attributable to the fact that their budget increased. I would also say that their baseline, their most valuable assets were getting fitter and stronger, whereas our baseline is getting significantly and quite rapidly older and with more costly issues to deal with. It is not a linear relationship.
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It does bring me on to what Deputy Collins was talking about. He has previewed this really, but I did mention this in the Budget debate but it is worth articulating that half of what we spend as a Government is broadly attributable to pensions, long-term care and health and social care. The increase, this talks to the baseline point, the fact that this is not just Committees being profligate, this is not Committees going, 'I feel like spending loads more money on this', it is the fact that the need is increasing within the community. So, in 2004, the States spent £55 million on pensions, by 2024 it was £170 million, so that pensions are 19% of the total expenditure, and that was an average increase year-on-year of 5.8%. Long-term care 2004, £8.2 million expenditure, 2024, £25.5 million. It is just 3% of the total but again it is a 5.8% year-on-year average increase over that 20-year period, significantly above inflation in both camps.
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Health and social care is the real biggie, as Deputy Oswald has already pointed out, a mere £101 million in 2004, 2024 it was up to £242 million, and that is 27% of the total and relatively modest by comparison to pensions and long-term care, a 4.5% increase year-on-year, which is much closer to the average RPIX of 3.1% over that period. It has really been driven again largely by our
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demographics. So, we have got a little bit over 12,500 pensioners at the moment and the proportion of those of whom are over 85 is 1,874, give or take. That is projected over the next 20 years to have gone up to 15,000 pensioners, 3,107 of whom are anticipated to be over 85 at that point.

3260 So, really, that is an important point about baseline and underlying needs, and that is why I thought it was maybe worth just drawing that distinction between what we have to deal with and the comparatively fortunate position that British Cycling found themselves in. Although I do take the point, which is the serious one, that incremental gains can add up to make significant savings. I am sure everyone in this Assembly would be very supportive of making those efficiencies and savings.

3265 But, again, Deputy Sloan has referenced the fact that I referenced there are too many planned around financial transformations programme. It did result in some sustainable savings. It also was affected by quite a lot of salami slicing and some false economies. One of the things that I am uneasy about in this amendment is the fact that, if there is going to be an assumption that health and education and frontline services, extremely important though all those things are, are to be somewhat protected, then the burden does, as the explanatory note is honest enough to accept, the burden does feel very disproportionate on other Committees.

3270 The figures that I have just read out about the proportion of money that is spent on healthcare, for example 27%, mean that if we are serious about savings, then realistically the place that we need to be looking is in our areas of biggest expenditure, especially health and social care, and the harsh reality of that is it means service cuts. One of my huge frustrations is that, when we have these conversations in the public, and my goodness me I have them all the time, and my goodness me, am I going to be having this conversation at seven o'clock this evening.

3275 The public are frustrated because they hear these numbers, they hear about these failed projects, they hear about this waste of money, and they say, 'Well, why are you even talking about the need to raise additional revenue when we have wasted tens of millions of pounds here?' and all the rest of it. When they say, 'If you just got your house in order', which absolutely, yes, we need to do and, yes, we are on it, 'but stop wasting money', we would not be needing to have these conversations. But that does not take into account (a) very different, but very rapidly changing, baseline and the cost that that is driving, but (b) more importantly there is this view out there that if we just had paid civil servants a bit less or had fewer of them, not frontline staff – never frontline staff is it – but fewer civil servants and maybe had a few fewer Deputies or something, then all our problems would be solved.

3285 The reality is that would not even touch the sides, and I know this from personal experience; people take an incredible interest in this expenditure of Committees like Environment & Infrastructure. Again, these sums do not touch the sides of the kinds of figures that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller was talking about. If we are serious about savings, I do not think realistically it can be done by somewhat protecting health and education. As Deputy Montague said, everyone loves the idea of savings, but not there, not like that.

3290 Deputy Gollop, I cannot remember what he said, he said something like, 'I am all for savings but not in ...' and then listed a bunch. I would quite like to know where Deputy Gollop would be happy to see savings because this is where the rubber hits the road, and I am personally really torn.

I will give way. If Deputy Gollop is about to tell us where he would like to see savings, I am all ears.

3300 **Deputy Gollop:** I frequently get chastised by some Members, including Deputy Vermeulen, because maybe Policy & Resources collectively, but I got the hit. In some people's eyes, we gave above-inflationary pay rise to the public sector and I would like to see where this Policy & Resources are on that. Because some of it was two-year agreements. Where would I put savings? I would not make charges. The key area for savings are in terms of senior management and senior officer grades. That is one area.

3305 Another area are efficiencies, so that we can consider outsourcing or running some services more like the private sector. I will be honest, I am a sceptic about how many services can be cut, but

surely, as Deputy Laine pointed out, our IT has been so difficult in terms of expenditure. If we could have saved even 20% of the IT costs we would have millions and millions more. But my position is
3310 Government in some areas needs to be bigger and needs to raise more revenue, but that is a debate for another day.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you.

3315 One of the general themes was that everyone really supports what this is trying to do, but there is a great deal of scepticism about what is going to be deliverable, and indeed when that rubber hits the road about what it means in terms of service cuts, that is also going to be very challenging for politicians across all the Committees.

3320 So, there seems to me that the general theme, I think this amendment probably will carry, but with a great deal of scepticism about whether it will achieve anything. But I do appreciate there is an optics message at the heart of this, and that is important. We do need to signal that we are serious about expenditure constraint. However, I would say that there is an amendment that we have not yet debated that is much more effective in achieving this and that is Amendment 6, because I am deeply sceptical about making any meaningful savings for 2027 that are not just salami-slicing, certainly across the board.

3325 Because what we really need to do, and I did touch on this in my General Update Statement yesterday, and it is something that aligns very closely with Amendment 6, is priority-based budgeting. Because, if we are going to be making decisions about reviewing services or building budgets from the ground up, which already happens, but if we are going to be making decisions about are we putting our resources into the right areas, are we spending the right way, can we
3330 justify all of the expenditure that we are making, then it does need to be done properly.

3335 Unfortunately, how Committees have had to deal really with a target of expenditure savings previously has meant that the things that get cut are buildings maintenance, training, as Deputy Montague said, all the sport and culture stuff is a really easy target when compared against supporting children with additional learning needs and stuff like that. So, I am concerned about the unintended consequences of doing this, although I am very supportive of finding meaningful efficiencies and savings.

3340 So, I am undecided. I am probably with Deputy Sloan and he made some good points when he spoke. I am probably with Deputy Sloan in that I will likely abstain on this. But obviously, if we are directed to do it, I will more than happily carry out that direction in absolute good faith and with a lot of seriousness. But, yes, I do think that to do this properly we do need to adopt a zero-based, priority-based budgeting approach to give serious consideration to how budgets can be better reprioritised in order to achieve that.

So, yes, I will leave it there.

3345 **The Bailiff:** Finally, I will invite the proposer of Amendment 7, Deputy Humphreys, to reply to the debate please.

Deputy Humphreys.

Deputy Humphreys: Thank you, sir.

3350 I hope my colleagues will forgive me, this is my first time trying to sum up, but there are quite a lot of pages of notes. Unlike Deputy Blin, I did not expect it necessarily to be easy and quiet, but maybe it took a little bit longer than I had perhaps anticipated.

Deputy Niles, looking at 3%. I am not sure your colleagues agree with you although a challenge would be interesting.

3355 Deputy Camp, spending more but less. That gets a bit complicated to explain quickly here, but I absolutely hear your point and this is about making savings, genuine cuts in expenses.

Deputy Gollop and others, Deputy Oswald, I absolutely understand the increasing demand in healthcare, the good old days of lower tax, I acknowledge, and that is why this is not a straight line, blunt instrument. I acknowledge there are issues. I acknowledge this is going to be challenging.

3360 I agree, I would like to see Deputy Goy's targets around KPIs, something I gave you earlier, that would be a useful thing. But this does not cut the fee services.

Deputy Ozanne, I am glad you changed your mind. The GWP is about setting the vision and this is part of my vision; I can give you my commitment.

3365 Deputy Inder, this was all my own work and I did not even send the speech to Deputy St Pier to read. But there you go.

A 1% straight line is exactly what I did not say, I wrote down, and then Deputy Burford very kindly pointed it out for me. Deputy Burford does not think it is doable. Maybe it is not doable, but if we do not try it, certainly it will not be doable. We all need to do our bit.

3370 Deputy Osborne, I am with you, Health is the biggest spender, this is a nuanced loan arrangement and I am pleased you have taken note of that across the bales. I understand your point on income and welcome the new revenue opportunity, welcome the new income lines, the user pays. There will be more detail I hope in the Funding and Investment Plan in due course. I will talk about that at that point.

3375 Deputy Blin, the Government Work Plan recognises the need for efficiency, and thank you for agreeing that you like my analogies and my amnesty. If we are efficient, people will come with us. Bottom-up budgeting; I agree it is the way to go and the way to get there, but every little step does count.

I agree AI is not an immediate answer, I think that was Deputy Laine who said that, but we need to work to get there, but I think we need to be getting there.

3380 Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, I am sure your mental maths is correct, if not very close. I did not rework the numbers; I was too busy making notes, but it is going to be a challenge. I never intended it not to be a challenge and I am wearing my big girl pants.

3385 Deputy Bury, I agree it is fluffy and, with no disrespect to the Greffier, he supervised my amendment and he said I was putting the detail in the wrong place. I am learning. Did I get it right or not, who knows? Targeting the efficiencies, concerns over staffing and pay, I carry all those concerns as well. I genuinely am not about causing harm. I am genuinely about targeting improvements, trying to get this sorted out, trying to go in a direction and in the right way, and without having this amendment there, without acting, it certainly will not happen.

3390 Deputy Leadbeater, again sympathetic to Home Affairs projects, sympathetic to the work you are doing, sympathetic to the things that take time; we just need to get going. We need to get the optics right and we need to push for savings. I agree, savings must be both achievable and reputable.

3395 Deputy Montague, public keep asking us to save money, but not like that. People keep asking the Housing Committee to build houses but not in their backyard. I feel you and I hear you and thank you for saying that you will look for efficiencies. If I can get 120 pens and 20 staff, imagine what all the teachers can do? I jest, but you get my point. I agree there are no easy fixes and Deputy Montague knows that getting good teachers and keeping them here is at the centre of my heart, not least because it would put my daughter back in my own home. We cannot cut core services. I am not asking you to. Very interesting the mixed messages, 1% is not enough, 1% is too much. The point is, let us start somewhere, let us get on.

3400 Deputy Laine, you will support it but it is doomed to fail. Again, I hear you, I understand that vocalisation of the concern. But genuinely, if we do not do it, if we do not try, it certainly will not happen. I fully appreciate the IT challenges. I fully appreciate running times. But we still have to target the things that we know and we still have to target savings. I am not advocating getting rid of staff. We need to look at each vacancy that arises. Again, I am not suggesting we just do not fill all the vacancies, I am suggesting we review them. We need growth, we need economic development to achieve savings.

3405 Deputy Goy, no teeth implied, sorry, I did it on advice. It was not P&R, Deputy de Sausmarez was absolutely right, they did not change the wording of my amendment whatsoever. That is what it is.

3410 There will be detail in the Funding and Investment Plan.

Deputy Sloan, you said it is not a version of your Budget amendment. I agree in that I approached the baseline, targeted nuanced expenditure, so while some people have drawn the anomaly, I agree it is not the same. We will see where it goes. I am sorry you feel it is meaningless.

3415 Deputy Curgenvén, it feels like Groundhog Day with your comment from Deputy Bury. I guess you and I, Deputy Curgenvén, have not been here long enough to get to Groundhog Day and perhaps we will be saying that in three years' time. I honestly have never felt that Deputy Bury would not listen to me. I will say that. I like the definitions.

3420 Deputy Vermeulen, pausing to avoid false economies. Agreed. We have got to be very careful. I was very clear; I talked about repeatable and achievable targets. I know this is not going to be easy. I absolutely know that this is not something that we can just go, 'Yes, way-hey, that is easy to find'. But, if we do not target it, if we do not start working towards it, we will never get there. We need the strength; we need to support. Does 1% apply to Deputy wages? That is one for the next debate, but a fair point well-made, and your false economies point, agreed.

3425 Deputy Strachan, I take the points, I have addressed most of them with other people. I understand the concern about health, I understand about the investment to save, it is almost the point I made yesterday in my question to Deputy de Sausmarez and P&R with regard to investing in properties because the stitch in time saves nine. I do hear you. It has got to be nuanced.

3430 Deputy Collins, your voting no confidence in health; hindsight is a marvellous thing for all of us. The question about public expenditure, we are talking about general revenue, not the General Insurance Fund, but it is up to ESS what percent they put in there, but they are looking at this, so it is of course protected. With regard to Heathrow, that is what you think, who knows, at the end of the day we do not know what is going to come out of that. But at least this amendment has got everyone thinking.

3435 Deputy Rylatt, not the time or place to think about it, I agree; we cannot keep talking about everything. I appreciate that, as seconder of the amendment, we share some scepticism about some of the features, because it is true, it is not easy.

3440 Deputy de Sausmarez, I take the irony of the British Cycling analogy. I enjoyed sharing a smile with you about it because it is one of those things, you can use it in either way. I am not going to rehearse your numbers, I tried writing them down, but what is the point. I understand this will be difficult but that does not mean we should not try. I will be clear; I do not want salami-slicing or false economy. I would rather we try and fail than keep pushing this through just for the sake of making it work.

3445 I will say that because, when we come to the next Budget debate, that might be relevant to how I stand on that. This is about signalling our intent, it is about saying that we will try, it is about saying we will work to achieve this, and I hope that we may come out with something at the end.

I am looking forward to debating Amendment 6 on baseline budgeting; I agree, I think that is a good way into the future. But, for now, I just ask for support for this amendment.

Thank you.

3450 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, it is time to vote on Amendment 7, proposed by Deputy Humphreys, seconded by Deputy Rylatt, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 7 please.

There was a recorded vote.

3455

Carried – Pour 29, Contre 5, Ne vote pas 3, Did not vote 1, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Bury, Tina	Cameron, Andy	Malik, Munazza	Williams, Steve
Burford, Yvonne	Goy, David	de Sausmarez, Lindsay		
Camp, Haley	Oswald, George	Sloan, Andy		
Collins, Garry	Parkinson, Charles			
Curgenvén, Rob	Strachan, Jennifer			

Dorrity, David
Falla, Steve
Gabriel, Adrian
Gollop, John
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah
Helyar, Mark
Hill, Edward
Humphreys, Rhona
Inder, Neil
Kay-Mouat, Bruno
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha
Laine, Marc
Leadbeater, Marc
Matthews, Aidan
McKenna, Liam
Montague, Paul
Niles, Andrew
Ozanne, Jayne
Rochester, Sally
Rylatt, Tom
Snowdon, Alexander
St Pier, Gavin
Van Katwyk, Lee
Vermeulen, Simon

3460 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Amendment 7, proposed by Deputy Humphreys and seconded by Deputy Rylatt, there voted in favour 29 Members, 5 Members voted against, 3 Members abstained, 2 Members did not participate in the vote. Therefore, I will declare it carried.

[Amendment 6.](#)

To insert an additional Proposition as follows:

"6. To direct the Policy & Resources Committee, working with Principal Committees, to establish a programme for zero-based budgeting, under which material areas of States' expenditure are reviewed from first principles rather than by reference to historical baselines; and to require that the scope, methodology (including reporting) and initial findings of this programme be included by no later than in the mid-term Government Work Plan report, with the outcomes of such reviews used to inform Committee Work Plans, future budget proposals, and major policy decisions during the remainder of the term."

3465 **The Bailiff:** We have potentially got time to get started on Amendment 6 next if Deputy Camp wishes to move that amendment now.

Deputy Camp: Yes, I do, sir, thank you.

3470 So, I bring this amendment today with thanks to Deputy Curgenvin for seconding it, because how we manage and spend public money matters profoundly. The last amendment has quite clearly demonstrated that point, and I probably have to say thanks to Deputy de Sausmarez who may be setting a little bit of this speech up, which might be helpful, we will find out.

3475 It matters to those who decide how money should be spent, it matters to those who are responsible for spending it, but most of all it matters to those who fund it, the people of Guernsey, who have no choice but to pay. Strip away the complexity, the Committees, and the jargon and this debate comes down to one simple concept: money, and of course trust. Two concepts perhaps.

3480 For years, people have said our Budgets do not make sense. I used to hear that from the outside. Now, having gone through a first Budget cycle from the inside, I understand why. Our system still relies far too heavily on what I can only describe as finger-in-the-air economics where last year's spending is assumed to be essential, rolled forward, topped up, and quietly absorbed into an ever-growing concept known as business as usual. That phrase, BAU, has become an amorphous

blob. It masks assumptions, it hides decisions, and it makes it almost impossible to explain either to ourselves or to the public why spending grows while outcomes do not.

3485 We cling to emotional arguments rather than well-reasoned justification. The qualitative trumping the quantitative every time while we continue to live outside our means and grow a deficit of £98 million at latest interpretation. So, when the public asks why new roles are created, why certain sector headcounts are growing exponentially, why new taxes are proposed, or why discretionary spending seems to expand, regardless of the Island's financial circumstances, it becomes difficult to give clear, confident answers. What never seems difficult, however, is for the spend culture to continue.

3490 That is hardly surprising when budgeting processes are opaque, procedurally dense, and buried under language that even experienced financial minds struggle to unpick. In an environment where everything is essential and everything is a priority, nothing truly is. Budgets grow, restraint, as we label the savings, and accountability dissolves into complexity. This is even a system that allows future commitments to be made while unfunded, 'It is okay, the people of Guernsey will simply have to suck it up'.

3495 Let us be clear, we cannot borrow our way out of this, we cannot tax our way into better financial management, and we certainly cannot pretend the problem will solve itself. That is why this amendment matters. Policy & Resources discuss priority-based budgeting. I understand why on paper it sounds disciplined, it sounds strategic, and I accept that it represents a step on from last year plus a bit more. I also want to acknowledge something P&R has said that they see zero-based budgeting and priority-based budgeting as broadly similar, and that when they talk about testing assumptions under priority-based budgeting, they understand that to include a form of zero-based thinking.

3500 I will come to a point in a bit, but my first point is I accept that at least in theory. At a conceptual level, both approaches seek to challenge inherited spending patterns, both aim to move us away from automatic roll forward, and both when applied rigorously can improve decision making, in fact to the extent that some might say they are the same thing. But similarity intent is not always the same as equivalence in execution, and here is where I want to exercise caution. There is a difference in that zero-based budgeting requires justification as a rule, priority-based budgeting allows it as an option.

3510 Under zero-based budgeting, the burden of proof sits squarely with the spending proposal. Nothing proceeds without explanation. Under priority-based budgeting, how far assumptions are tested depends on how rigorously the system is applied. That is where existing financial culture and controls really matter. So, when P&R says that priority-based budgeting will test assumptions, I do not dispute the aspiration. My concern is whether our current systems, data and controls are strong enough to ensure that those assumptions are tested consistently, transparently, and without exception.

3515 We are often assured that costs are already being rigorously tested. That may well be true within parts of the Civil Service. But, if that work is being done, then something is being lost in translation between officers and Committees, because, as Deputies, I speak for myself, I did not consistently see that rigour reflected clearly in the Budget we were asked to approve, and the public definitely does not believe that rigour is there. There is a fundamental difference between being told that costs have been robustly challenged and being able to see evidence in hand that they have been.

3525 Coming from an evidence-based, professional background, I am far more comfortable relying on documented justification than on assurances, however sincerely given. That is not a criticism of individuals; it is a statement about systems. Good systems make scrutiny visible. They do not ask Members to take discipline on trust.

3530 I also want to say something about phasing. I understand the attraction of introducing new budgeting disciplines incrementally and learning lessons along the way. But there is a real risk here that we should be honest about, piecemeal reform often does not test the system's willingness to change, it tests its ability to resist it. When new disciplines are introduced unevenly, resistance is very quickly reframed with evidence. Partial implementation produces partial outcomes and the

3535 conclusion too often is that the reform itself does not work. This is not a fair test. We run the risk of different budgeting systems in parallel, we also risk creating mixed incentives, blurred accountability, endless debate about comparability. It allows costs to shift, baselines to blur, and responsibility to fragment.

3540 Phasing can work, but only if we phase the scope, not the discipline. One system, one standard of justification, one expectation of evidence applied consistently, even if not universally on day one, which brings me back to zero-based budgeting. Zero-based budgeting simply removes the automatic assumption that spending is justified simply because it existed last year. Each budget cycle starts from zero and every area of spend must be actively justified. This is the line by line that Deputy Collins was discussing during the last amendment. In plain English, if you want money, you explain what it is for, why it is needed, and what happens if it is not funded. Past spending is not a defence.

3545 The phrase 'business as usual' disappears because it no longer explains anything. This is why zero-based budgeting is uncomfortable and that is precisely why it works when discipline is lacking. It forces clarity, it creates ownership, and it breaks the quiet ratchet effect of historic decisions rolling forward unexamined.

3550 Now, I want to be clear, it is not about cutting essential services. Justification is not the same as jeopardy. Services that are genuinely essential will withstand scrutiny. What will not survive are assumptions that have never been tested. I am not pretending this is easy. Zero-based budgeting is demanding, it takes time, it requires effort, but that is not an argument against it, it is an argument for honesty. If we do not have the capacity to explain how public money is spent, then we have a far bigger problem in process. This is not about accounting theory; this is about whether this Assembly is serious about financial discipline or whether we are content to relabel the habits that brought us here.

3560 My argument is not that priority-based budgeting is wrong, but that it comes later. Zero-based budgeting is how you reset a system. Priority-based budgeting is how you allocate once that reset has happened. If we adopt priority-based budgeting now without first challenging the baseline, we will get exactly what we always have had, incremental growth, deferred decisions, and accountability blurred by complexity. Reranking a broken baseline does not repair it, it disguises it.

3565 Members, this is ultimately a choice between describing restraint and enforcing it. Zero-based budgeting teaches the Government how to say no. Priority-based budgeting teaches it how to say yes intelligently. Right now, we need to re-learn how to say no. If our system were already rigorous, restrained and willing to make genuine trade-offs, this debate would barely matter. The fact that it matters so much tells me everything I need to know, I hope it does you too.

3570 This amendment asks us to do the harder thing, not because it is fashionable but because it is necessary. It sends a clear signal that this Assembly is prepared to govern within limits, not merely talk about them. I ask Members to support this amendment for transparency, for discipline, and for the people who pay for it.

Thank you.

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

3575 **Deputy Curgenvin:** I do, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.
Deputy Helyar.

3580 **Deputy Helyar:** Thank you, sir.

I am aware of the time, graveyard shift, so I will not keep you after 5.30. You will not often hear me giving a speech in support of spending, so enjoy it; this might be the last time you hear it. I will support the amendment. This is an important technical process to go through in order to get

3585 everybody to understand what money is being spent by their Committees when they go through the process.

3590 However, it is important to recognise that the two major spends that we have, one is staff, and that is not a zero-based exercise, they are there and if you do not want them you have to pay for them to leave. So there is a cost associated with that. The other part is, and we can go across the top bench, so head of Health, a large part of Health spending is formula-led. Deputy Oswald and his team have no idea how many people are going to get ill this year or next year or the year after, they have no idea what treatments they need, what new treatments come along, whether they need to go to the UK for specialist treatment, whether we need to pay for transport; transport is getting more expensive because fuel prices have gone up, so we can go around the bench.

3595 Home have no idea how many people are going to be arrested, how many of them are going to need to go to prison, how many fires there are going to be, whether there is a toxic pollution incident, none of this can be budgeted for, it is all open ended.

3600 When we get to ESS it gets even worse. We have no idea how many babies will be born, how many people will be unemployed, how many people are going to need social support. Similarly, when we get to Education, we do not know how many pupils, we do not know whether they need special support for languages, we do not know how many will be SEND required. These things are formula-led, which means we can only estimate how much that is.

3605 A vast amount of the budgets that we have to predict are based on that kind of spending and you cannot zero-base that kind of budget spending. So, for the areas where it can be applied, it is a really useful exercise. But, if we are expecting it to produce huge results in terms of saving, it is unlikely, because this kind of spending, we have no idea at the beginning of every year what it is going to look like. We have to make reasonable estimates of it and unfortunately it comes out where it does.

3610 Part of the job that we have, and it would be a very useful exercise for everyone to understand the budgets, is then taking that information, living with it, and explaining it to the public. Because I accept there is a lot of contradiction and there is a lot of opposition to tax drivers out there. I know, it is my lived experience for several years as a Deputy and Treasury lead, having to explain that to people, and I have been through the process. But we all need to carefully explain to people, there is no money down the back of the sofa. People are doing very much the best they can with the budgets that they have.

3615 In a budget this size, in any organisation, it is possible to save money. There is no doubt about that. There are examples of waste all over the place that we can pick up on. The problem is that in the main part they are largely trivial when it comes to the big size, and we are going to have to accept that through a learning experience and then have a mature debate about how we fix it. Because we have to fix it, we have a lot of big bills represented by the work in this plan that we have to spend money on, otherwise our infrastructure is going to start to fall apart and our services with it.

3620 So, I do think it is a good idea. I will support the amendment, but we have to reflect on the fact that a large amount of our spending, it is not pie in the sky, but we just do not know what is coming down the tracks when we start every year.

3625 Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Rochester.

3630 **Deputy Rochester:** I will support the amendment, and I am grateful for it being brought forward, as Deputy Camp says, because it encourages discipline and it encourages analysis. As finance lead on Environment & Infrastructure and Health & Social Care, I have had the opportunity to meet with our finance business partners for a couple of months now, and what I would share with the Assembly is that I do not think it comes naturally to Committees to scrutinise our financial position. That is understandable. We are by necessity and by democracy a variety of individuals with different backgrounds and skillsets.

3640 We all come to the job to create policy that will make lives better for Islanders and it does not naturally align that spending hours poring over our financial position will deliver to that outcome, but of course it does. I like this amendment because it requires all of us to apply ourselves, as we must, to the financial considerations of our mandates. I would argue, maybe optimistically, but based on my experience over the last couple of months, that there are opportunities for all of us to tighten up our financial position, to maximise the revenues that are available to us by charging for the things we should charge for at the cost basis we should be charging them for, and also to ensure that through effective management of service level agreements and other significant financial spends that we can find some savings, even at HSC. I am confident that we can do that over the coming years. So the opportunity for us all to look in detail at the money that we spend and exercise scrutiny is to be welcomed, and I trust that the zero-based budget process will enable us all to do that.

The Bailiff: Deputy Collins.

3650

Deputy Collins: I will be very brief, sir, as we have got a few minutes to go. I just thank the Deputy for bringing this, it is something I am definitely behind and very supportive. Once again, as we have said before, we are starting to put finance leads in place on Committees, and I am really keen they all get together. Deputy Rochester suggested that but we are of the same mind at the same time when we exchanged emails; I was possibly finance lead on Housing but Deputy Humphreys has now taken that lead. But, again, very supportive and just to thank again the two Deputies involved in bringing this.

3655

Thank you.

3660

The Bailiff: Deputy Oswald.

Deputy Oswald: Thank you, sir.

Clearly, I am not an accountant. Zero-based accounting has been explained to me but this is not an area which I am familiar with, but I understand the implications thereof and the efficiencies which can drive from this. I am just aware of the massive task it might be, like turning a tank around, to change the way the accounting system, particularly for a Committee which I am responsible for at HSC with its expenditure, would take to turn the boat around to adopt this process. Are you envisaging or can you answer in your response, whether this can be introduced in a stepwise fashion or is it going to be a big bang?

3665

Thank you.

3670

Deputy Inder: Sir, I am going to attempt the 26(1), please.

The Bailiff: All right, can I invite those Members who wish to speak in debate on Amendment 6 to stand in their places? Is it still your desire, Deputy Inder, that I put a motion under Rule 26(1).

3675

Deputy Inder: It is.

The Bailiff: Okay, can I just get a sense of how many people want to speak in debate on Amendment 6? Only Deputy Curgenvén stood up to say that he wanted to speak. So, what I am tempted to do is to put a motion to you that we conclude Amendment 6 by hearing from Deputy de Sausmarez after Deputy Curgenvén and then Deputy Camp can reply to that short debate. Those in favour and those against. I will declare that carried.

3680

Deputy Curgenvén.

3685

Deputy Curgenvén: Talk about graveyard shift. Thank you, sir.

I do not believe zero-based budgeting is a contentious proposal. My understanding is here now, and perhaps the majority of the Chamber are already aligned on the principle of it, and especially that public spending should be actively justified rather than automatically rolled forward on a year-by-year basis, which is how most budgeting is done.

3690 Given the extensive experience in this Chamber, I am not going to bother going into the minutiae of how zero-based budgeting works, I will if you want. I am an accountant, I am also a lead that the economist talks about, so if anyone has any queries I will be happy to help you out. I suppose what matters really is why it is appropriate for us to formalise this approach now.

3695 In simple terms, the reason people like zero-based budgeting is that it gives every pound a clear and immediate job, a defined purpose. Spending is assessed on its merits each cycle rather than inherited by default. This eliminates unnecessary spending, promotes accountability and aligns financial resources directly with strategic goals or/and tactical targets. This is precisely what we have told the public we will do, manage public finances deliberately, transparently, and prove
3700 Government as a whole is fiscally responsible.

Zero-based budgeting is not new or an untested concept. It has been used since the 1970s by Governments and large corporations to improve financial control. Notably, in the case of Governments, to ensure that budgets do not habitually overrun, which of course we all know about. Importantly, the States of Guernsey already applies elements of this approach in practice, or at least that is what I have been told. This proposal does not represent a radical departure from existing systems but more consistent and structured application of the principles I suppose we already accept.

3705 Formalising zero-based budgeting across Departments would be an evolution rather than a real invention, one that can be implemented proportionately and cost effectively while improving the credibility and resilience of our budgeting process going forward. Therefore, I please ask Members to support this amendment going forward.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: The President, Deputy de Sausmarez, to speak to Amendment 6, please.

3715

Deputy de Sausmarez: Sir, I will be quick.

The only point that is worth just expanding upon slightly is the point that Deputy Oswald made in that this will require resources to do well. Deputy Camp did explain the alignment and potential distinctions between priority-based budgeting and zero-based budgeting. This twins quite well with the amendment that we debated previously in terms of a target to reducing savings. But certainly the current plan that we had in mind anyway was to pilot this different approach for all the reasons that people have spoken in debate, most recently Deputy Curgenvén, have already talked about.

3720 A few different areas, one of those areas being corporate service, another being a service area within HSC, precisely because of the challenges that Deputy Oswald has highlighted, and also a smaller Committee. On that point, I would say I commend Deputy Rochester for her suggestion about the Committees having a finance lead. That is a really positive improvement and will really help in all of this. So I am strongly supportive of this. I believe we will certainly in P&R see a strong alignment with what we were intending to do anyway. As I say, it does pair quite well with the amendment before this that we debated.

3725 So, given the hour, I will hand over to the proposer of the amendment.
3730

The Bailiff: I will invite Deputy Camp as the proposer of Amendment 6 to reply to the debate.

Deputy Camp: Thank you.

3735 My technology is revolting on me. So, yes, just to speak to Deputy Helyar's point first. I completely agree, and to his point, this is not necessarily about savings, it is about transparency, it is about understanding and it is about explaining to the public. If we cannot do that within ourselves, within our own Committees and in this Assembly, then how can we do it to others. I agree

3740 with him, I have said this in other forums, is that if we are going to go out and ask for more tax from people, then we must be able to explain ourselves when we do that. This proposal is really about trying to start that discipline, that move – or move may be the wrong word, but that discipline, that demonstrable discipline that I have been confounded by just in my short time in the States.

3745 Thank you to Deputy Rochester. I agree it is about scrutiny and discipline and analysis, and I am not an accountant but I have worked in finance a long time and I needed it. I am a humble lawyer who needs a lot of financial information to make any sense of what is going on. Yes, it is good to be optimistic there will be savings, I think there will be, and this is not the major drive of the move.

Thank you, Deputy Collins. I am writing people's initials; I am going to have to remember who they are.

3750 To Deputy Oswald's point, yes, obviously this is a direction to P&R to go away and consider exactly that, how this happens. In discussions, while perhaps lots of people would love a big bang, a big bang probably would be contrary to what we are trying to achieve here. So, that iterative phasing is a good one, but back to the point I made in my speech is that, when we do that, what we do need to make sure is that the discipline is not iterative. The way we might get there can be, but the discipline needs to be instilled from the beginning and we work forward from that.

3755 Finally, Deputy de Sausmarez, we may differ and we may probably agree and disagree in certain areas about whether they be priority-based, but broadly we are aligned that they set out to do broadly the same thing, even if they may come from slightly different angles. So that is why this amendment proposed has been to direct P&R to go away and come back with a method for achieving something that gets us back to first principles rather than reference to historic payments.

3760 So I hope in essence that captures everybody's points, and thank you very much.

The Bailiff: Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 6 proposed by Deputy Camp, seconded by Deputy Curgenvén, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 6 please.

3765 *There was a recorded vote.*

Carried – Pour 35, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 2, Absent 1

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	None	Cameron, Andy	Helyar, Mark	Williams, Steve
Burford, Yvonne			Malik, Munazza	
Bury, Tina				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
Curgenvén, 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				
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

3770

The Bailiff: In relation to Amendment 6, proposed by Deputy Camp, seconded by Deputy Curgenvin, there voted in favour 35 Members, no Member voted against, 1 Member abstained, 3 Members did not participate in the vote, and therefore I will declare it carried.

3775

Just by way of further explanation before we adjourn until tomorrow morning, there is now Amendment 10 to the Government Work Plan, which is a Committee amendment, so I am going to interpose that before Amendment 9 just because I will always take a Committee amendment provided that we have paper copies on everyone's desk in the morning. There will be a paper copy tomorrow morning. So I simply wanted to explain, particularly to Deputy Rochester, that I was going to interpose Amendment 10 before Amendment 9 and therefore that will be the order tomorrow.

3780

We will now close the meeting and adjourn until 9.30 in the morning.

The Assembly adjourned at 5.38 p.m.