



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

STATES OF DELIBERATION

OF THE

ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

HANSARD

Royal Court House, Guernsey, Friday, 30th January 2026

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Present:

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

Law Officers

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

People's Deputies

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

Representatives of the Island of Alderney

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

The Clerk to the States of Deliberation

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

Absent at the Evocation

Deputy R. P. Curgenvén (*indisposé*) ; Deputy L. T. Goy (*relevé à 9h 40*) ;
Deputy N. R. Inder (*relevé à 9h 58*) ; Deputy M. S. Laine (*relevé à 9h 58*) ;
Deputy M. Malik ; 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: Deputy St. Pier.

10 **Deputy St Pier:** Sir, the States' Greffier was too quick for me, I meant to call Deputy Curgenvén indisposé.

The Bailiff: We will note that he is unlikely to turn up unless he has a miraculous recovery. I think Deputy Laine might also have left the Island or on be on the verge of leaving the Island, and the others I have no idea about.

15 We have two new amendments to the Government Work Plan from the Committee. Deputy de Sausmarez, which of the two are you going to actually move?

Deputy de Sausmarez: I think it is Amendment 11, sir, but I have not actually seen this one.

20 **The Bailiff:** You all should have Amendment 10.

Deputy de Sausmarez: It is basically the same.

25 **The Bailiff:** Just a minute, But Amendment 11 will be circulated by the Sheriff. Does every Member have a copy now of amendment numbered 11?
Deputy de Sausmarez, is it 10 or 11?.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Eleven, please, sir.

Amendment 11.

To insert an additional proposition as follows:

"To direct the Policy & Resources Committee to publish a report on the progress of the Major Projects Portfolio, including relevant information and metrics on each project's performance against plan and budget, in a format that is publicly available and easily accessible, no later than 1st July 2026, with updates provided at least every six months thereafter; and to note the Chief Executive shall report on major workstreams underway in the public service as part of an annual Chief Executive's report."

30

The Bailiff: We are going to do 11, so 10 will not be late. Now I invite you to move Amendment 11, Deputy de Sausmarez

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

35

I am grateful to Members for their patience while we got that administrative hiccup out of the way.

Just to explain, Amendments 10 and 11 are essentially identical except for a very small change to the wording because of some advice. Because we drafted it during debate actually on Deputy Goy's amendment yesterday. We just missed a bit of advice that I think was picked up by the officers. I am grateful to them as well.

40

So the change, if anyone wants to know exactly what it was, it used to be:

... and to agree to mandate the Chief Executive.

and the new wording that we are now debating in this amendment is:

45

... to note the Chief Executive shall ...

I will explain why Members can have absolute confidence that will happen. It is already mandated to do that or that is already something that he is planning to do because, in fact, the Policy & Resources Committee has set the Chief Executive a number of objectives. One of them is to increase transparency and accountability in the public service with the outcome that we are looking for being that Islanders and elected Members have a clear understanding of how the public service is structured, who is responsible for what and how well objectives are being delivered.

50

Really this amendment picks up the sentiment that was expressed by many people in the debate on Deputy Goy's yesterday. I am afraid I have forgotten the number off the top of my head. I think everyone recognised that the intent was a really good one, but actually the way it was framed and that amendment was not quite workable and maybe was not directed at quite the right places.

55

Given some of the examples that were used in debate, we thought it would be worthwhile bringing along this amendment, which, for those Members that have not got around to reading it, is:

60

To direct the Policy & Resources Committee to publish a report on the progress of the Major Projects Portfolio, including relevant information and metrics on each project's performance against plan and budget, in a format that is publicly available and easily accessible, no later than 1st July 2026, with updates provided at least every six months thereafter; and to note the Chief Executive shall report on major workstreams underway in the public service as part of an annual Chief Executive's report.

Really, I am hoping that this debate on this amendment will be very short because essentially we have had it. This is just really, I hope, reflecting the will of the Assembly and bringing forward propositions that I hope can give Members and, even more importantly, the public the reassurance that we are really committed to and serious about transparency and openness in a way that will make a measurable – and I use that word advisably – different.

65

I hope that Members will support this amendment.

70

The Bailiff: Deputy St. Pier, do you formally second Amendment 11?

Deputy St Pier: I do, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.

75

Deputy Gabriel: 24(6), sir.

The Bailiff: Just a minute.
Deputy Goy, is it your wish to be relevé? Just relevé.

80

Deputy Goy: Yes.

85

The Bailiff: Rule 24(6), does it go further than the original proposition? I think the difficulty is that the – is the parenthesis in Rule 24(2), Madam Procureur, I might need a bit of assistance here. Because this is a Committee amendment, then does it go further than the original proposition because it is a Committee one?

Madam Procureur: [*Inaudible 9.41.43*]

90

The Bailiff: The ruling I am going to give you, Deputy Gabriel, is that you cannot engage Rule 24(6), but you can engage Rule 24(4), if you wish to do so.

Deputy Gabriel: Too hard. (*Laughter*)

95

The Bailiff: All right. Who wants to speak on –
Deputy Gabriel then on the amendment.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

100

First of all, I would like some clarification from Deputy de Sausmarez or even Deputy St Pier, as why they are directing themselves to do something. Perhaps in their summing up, or even in debate, they could explain that. Because to me this is, and I hate the term 'business as usual', but if they need to report and feel the will of the Assembly has changed that, then surely they should just be able to do it and do not need a resolution to do that and the debate around it, albeit however short it is going to be, which is the main thrust of my point I wanted to make.

105

If Deputy de Sausmarez or Deputy St Pier, as the seconder, could explain why they are directing themselves under proposition to do something, to explain and come back to the Assembly, albeit the will of the Assembly of what we think we want and what has come through debate, then I would be grateful.
Thank you.

110

The Bailiff: Deputy Goy.

Deputy Goy: Thank you, sir.

115

Deputy de Sausmarez and Deputy St Pier has taken Amendment 4, the amendment that I lodged, killed it, punch out all its teeth, taken out all the substances and rebranded as their own. What it is, is virtue signalling with no substance, no teeth, no bite, and is not going to accomplish what Amendment 4 originally set out to accomplish. It is a Potemkin village. However, I am going to vote for it (*Laughter*) and I will tell you why. I will tell you why if the motion passes for us to debate this.

120 At the time when the Guernsey people are crying out in hunger and starvation for transparency and accountability, Deputy de Sausmarez (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and Deputy St Pier threw them a morsel of bread. If I were to reject this amendment, they would then turn around and say, 'Well, did you not say the people of Guernsey are hungry? Here is a morsel of bread'. A morsel of bread will fill a tiny bit of the stomach, but it is also to prevent them from then saying, 'Well you know what, we did offer transparency. You did not take it'.

125 We know what it is about. This amendment is because P&R is worried about a public backlash for their rejection of a more substantive Amendment 4. That is all I am going to say. Let me show you something, a headline from yesterday, 'States IT disasters. We'll say who done it'. Who done it? You lost £42 million'. Who done it? You do not know who done it.

130 Some of our colleagues here presided over the £135 million IT debacle with Agilysys too. So this is not the first time. All of this could have been prevented if we have a strong KPI focus amendment, such as Amendment 4, but of course that was torpedoed by P&R and they came up with this Amendment 11, which is a Potemkin village.

135 Mark my words, the Government Work Plan has a lot of workstreams, much more than just the major projects. Without strong accountability, KPIs, measurements, you can expect these things to repeat itself. I am not being negative here, I am just being very realistic and very pragmatic about things. I have seen how things works in the States. I have seen how the same people who preside over millions of pounds lost to this small Island is still in power, some of them still sitting in this Assembly here.

Thank you.

140 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen.

Deputy Vermeulen: Thank you, sir.

145 I had a most sleepless night last night. Seriously, after our meeting I felt what hope is there for us as an Assembly? What hope is there for the new P&R if they cannot be accountable to what is going on. I could not work out for the sake of me why Deputy Goy yesterday and Deputy Curgenvin were torn to shreds over wanting visibility, transparency, accountability. It is not a good look for this Government. It is not a good look for P&R if there is no transparency and accountability.

150 I want to know the figures, and I hope all you want to know the figures too. I do not want anything swept under the carpet. I want to know. I do not want to know at the end of it, '£42 million, why was I not told earlier? You knew there were problems, why was I not told earlier?'

Deputy Goy, my word, very passionate speech from him. And he is right. He is right to be passionate because this goes to the core. The public have not voted you in to not be transparent and honest about what is going on. The public have voted you in to avoid all the pitfalls we have been performing previously. There are a lot of Ps there, sir; a lot of Ps.

155 I know Deputy de Sausmarez, our Chief Minister, has been very busy, hats off to her last night doing that. Fantastic [*Inaudible 9.50.05*] the other Deputy. Good on the energy to both for doing that.

160 But was Deputy Goy consulted on this? Was Deputy Curgenvin, a very highly qualified accountant, was he consulted on this amendment? Because there was a lot of stick given yesterday to these two Members for bringing their amendment, which I think was far better than what we see here in 10 or 11; far more detail. I racked my brains. Businesses cannot run without looking at key performance indicators, KPIs; they cannot run. How can a Government run without monitoring it? It cannot. This is probably one of the more important amendments, and I cannot understand why there were only the glorious 12 yesterday that voted for Deputy Goy's well thought-out amendment.

165 I will be looking forward to the answers from Deputy de Sausmarez. I will listen to any debate. I expect it will be a short one, but please, from P&R, I want openness and transparency. I do not want anything swept under the carpet. I do not want any fall guys, sir, appointed. I do not want the Chief Officer this, the Chief Officer that.

170 I am in this Assembly. I am a Member of the States of Guernsey and I want P&R to be responsible.
Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy van Katwyk.

175 **Deputy van Katwyk:** Thank you, sir.

I will be supporting this amendment, and I would just like to say Deputy Goy is a very good orator, but perhaps not such a good listener. I did not vote for his amendment yesterday as I had fact-checked some of his statements regarding other countries' Government Work Plans and KPIs, and Chatbot GPT told me that it is just simply not included in other countries' work plans, as
180 Deputy Goy had suggested.

Deputy Goy: Point of correction. He sent me that that –

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Goy.

185

Deputy van Katwyk: Should I sit down, sir?

The Bailiff: You should, yes.

190 **Deputy Goy:** Deputy van Katwyk actually sent me an email and he ChatGPT it. It said, 'How many countries actually have such comprehensive' and ChatGPT says, 'A few'. Not too many. But here is the thing, the good ones do. The good ones do. There are 195 countries in the world. Most of them call them democracies. I can tell you the good ones do. So this is the correction that I want to make. It is misleading and it is a misinformation. Thank you. That Deputy van Katwyk has just said.

195 Thank you.

The Bailiff: I am not persuaded that that was a valid point of correction.
Deputy van Katwyk to continue.

200 **Deputy van Katwyk:** Thank you, sir.

I do believe that Chatbot GPT actually said 'few to none'. But Deputy Goy can fact-check that and I am sure put it on social media later.

If Deputy Goy had been a good listener – I give way to Deputy Vermeulen.

205 **Deputy Vermeulen:** I should just remind Deputy van Katwyk that artificial intelligence facts do need to be fact-checked by experts. You cannot rely that it is 100% correct. It is very good. It will get information from absolutely what is out there and wherever. The Guernsey people have their say and all the rest of it, but these things need to be accurately captured.

I would be very interested to know if other Crown Dependencies further advanced them and
210 include KPIs in openness and transparency as has been suggested.

Deputy van Katwyk: It is a great point, Deputy Vermeulen. If you would like to check with Chatbot GPT and then fact-check the other Crown Dependencies, please feel free.

215 But also the point is Chatbot GPT cannot just take all the data and put it on a website. There needs to be resources put into human fact-checking. Therefore, that made my point for me.

If Deputy Goy had listened yesterday and know that *The Guernsey Press* article, the IT debacle, it is not relevant to bring up today because this amendment would capture that with the Major Projects Portfolio. I cannot understand what the problem is with this –

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

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Goy.

225 **Deputy Goy:** This example of IT debacle is highly relevant because it is a warning to us that without Amendment 4 the GWP would repeat the same mistakes of the Agilisys IT debacle that cost us £135 million and the £42 million IT debacle that got lost, and they do not even know who done it.

230 **Deputy van Katwyk:** Sir, I repeat, a very good orator not so good at listening. Deputy Goy's amendment cast too wide a net. A lot of resources would have been used to gather information on things that the public just are not interested in. Those resources can be better put in better areas. So unfortunately I could not vote for his amendment in the end for multiple reasons, though well-intentioned but I will be voting for this amendment today.

235 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater.

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

240 Can I start with two requests from Members, please? Can we first follow Deputy van Katwyk, and keep debating realms of reality and can we also be quite succinct? Because we do not want to find a situation where we are still on amendments this afternoon. I am not going to be here this afternoon anyway, but a points of correction and extending debates on amendments are not really helpful to anybody.

245 I am going to support this amendment. I did not support Deputy Goy's amendment for the reasons I articulated yesterday, which are similar to Deputy van Katwyk's. At the end of the day, this is where the money is spent. In Major Projects Portfolio is where the money is spent. So if you want accountability for where the money is spent, this is where it is.

250 There is going to be accountability and there is going to be reporting on the Committee work plans which dovetail into the Government Work Plan. So all that information is going to be there and it is going to be teased down. It is going to be reported on twice yearly on this top bench by Presidents of those Committees that are undertaking that work.

I think this was clearly put in yesterday. These accusations of P&R trying to sweep things under the carpet and the lack of openness and transparency. I just do not know where that comes from. It is just absolute crazy.

255 What Deputy de Sausmarez and Deputy St Pier have done is they have taken this and said, 'Okay, Deputy Goy, you want to see some checks and balances and some more eyes and optics on the money that we are spending'. They have taken that message. They have gone away with this, which does just that. It does exactly what Amendment 4 was intended to do The intention of Deputy Goy and the intention of Deputy Curgenvin is wrapped up where it should be by P&R.

260 So I think they should take the advice of P&R. They should be thinking well – Deputy Goy should be thinking because Deputy Curgenvin unfortunately is not here – Deputy Goy should be thinking, 'Well, I thank Deputy St Pier and I thank Deputy de Sausmarez for listening to me, for understanding the message and the intent that I was trying to bring'. They have gone away and they have spent their time, bearing in mind, I think they probably had other things on their plate last night as well, and they brought this back this morning. They have had two bites at the cherry. The first one, Amendment 10, and they have gone away, 'Actually, no, that is not the teeth that it needs. Let us have Amendment 11', and they brought this along.

265 I thank them for that. I think, Members, we should just support this amendment and crack on.

270 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Laine, Deputy Inder, is it your wish both to be relevè?

Deputy Inder: Yes, sir.

275 **Deputy Laine:** Yes, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Ozanne.

Deputy Ozanne: Thank you, sir.

280 I just want to remind Deputy Goy, if I may, that it was not P&R who threw this out, it was us as a Chamber. That is democracy at work. Those of us who have been elected have been elected by the people of Guernsey. So we are here with a mandate and if we disagree with something, that is the whole point of debate.

285 But I was also here when I heard our Chief Minister trying to work on the amendment and trying to explain both to Deputy Goy, but also then to us in the Chamber that the amendment was not workable in its current form. That was a big difference between having metrics on policy versus operational methods and the greatest operation –

Deputy Goy: Point of correction.

290 **The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Goy.

Deputy Goy: The Amendment 4 asks for KPIs on Government Work Plans, not just on policy. The Government Work Plans consist of workstreams, which then can be broken down into projects. As you can see here, there are also projects within the Government Work Plan, within all the five 295 priorities. So it is not an amendment on policies. It is not demanding KPIs and policies. It is demanding KPIs on the workstreams, broken down into projects and attached with KPIs so they can be measured and tracked so that the public can have accountability and transparency.

Thank you.

300 **The Bailiff:** Before you continue, Deputy Ozanne, can I just remind Members about a couple of your rules. Debate must be relevant to the matter before a meeting. At the moment, what is being debated is Amendment 11. If Amendment 11 were to be successful, it will insert a proposition along with a number of other amendments that will have inserted propositions. There will then be an opportunity to debate in general debate all of the propositions in the round.

305 The only thing that needs to be addressed at the moment is Amendment 11. Amendment 4 is history. It was lost. It does not need to be referred to. Please will you all avoid referring to Amendment 4, and that includes you particularly, Deputy Goy.

Deputy Ozanne to continue, please.

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

I fully support Amendment 11. I think it shows that P&R have listened to the debate yesterday, understood what was often cited in the Chamber as a deep desire to be accountable, but in a way that was practical and in a way that would be meaningful to the members of the public. The greatest focus of the members of public, as we have often heard, is that on Major Project Portfolios. So 315 I welcome this.

But my challenge may be that once we have a place which is easily accessible and findable – we all know that we have had problems with gov.gg – but we may use that to include other ideas that came up in debate yesterday, such as Deputy Montague’s ideas and those of all the statements that are often made to update on Government Work Plan projects from the Committees themselves. So 320 to have a place which brings all that information together I think would really help because ultimately this is about communication. We try our hardest to communicate with the public, but we have not always found a good way of giving them reassurances, the measures, the metrics and the good project management that I know our Civil Service do as the norm in every project that I have seen them manage.

325 So I urge everybody to get on and support this.

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: Sir, thank you very much.

330 My apologies, sir, I was not aware of what the Major Projects Portfolio was and of course I am still a new parliamentarian, as it were, so I did a quick check on the policy letter and it says in 2.13, which is the first reference:

The GWP does not include the States' Funding & Investment Plan ("F&IP") or the Major Projects Portfolio.

335 Sir, I was just wondering why in terms of that respect it is referred to in the Government Work Plan, however we are debating it. I am not going to dismiss a bit of extra reporting on the Major Projects Portfolio; that is fine with me.

340 My general assumption in the spirit of what I thought we had been debating yesterday and today was what I thought [*Inaudible 10.03.09*] we were talking about five super priorities because I think that is the essence of the Government, and that was the amendment I would like to have seen because in 1.5 in the policy letter, it says:

Each of these five super priorities is an important, actionable project that the Assembly can significantly advance or complete within its term. They are not abstract goals but concrete commitments against which progress can be measured.

345 In that respect, Sir, those are the five KPIs, to use that phrase, that I would like to see developed. I would be happy for the Economic Development Committee to work with Policy & Resources to look at how we can do that over the course of this term.

350 But with respect to the [*Inaudible 10.03.48*] and with respect to this President, I am not going to throw out some bit of extra reporting, because I think it is very useful. But the question is to why it is added now. But I will be happy to support it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

355 Sir, I am happy to support this Amendment 11. As others, I am disappointed to some extent that we are not attempting to track the development of policy, we are only looking at Major Projects Portfolios. I think in this debate, as well as others, Sir, it was mentioned that tracking the development of policy would be very difficult to do because it is not the same thing as a project, and they do not have stages.

360 But actually, when I looked, I saw that actually there are such things as methodologies and frameworks for how you can measure the development of policies. There is a common policy formulation cycle with six steps. There is an alternative policy development model with eight steps which are number (1) identify issues; (2) policy analysis; (3) policy instrument development; (4) consultation; (5) co-ordination; (6) decision; (7) implementation; (8) evaluation.

365 As I had mentioned, it would have been possible to develop different KPIs for different projects. I would not necessarily count bricks. When you were developing a policy, you could report on the stage that it was at. I think that would have actually been a useful thing. It would be a useful thing for us to do because there are an awful lot of times where I would like, as a Member, to know the stage that a policy is at. It is quite often the case that we vote something through and then we just hear crickets for a long time until something eventually emerges or sometimes does not emerge.

370 People have cited policy development like, for example, SLAWS, which went through the entirety of last term without producing a result. There were lots of reasons why that did not get there, had been put back from the previous political term.

There are certainly policy developments that I had a hand in voting through and then lost track of, or it has been lost track of where they have got to. An example would be during the last debate

375 on revenue, there was an alternate proposal called the Fairer Alternative. I had a hand in adding
some parts of that to it, one of which was to look at alternatives including property taxes. I think
I have had a couple of meetings with Treasury about that and it did not get very far at all. In fact,
I think the advice was it would be far too difficult to develop any kind of policy like that. It is going
to take many months, many years to develop that.

380 Actually, if we look across to the water to the UK in that time, and I do not necessarily support
what the Labour Government have done, but they have managed to develop a policy, legislate and
implement a mansion tax in their case, while we, I believe, have not really got started on developing
any proposals in Guernsey.

385 So actually it would be useful to be able to report on the visibility of policy development rather
than it just all being voted through, going into this enormous cauldron and eventually emerging or
not.

I will support this amendment, Sir. I am disappointed that it does not go as far as it could have
done and the previous amendments had done.

Thank you.

390

The Bailiff: Deputy Laine.

Deputy Laine: Thank you, sir.

395 I rise to wholeheartedly support this amendment and wish I had placed it myself. Yesterday,
I mentioned some of the large projects that are ongoing, whether it is MyGov2, which incidentally
will replace gov.gg, so let us hope the functionality reflects what we need today. We have electronic
patient record (EPR) phase two. I mentioned the SAP migration and potentially Revenue Services
Cloud migration or perhaps even a new Revenue Services system, who knows.

400 Even with the close working that I have with P&R, it is actually tough to find out about these
projects. So having a single source published every six months I think is a brilliant idea, and I support
it.

405 I would add a couple of other things. I think as important as those projects that are actively
being worked on, some kind of heads up on what is coming down the road, what is not an
authorised project or has not got a budget yet, but giving us a feel for the future would be useful.
I am not baking it in here, but I think it is something that we keep getting taken by surprise, and
there is nothing untoward about that. But some idea of future projects in that same reporting would
be really useful.

410 I just respond to comments from Deputy Ozone around project management. The States has
learned a lot about project management and EPR, as an example; the previous board had a lot of
difficulties. That project was not a model project in its inception and early delivery. But they have
really upped the game in the last year in terms of the quality of project management that they apply
to it.

415 But I think one of the big weaknesses that we have is we have suffered from the belief that you
can drop in a project manager and everything is sorted. But actually, unless the senior leadership –
we do not have senior leadership with experience in delivering major projects. You need someone
with that experience to respond to the ups and downs delivered as per the project management
team. So just the project manager in itself does not solve the problem. I am sure that will be a
consideration and work that the CEO is doing.

Well done, P&R, and I look forward to seeing this this publication.

420

The Bailiff: Deputy Blin.

Deputy Blin: Thank you, sir.

425 I would like to start actually by endorsing Deputy Laine's comment about seeing things coming
down the line. I really appreciate it because it is not very often I feel that through the work of silo
committees, we just see it when it comes as whatever it is. So that would be an interesting addition.

430 I would also like to refer to Deputy Goy for his rather passionate, but actually it was not just passionate, it was a frustrated speech. I was, as my colleague Deputy Vermeulen said, one of the glorious 12 who supported that. I never realised that supporting an amendment would put me there.

But I did feel at the time, and I shared it when I spoke of the amendment, that I did not feel fully comfortable that it was a case of there was too much in there. But in the past, if you do not show something, nothing will happen. So I am very grateful to actually P&R for doing that.

435 I do not believe they needed to actually refer to Deputies Curgenven and Goy because I quite frankly, having heard the tone of conversation, I know where that would have gone. But the results here are clear.

440 What I also really appreciate is – well, it makes me think of the average of when is the best time to plant the forest. People say 20 years ago. When is the next best time? Today. So this is the planted today. Yes, as Deputy Gabriel has said, surely this is within the remit, the mandate of P&R, but actually here it is, a clear message telling us that actually this is what we are going to add to take this further.

445 So what do I feel? I also feel when it speaks about the report of the progress of Major Projects Portfolio, when we were talking yesterday, I did feel on a number of amendments we are going beyond the GWP, what we are talking about with the super priorities, but a lot of conversations and amendments, including the last one, on zero budget, etc., they were almost Budget debates rather than the GWP debate. So this is great.

This means going forward we are going to see the impact on all the Major Projects Portfolio ranging from the affordable housing and hospital modernisation. I am very much in support of this and I really do hope it gets voted fully.

450 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

455 **Deputy Inder:** Just briefly, Amendment 4 is no more. It has ceased to be. It is skipped, sir, bereft of life, joined the choir invisible. It may have had a lot of the plumage but democracy says that Amendment 4 has gone, and I was one of who does the impossible, maybe the 12 that supported it. *(Laughter)*

460 I think P&R have probably listened to some of that debate. This appears to be the solution. So I am grateful they are putting it together, so I will support it even though I am a Norwegian parrot.

The Bailiff: Deputy Oswald.

465 **Deputy Oswald:** So I thank Deputy de Sausmarez and Deputy St Pier for submitting this amendment. As responsible for some of the major capital projects which are coming up, we are besieged by a request for information, and I welcome this opportunity to refresh on an organised basis in the six-monthly cycle.

Thank you very much.

470 **The Bailiff:** I will invite the proposer of the amendment, Deputy de Sausmarez, to reply to the debate, please.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

475 There was more debate than I was anticipating, so I chose the wrong bit of paper. My notes are therefore a little bit crammed into the margins, but I will do my best to make sure I pick up all the comments that have asked for a response at least.

Deputy Gabriel asked a fairly fundamental question: why resolution? But I think actually that has been generally answered by many other people who contributed to debate. I would just like to underscore the fact that for me, and for us as a Committee, it is really important that we do

480 demonstrate that we are serious about openness and transparency and that we do listen to the will of the Assembly.

We want the GWP to accurately reflect what this Government sees as its priorities, and that message came through loud and clear. There were lots of people who spoke in debate yesterday who were very keen on the idea of meaningful reporting, and Deputy Ozanne described this as a practical and meaningful way. I completely endorse her comments as well about the fact that we have not historically been as good at communicating as we might have been.

485 I would say, with a decade's experience, it is pretty hard. I come from a communications background and actually it is really hard to communicate what is going on in Government. But my goodness me, we need to strive to be better. I think this is one step towards that.

I think putting it in the form of a resolution or a proposition, which will hopefully become a resolution, demonstrates, especially if we can get a really strong vote on it, that this is something that the entire Assembly takes seriously. It is not just something that P&R said they will do. Obviously, it is on our Mandate. We would have done it anyway, but I think it does add extra welly, if you like, to have the entire Assembly or a good chunk of that Assembly in support.

495 Actually just before I forget, Deputy Curgenvin is indisposé today. He cannot be here, but he has sent me a message to say that he is strongly supportive of this. He asked if I could share that, and I am grateful to him for that.

Deputy Goy, I can understand the emotion and I can understand some of his frustration but I think there are two ways of looking at politics. It is a very weird thing sometimes. I know that there are some people who see it as a contact sport and an oppositional thing. I have never approached it like that. I do not think that is how we get the best results, frankly. I really genuinely believe in working together and finding compromise, finding ways of listening and moving forward. That is what we have tried to do with this amendment. It is a genuine attempt to help those people – I do not know whether the glorious 12 actually does – but to recognise that there is such good intent there and that that is a very genuinely-held conviction. One that I think in its broader intent is absolutely shared by this Assembly. That is why the Committee is bringing this forward.

505 But at some of Deputy Goy's comments, we were not the ones that presided over these debacles. That was not on our watch. We came in, we found out what was going on and we wasted no time. I am not going to give way. We wasted no time –

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

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Goy.

Deputy Goy: Thank you, sir.

515 What I said was some of the Committees here presided over. I did not say P&R as it stands today. Of course this P&R is new. It was formed in 2025 July. What I meant was some of the Deputies who presided over the debacle are also still in power and sitting in this Assembly. That is all I said. I just want to correct the point.

Thank you.

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

Deputy de Sausmarez: The inference appeared to me and I can only take it the way I read it. It was a very aggressive sentiment. I think there are actually only two Members still in this Assembly who were in P&R at any time and not at the same time, in fact, in the previous Assembly. I have to say that from the work that we have done, it is absolutely clear that they have no way of knowing what had been going on in their watch. Even though they were asking questions, and Deputy Helyar is nodding in agreement, the information was not shared with them but would have allowed them to expose it.

530 We have been very fortunate. We have been able to get to the bottom of this. As I was saying, when we discovered it, we were horrified. We were absolutely horrified and we wasted no time in being open and transparent about that.

Let me say, especially given the kind of rhetoric that we have heard, my goodness, it would have been easier not to bother, to just have kept quiet about it. But no, we decided that openness and transparency was a core principle that we were going to be true to. That is why we chose the more difficult path. That is why we chose to be honest about it. We get a kicking. That is politics. We are the messenger that is getting shot, but we are serious about dealing with it (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and this is part of that.

540 We want to listen, we want to work together. Just on that note, I was so disappointed in an Update Statement yesterday when we had shared a bit of information with the Scrutiny Management Committee. We had explained why it was sensitive. We had explained why it had to be kept confidential for maybe a few weeks, but after that it would be shareable. I was so disappointed that that was twisted into some implication. That the default was that we did not want to share information. Quite the opposite. Quite the opposite. I give way to Deputy Sloan.

545 **Deputy Sloan:** Point of correction.

Sir, what I said was that after asking for these terms of reference several times that we received them and they were marked 'confidential'. I said that indicated a default culture.

550 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Yes, and we made it quite clear in the communication that everything would be published once we got through a particularly sensitive stage in proceedings. That remains the case. So that is why I was so disappointed. Again, it feels like a contact sport. The last Assembly was marred, I think, by a reputation for being toxic and for not moving things forward. I have genuine hope, and I retain that hope, that we are going to be better as an Assembly, as a political body of genuinely working together.

555 I think it is really healthy to have differences of opinion. In fact, I would be really concerned if we all thought the same thing, there would be something broken about our system. Differences of opinion are important. We need to have that diversity of thought, that diversity of perspective in order to make better decisions. But I think the point is how we go about it –

560 **The Bailiff:** And the relevance of this to Amendment 11?

Deputy de Sausmarez: So the relevance of this is that this is what this amendment is trying to do. I thank the Presiding Officer for his hint to get back on track. I will.

565 There were a couple of things particularly towards the end of debate, which I think are new. Deputy Sloan raised the very good point about super priorities, and Deputy Matthews swiftly followed him and said, 'Well, actually there are really good ways on reporting on things that are policies, rather than projects'. I completely concur.

570 I can reassure both of them and the rest of the Assembly that we do intend to find a really good way of reporting on that. It is not included in this amendment, we have not quite figured out the best way. But, for example, we already have – I think it might not be live yet – but a dedicated page. We do plan to be doing that. I am maybe being a little bit premature and stealing someone else's thunder, but I can say certainly on the issue of Leale's Yard, I know that there have been discussions, and I think Committees involved are broadly supportive or I think they are supportive, as far as I am aware, of bringing forward a bespoke report really quite soon in the next couple of months, for example.

575 I can certainly commit to finding good ways of reporting on those super priorities because I think Deputy Sloan raises a very valid point, and that is something we will take back and work on and make sure is implemented.

580 Deputy Laine talked about the advance warning on major projects, and actually the Committee has just agreed a change to the way that we are going to be dealing with the major projects, and it

585 does include a bit more flexibility. The previous system, everything was sort of wrapped up in one report and basically you had to make the cut in order to get it into the four-year cycle. We have made it more flexible or we are in the process of making it more flexible than that, so that there will be the ability to add projects in as and when they are developed. Because the problem with the old system was that projects that were really early in their stage of development were going into that, and then potentially not progressing or needing to go in a slightly different direction.

590 So I think the points raised by Deputy Laine, and whoever else mentioned it as well, is a very good one. I think we have got at least the skeleton of a solution there and it is something, again, that we will work on.

I think that was all the substantive comments. I thank Members for the debate and hope this can be resoundingly endorsed by the Assembly.

Thank you.

595 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 11 proposed by Deputy de Sausmarez, seconded by Deputy St Pier. I think you can ignore the second two after the semicolon, which appears to me to be superfluous, which can be crossed out. I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 11, please.

600 *There was a recorded vote.*

Carried – Pour 35, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 4

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

605 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Amendment 11 proposed by Deputy de Sausmarez and seconded by Deputy St Pier, they voted in favour of 35 Members, no Member voted against, no Member abstained. 4 Members were absent for the vote, and therefore I will declare Amendment 11 carried.

*Motion under Article 7(1) of the Reform (Guernsey) Law, 1948
To suspend Rule 24(2) of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees to the extent necessary to permit the amendment below to be debated*

610 **The Bailiff:** So the final amendment starts with a motion under Article 7(1) of the Reform Guernsey Law, 1948. Deputy Rochester, what do you want to say about the motion; not the amendment, the motion?

615 **Deputy Rochester:** I would just like to explain that following Committee input I have made some revisions to the amendment, hence the request.

The Bailiff: Deputy Montague, do you formally second the motion?

620 **Deputy Montague:** I do, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you.
Does anyone wish to debate the motion? No? In that case, I will put it to you *aux voix*. Those in favour; and those against.

625 *Members voted pour.*

The Bailiff: I will declare that carried.
Now you can move Amendment 9, please, Deputy Rochester.

[Amendment 9.](#)

To insert an additional proposition as follows:

"6. To agree an additional workstream to the 'Foundations for Our Future' area of focus (under the 'A Place to Grow and Succeed' theme) with the objective of 'Responding to the Needs of the Island's Young People', and to direct the Policy & Resources Committee to support the cross-committee coordination of the upcoming refresh and enhancement of the Children & Young People's Plan ensuring that it:

i) hears and reflects the voice of a wide range of children, young people and young adults via direct consultation;

ii) consults with third sector organisations supporting the island's children, young people and young adults;

iii) takes into account existing relevant strategies and plans; and

iv) provides the necessary resources to undertake that consultation and to support the production of the enhanced Children & Young People's Plan for consideration by the States of Deliberation."

630 **Deputy Rochester:** Thank you very much, sir.

I am pleased to propose my first amendment as People's Deputy, and I am particularly grateful to ESC, HSC and P&R for their engagements in developing it.

635 I would also like to thank Deputy Montague for seconding this amendment and to Deputy Strachan for seconding the original amendment and stepping aside.

This is an amendment that, if supported, will showcase the way of working I committed to in my manifesto. Because the amendment supports long-term wellbeing of our community, it focuses on delivering for the next generation and it will put young people's voices at the heart of our

640 Government Work Plan. Importantly, it also seeks to address one of the most significant examples of social inequality in our islands.

This amendment in support of the development of an enhanced Children and Young People's Plan is, at its heart, about building a hopeful vision for the future. This amendment tells our young people across the Bailiwick that they matter, that they all matter, and it makes clear that this Government values their contribution to Island life, that it wants to meet their needs and that it will act to enable our young people to thrive both now and in the future.

645 Throughout this speech I will be unapologetically aspirational, and I will do so despite a firmly-held suspicion that it will make this Assembly feel a little bit uncomfortable. I will ask you to imagine a community where young people are valued and integrated and have confidence; their energy and voice for change that our Island needs.

650 A community where young people know without doubt that their skills, energy and commitment will be recognised, valued and rewarded. I will set out what I hope will be a compelling case for action and, of course, I will recognise the wide range of work being done by caring, committed public and third-sector employees for our most vulnerable young people. I will showcase the ambition of all Committees to enhance our young people's health, wellbeing, education and protection. I will explain the critical role that our existing Children and Young People's Plan plays in protecting the most vulnerable in our community.

655 But I will then go on to expose what we are not doing, the questions we are not asking and the needs we are not meeting, all of which means we risk squandering the next generation's potential. But as importantly, for me, as a mother and a huge believer in the power of youth, we are missing an opportunity to ensure that our young people are happy, healthy and hopeful. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

660 This amendment to the Government Work Plan is not about supporting just the floor. By that I mean meeting the needs of the most vulnerable young people in our community. It is about raising the ceiling for all young people in our community. As we all know through these debates, the Government Work Plan exists to co-ordinate and resource cross-Committee strategy and policy work.

665 One of the three pillars that the plan highlights is the importance of building foundations for our future, and beneath that pillar sits one of four areas of focus: committing Guernsey to being a place to grow and succeed. This area of focus commits our Government to creating a supportive environment for children and families. It goes on to say that it will help upcoming generations to reach their potential and prosper in Guernsey, but it will support workforce participation and retention.

670 I could not agree more with this important commitment. In fact, this amendment fills the gaps that will ensure this objective is delivered. This amendment expands existing priorities beyond what is written in the plan: the needs of early years' children, education funding reviews and the modernisation of the Children Law, a critically important law that seeks to better protect children and young people at risk of harm, but there is no mention of a priority that seeks to meet the needs of the majority of our young people.

675 I am delving into the detail of the plan now, but as I hope you will see as I set forward my case for action, the detail really matters. On the face of it, the Government Work Plan, at a headline level, recognises how critical it is to enable young generations to reach their potential and prosper, but at a detailed level it focuses only on those in the floor for young people; it is silent on raising the ceiling.

680 I would love to stand here and say that our young people do not need to be a priority but, sadly, the data we have – the data we are all very aware of – tells a very different story. Our young people need to be a priority.

A Member: Hear, hear.

690 **Deputy Rochester:** With more than a third of young people feeling lonely, with none of the 16
to 24-year-old females surveyed reporting high mental wellbeing, with the rates of high self-esteem
for pupils dropping by 22% between 2016 and 2022, and with the Community Foundation report
concluding that young Islanders are less satisfied with life, lonelier and less able to be themselves
695 than their parents or their grandparents, with this information in our hands, we all know that saying
you are committed to young people in the headline without explicitly prioritising their needs is just
not good enough.

I said in my opening speech that much good work is being delivered, and I believe that. The
Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture can demonstrate through its actions and recent Ofsted
reporting that the voices of students are heard and respected. The Committee *for* Health & Social
700 Security can demonstrate through the existing Children and Young People's Plan that work is being
delivered to secure excellent outcomes, but that is for a few and not for all.

The Youth Commission, funded in part by this Government, is the voice of our young people
and responds to their needs on a daily basis. I am certainly not suggesting young people do not
matter to us all and that we are not doing anything to support them, but yet again I remind us all
705 that the detail matters. As many have pointed out, including the Policy & Resources Committee in
their commentary to the original amendment, we do have a Children and Young People's Plan,
which commits to identifying the needs of our young people and setting out:

... local vision and aspirations for all children and young people in the Bailiwick.

710 But that cross-Committee plan, as a result of past decisions, has no resources and it has no
cross-Committee political leadership. If you drill down to the actions within the plan, you will see
that the outcomes, if successfully delivered, will be felt only by a minority of our children and young
people. Of course these children need and deserve all the support we can offer, but the existing
Children and Young People's Plan is, in the main, about supporting the floor.

715 That needs to be done, but this amendment is not about putting in place modern-day safeguard
supporting legislation, it is about listening to the voice of the majority and meeting their needs,
which demonstrably are not being met. This amendment is about raising the ceiling. It asks the
Assembly to support the development of an in parts Children and Young People's Plan, responding
to the voice of young people. That is worth repeating: responding to the voice of young people in
720 the Bailiwick.

The Children and Young People's Plan should be built on the presumption that we want to meet
the needs of all of our young people and provide them the support, space and a voice to thrive. We
can only do that if we first ask young people what they want and what they need for that to happen,
and we have not done that to date. If, after community-wide engagement, we determine that the
725 existing workstreams meet those key needs identified, then no enhancements will be required to
the Children and Young People's Plan, but I do not think that is going to be the case.

I think the subsequent analysis will show that we can and we must do more to give our young
people a place to grow and succeed. We have the data that tells us it is more than a vulnerable
minority that need our support and focus. The data tells us this is systemic and we need a
730 Bailiwick-wide co-ordinated response.

So to conclude, I would ask for your support to provide the resources that will enable us to ask
young people what it feels like to grow up in the Bailiwick, what is preventing them from reaching
their potential and prospering and then co-designing with our young people an action plan to
remove those barriers.

735 Done well, this piece of work will unleash the next generation's potential and the future of our
Island. It tells them that we care, that we value them and that we want to work with them for a
better future. It has been said that we, as politicians, have a moral obligation to create a vision of
hope. I would argue that with the geopolitical, economic and environmental backdrop, of which our
young people are bitterly aware, that obligation has now grown much greater.

740 I thank each of you for working towards the vision of hope in your own ways, and I ask each of you to support this amendment to further that commitment and deliver better outcomes for every young person in our community.

The Bailiff: Deputy Montague, do you formally second Amendment 9?

745

Deputy Montague: I do, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.

Deputy van Katwyk.

750

Deputy van Katwyk: Thank you, sir.

I stand now as a teacher, and with another hat on as well, but I will talk to the second hat in a moment. At the moment, I do really appreciate Deputy Rochester's amendment and I would like to say at the start that our Bailiwick's children do absolutely matter – completely agree – but I am worried about the cost of this survey. It is £100,000 for the survey and then there are going to be initiatives on top of that, which will perhaps cost more.

755

Deputy Montague is shaking his head, so I am just going to pre-empt: up to £100,000, but when we give civil servants £100,000, how much do you think they are going to spend? £100,000 is the answer. I am concerned, and I believe that – as a teacher – some of us already do have the answers. Deputy Montague, as a teacher of many decades in the Island, and with a head filled with sofos does I think – in fact, I can tell from personal experience – question his students as much as they have questioned him, so I do wonder if we already have the answers to these questions without a £100,000 survey.

760

Now I am going to put my Economic Development hat on. We have a Tourism Management Board that receives £122,000 each year to be put on grants and activities. Those activities are to attract tourists into the Island, but they are also for everybody on the Island, so I just wonder if that £100,000 could be better spent by something like the Tourism Management Board in creating things like young people's literary festivals, youth blue economy training programmes, summer music festivals and a host of winter silent discos, for example, which could attract people to come to the Island – young people – to come and interact with our Islanders.

770

That would generate money for the economy, and I think it would answer the question that the survey is asking: what is the problem with our youth? It is that there is not enough to do on the Island. That is the answer that is going to come out, so at the moment I cannot support the amendment, but I look forward to hearing other people's views and Deputy Rochester's answers.

775

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Montague.

Deputy Montague: Thank you, sir.

780

I hope you all agree, as I said yesterday, that we have left the best until last in terms of these amendments, but as my very first GWP debate, I have been reflecting on the words – I believe it is Macbeth when he is reflecting on life, when he said:

It is a tale. Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury. Signifying nothing.

785

Now, we are not idiots, and there has been very little fury, maybe a little bit of anger creeping in here, but I do wonder how much significance there has been in some of the things we have been discussing. What will it signify? It is my job over the next 10 minutes to try to persuade everyone that what Deputy Rochester has proposed is in fact genuinely significant.

790

A good few years ago I found myself on a working party to scrutinise a new policy and I was doing what I believe was my due diligence. I was digging into each little element and saying, 'Well,

that will not work because in this school, that goes on'. One of my colleagues got a bit frustrated with me and they said, 'Monty, why are you getting your knickers in a twist?' I looked at her and thought, 'What do you mean?' She said, 'This policy is going to come into our office, we are going to put it on a shelf and we are going to leave it there'.

795 As a result of that and other things like it, I have always been very suspicious about new policies, new strategies, which is why I was unable to support the previous Amendment 5, but I am absolutely in support of this one because rather than creating something new, it is using a statutory Children and Young People's Plan, based on the Children Law from 2008. For that reason, I absolutely support this amendment. We are not creating something new, we are building on an existing statutory document.

800 Now, you might be sitting there thinking, 'Well, then why is it in the GWP if it is just business as usual, something Committees need to do?' When I had the very first presentation at the GWP, in common with many colleagues, I was really surprised that there was very little mention of young people in it. It is much better now, but I was concerned that we were not really focusing on young people.

805 Yesterday and the day before we spoke a lot about the economy and there was the beginning of a debate about are we putting enough emphasis on it. I would like to remind Members that the economy – economic growth, economic resilience – is not a good in itself; it is a means to an end. Unless the economy makes Guernsey a good place to live and enhances the lives of all who live here, then it is not doing its job. We will end up with a hollowed-out Island.

810 Our young people will look for their opportunities elsewhere, which is why this refresh of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) is absolutely timely and essential. I believe it should be supported today and put into the GWP because the CYPP is in time for a renewal in 2026. It needs, as we say in the amendment, a refresh and enhancement. It needs an adrenalin shot; it needs to be super-charged.

815 If I can go on to my first main point, picking up something Deputy Kazantseva-Miller said the other day, the GWP is not a P&R responsibility; it is something we all own. This policy, even though it is technically owned by HSC, is something that every single Committee will have input into. Section 28(2) of the Children Law of 2008 mentions that the areas concerned are:

820 (a) physical, emotional and mental health, (b) protection from harm and neglect, (c) education, training and recreation, (d) contribution to society, (e) social and economic well-being, and (f) such other matters as may be prescribed.

This HSC document is something we all need to own and the GWP will encourage us and force us all to get involved in its reworking. Essential to this refresh is to look at what we currently do, and if we look at the amendment and we look at the first three subsections, (1) to (3), you will see that it requires us all to do our research, not only to look at things like the Education Strategy, the work we do in Education on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child but, crucially, to look at all the third-sector organisations that bring such value to young people's lives. We do need to research and that is going to require not just HSC, not just ESC, but all of us to do that.

825 We need to build on the excellent work of the Youth Commission. The Youth Commission run a Youth Forum, and it is essential that we support them to broaden the support of the Youth Forum, to make sure that youngsters from a very wide range of social backgrounds are getting involved. That is my first point, sir. It is something we all need to buy into.

830 The second point deals with something Deputy Sloan raised way back on Wednesday, and that is the fact that we should not launch into anything in Government unless we have the data. This is where I would like to pick up the point that Deputy van Katwyk made. Data really matters. We do need to do that.

835 We all come to life with a kind of internal map of what the world is, but if I remind you of that very important statement, 'The map is not the territory'. Your view of the world is not the way the world is. We do need to do some very thorough research to discover what it is like to be a young

840 person on the Island and broaden that to make sure we get as much data for as many young people
as we can.

Deputy van Katwyk mentioned cost. I would like to explain something about the surveys that we
have done. Until 2022 we did a Young People's Survey and it was suspended at that point. It was a
really good piece of work, but towards the end it was not robust enough. We did not believe the
845 data it was providing gave us an adequate foundation to move forward.

Since then, we have still been collecting data. It is not the case that we need to do a brand-new,
very expensive survey of young people. Within Education we use something called PASS, which is
Pupil Attitudes to Self in School, and we already have a significant amount of data. There is some
collation required. It is also the case that we are doing surveys on young people's health, so we
850 have replaced the Young People's Survey, which did not produce enough robust data, with better
surveys.

When we ask young people questions, it is really very difficult. I am not sure what your education
was like, sir, but it might be the case that you were in classrooms where the teacher would ask a
question, three people would put their hand up – maybe you were one of them, sir – and the teacher
855 then –

The Bailiff: No, certainly not. *(Laughter)* I sat at the back.

Deputy Montague: The teacher then would ask one of those three people. Education has
860 moved a long way. We do not follow that pedagogy anymore. What is crucial in education is we get
every young person in that classroom involved, and it is the same with our data that we get here.

We also need to be aware of how we get our data from young people. Anyone who has tried to
write a survey knows that getting information from adults is quite difficult. With young people and
attention spans, it is crucial that we have the very best mechanisms of getting that data. In Education
865 and in Health, we are beginning to get the right kind of mechanisms to get that.

We need to be careful not to buy into the online commentariat. I think it was Bertrand Russell
who said the trouble with the world is the wise are so full of doubts and the ignorant are so
confident and cocksure. The reality is that we hear people pontificating about what they know about
what young children want and we actually need some far more robust data.

870 We are also, all of us, guilty of talking to a small group of people and thinking, 'Well, they
represent everyone'. We can see even in this Chamber we are a very diverse group of people and
so we do need to be very careful to try to get that information from as broad a group as possible.
We need to be very thorough, very careful and very diagnostic.

I also just would like to raise an issue about a warning. Whenever you read any information
875 about mental health data for young people, we do need to be very cautious about it. We make
comparisons with previous generations. Now, sir, I do not know what you were like when you were
14 and 15, but back in the early 1980s I was a very attitudinal, moody, angsty young man. *(Laughter)*
Can you believe that? Sir, my point though is that no one asked me about my mental health then,
and so we are very good at asking questions now, but do we have the longitudinal study? I think
880 we do need to be quite cautious about that, which is why we need to be very careful about how we
get this data.

I will leave this point with a reference. I am sorry that people often quote Churchill, but there
was something that he said. Also when we reflect on our lives, we tend to view our school days with
rose-tinted glasses, and he said:

885 Show me a man who has enjoyed his school days and I'll show you a bully and bore.

I sometimes said to young people throughout education when they were coming to me and
they were stressed, 'Look, if you are not getting a little bit stressed and anxious and worked up as
a teenager, you are not doing it right'. So I just wanted to say that we need a bit of a caution there.

890 But I want to say we are also, in our primary schools, really going out of our way to listen to the voice of young people. I will give you two specific examples. St Martin's had their Ofsted report last week and it directly mentioned that the voice of pupils has changed the ethos of the school.

Also, in another one of our schools there has been an investigation into what the young people feel about the traffic in the school area, and that is changing the way the school deals with pick-ups. When we talk to young people and we do it wisely and cautiously and carefully, they can really help us to build a better future for our Island.

895 If I can come on now, sir, to the final point I would like to leave colleagues with and the other reason why I think everyone should support this amendment. We have a responsibility to solve the short-term problems that present, but we also have a genuine responsibility to deal with long-term issues. We are absolutely challenged by the demographic downturn. If we consider the young people on our Island between the ages of 16 and 24, in each year group we have about 600 to 700 young people.

900 If you look at the cohorts just being born, they are down in the low 400s. As that scrolls through over the next few decades, there will be a massive problem for our dependency ratio, and not even Deputy Goy's robots will be able to solve that problem. We absolutely need to make sure we make Guernsey the best place to bring up young children.

905 Now, I got myself in trouble just recently, sir. I was at Les Beaucamps High School on a Saturday for their Joyous Childhood event, which is run by our Early Years Team. It was a really amazing event, but I was ambushed by a fine member of our local media. They asked if they could speak to me, and I was reasonably unguarded because at the time I did not realise I was being recorded, and I was talking exactly about this issue.

I was disappointed to see, two days later, the front page of *The Guernsey Press* said that the Education, Sport & Culture President was asked the big question:

How can we help couples to have more children?

915 Two days after that I met an ex-colleague, who said, 'I really liked your idea that was in the press the other day. In fact, my son absolutely supports you, but he is looking for a girlfriend and wonders if you could help him'. (*Laughter*) I would like to be clear, sir, that the mandate is big enough for Education, Sport & Culture. We are not adding 'dating agency' to the end of that.

920 To sum up, sir, we all know our young people – and it is a platitude – they are so important to us, but as Deputy Rochester said, we do need to hear their voice. Once we have heard their voice and understood what it is like to be a young person and have listened to the parents of young people, we need to then enhance and refresh and absolutely revitalise this Children and Young People's Plan.

925 It is something we all need to get involved in. We need to ensure our Island continues to be a great place to live. It needs to be a better place to bring up young children. Yes, there are loads of issues to do with housing and various other areas about the cost of living, but if we do not, our young people will find their opportunities lie elsewhere and our Island will become hollowed out. Sir, this is something that we all need to own and I ask for colleagues to support this amendment.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater.

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

935 I would just like to commend Deputy Montague on an excellent speech, and Deputy Rochester too. The quality of speeches has just reached another level during this amendment, and I applaud that.

I just have a couple of questions, because Deputy Rochester talked about the fact that there is no real ownership of this Children and Young People's Plan, because if we look at it, it is:

... to direct the Policy & Resources Committee [because these are the ones that are important] to support the cross-Committee co-ordination of the upcoming refresh ...

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Is P&R now going to be responsible for this? If Deputy Rochester could outline exactly where the accountability and responsibility is going to land under this proposition, just so I can be clear about that.

Also the consultation:

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... consults with third sector organisations supporting the Island's children, young people and young adults ...

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Deputy van Katwyk's interjection there when he spoke and his ideas about how Economic Development could maybe play a part in this piece of work as well, so any ideas that he has to be able to assist in this piece of work, if he could have some involvement or pass those ideas on for consideration by those that are involved in this piece of work.

I am definitely going to support this. I think we have two people here who are absolutely passionate about supporting our Island's children and I think it is amazing. They are a brilliant addition to the Assembly in this respect and I support them wholeheartedly.

Thank you.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Strachan.

Deputy Strachan: Thank you, sir.

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I am pleased to have worked with Deputy Rochester as she formed this amendment, and I am a huge supporter of the revised effort to ensure our young people's voices are heard and that we develop appropriate resources for ensuring this forms part of a new workstream.

I know there has been considerable cross-Committee discussion on how this amendment can work best, and I think this is an excellent example of where, working together, we can achieve real, workable initiatives.

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Now to the amendment itself. I have been struck during my time on the Committee *for* Health & Social Care by the sheer weight of evidence showing how profound our early life experiences shape our ability to function, contribute and ultimately thrive within our community. There is, quite rightly, a proposed super-priority in the Government Work Plan to strengthen and shape the focus on early years and families, but I believe it is both unfair and uneconomic to allow structured support to follow an arbitrary age, simply because early years ends.

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Our young people do not suddenly stop developing at that point, nor do the risks and nor do the opportunities. We are speaking today about the next generation of workers, entrepreneurs, parents, voters and carers. These are the very people we hope will choose to remain on-Island to fill workforce shortages, staff our businesses and public services, care for us when we are unwell and need support in our hospital and care settings, and within the next 5 to 10 years, feel confident enough to start, yes, families of their own.

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They will also be the entrepreneurs who create new businesses, strengthen our tourism and digital sectors and adapt our economy to rapid technological change. That will require resilience, adaptability, social skills and improvement in health. Finally, they will be our current and future voters. A healthy democracy depends on an engaged and informed electorate, and that engagement does not appear spontaneously in adulthood. It is built from support, connection and inclusion during adolescence.

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Indeed, the results from this amendment can support the work that SACC are doing to expand better engagement. In short, our future economy depends on young people who are well, capable and engaged, and yet increasing numbers of our young people are not thriving. Deputy Rochester set out stark evidence of mental health difficulties, growing loneliness, increasing neurodiversity-related needs, and this has placed sustained pressure on families, schools and already stretched care services.

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We also know the pandemic introduced sharp increases in school refusal and anxiety, and five years on those patterns have not returned to previous baselines. This has a cost, not just an

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emotional cost, a moral cost – which is vitally important – and a measurable financial cost through increased demand for health services, social care, specialist education support and lost productivity for parents and carers leaving the workforce or reducing hours to cope. You may have thought the Children and Young People’s Plan was in place to deliver a strategy for our youth, but I think you can already see that this needs support.

As has been mentioned by Deputy Rochester, the title of the plan and what it actually supports are two different things. The current Children and Young People’s Plan is narrowly focused on safeguarding, welfare and statutory duties, whereas this amendment will bring more aspects into scope. So how would this expansion of the Children and Young People’s Plan help? First, it would ensure we listen directly to young people about what supports their engagement, wellbeing and aspiration.

Second, it would give parents some direction to work that is already complete, particularly in our highly skilled third sector, so that good intentions translate into evidence-based, cost-effective action.

We are not being asked today to fund a long list of programmes. We are being asked to find out what young people say they need, to identify and incorporate what we can do better, to co-ordinate services better and intervene earlier before problems escalate to the point where they are vastly more expensive to address. Members may ask whether there could be costs beyond developing a strategy. Possibly, but that will depend on what the evidence tells us.

Other jurisdictions’ youth strategies have led to very practical, proportionate interventions and include service co-ordination in New Zealand, standard access to youth spaces in Denmark, as Deputy van Katwyk suggested, and in the UK, youth participation structures that build agency and connection at minimal cost.

So let us be clear about value for money. Deputy van Katwyk was concerned about the cost of a survey. I would answer this by saying that if this strategy prevented even one young person from entering the care system, going into prison or leaving the Island, the investment from this amendment will pay for itself many times over.

I was struck on a recent tour of the prison, where I met one of the teachers of life skills to the prisoners. I asked if she felt she made an impact. She said it was the most valuable thing she did. She explained that when she discusses life skills with most of the young men that it has a real resonance. One man said to her no one has ever talked to him about these things and then, tragically, she explained that if only somebody had done so, maybe he would have made very different life choices.

We have a clear opportunity to get this right. When our young people reach their full potential, the world is truly their oyster or ormer, depending on your preference. We have fantastic systems in place to support engaged young people, with high-quality post-16 education, to excellent career prospects in a full-employment economy. When children thrive, their families thrive and our Island thrives.

The financial updates from these opportunities include reducing future demand on health and social services and reducing stress on families, with parents and carers better able to remain productive in the workplace. In the Committee for Health & Social Care, we shape most of what we do around these demographic changes. This investment goes partway to tilting the curve in their favour. My concern is that Government is often pulled to the most urgent crises – housing, healthcare and workforce shortages – and rightly so, but this quieter crisis of youth disengagement and deteriorating wellbeing is becoming existential for our Island.

If we fail to act early and strategically, we will pay far more later in services, lost talent and social cohesion. A youth strategy is not a luxury; it is economic infrastructure for our future. I would urge Members to show our community and our young people that they matter and to vote unanimously for this amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Camp.

Deputy Camp: Thank you.

1045 I want to start off by making it clear that I am in support of this amendment. Indeed, it gels with some work that I did when I was chair of the Guernsey Investment & Funds Association (GIFA), which was to look at opportunities for – not just rich, educated, privileged – children to enter the financial services sector, which I am glad to see that GIFA has continued that work I started.

1050 What I do want is to ask for three reassurances. The first is how do we ensure that this work does not just listen to those privileged children? All of us, our children are privileged. They do not have the deprivation and what have you that others do, which I see in my friendship group and in my son's friendship group. My son would be listened to any day of the week; his friends would not necessarily be listened to. How do we make sure we capture those that we are actually trying to capture?

1055 The reality is we are not very good at listening to those who feel disenfranchised, and some of the speeches, including Deputy Montague's, where we constantly see social media downplayed, sometimes that is the only avenue people have to actually contribute, because they are not spoken to by Government; they are not taken seriously. I do worry about how much we intend to listen when avenues are shut down so easily.

1060 The other one is, as Deputy Montague will know from our work on Education Devolution & Delegation Investigatory & Advisory Committee (EDDIAC), the word 'survey' brings me out in a cold sweat, because Government surveys tend to be, 'Would you like lovely fluffy bunnies in your bedroom or would you like kill puppies?' (*Laughter*) so they tend to sway an answer, they tend to be fairly unhelpful and they set out to prove what Government was trying to say in the first place rather than listen, and this is all about listening.

1065 The third reassurance that I would like is – and this is a big one for me – when does Government stop listening and just basically start to control the outcomes? In Deputy Rochester's opening speech to this, it was mentioned that children feel like they do not have the freedoms of their parents and of their grandparents. I have a concern that actually Government has played quite a serious role in reducing the freedoms of the generations as we have gone forward and I do not see that stopping.

1070 I worry when we talk about intervention. Again, it has come from this place of privilege and great intention, but when does good intention start to really echo control? We are just now talking about state-controlled childhood.

1075 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel: Thank you.

1080 I would like to thank the bringers of this amendment and for their excellent speeches, and reiterate that what this amendment does is it recognises that the work is not absent. The Children and Young People's Plan does exist and it is a statutory device, and actually we should be using it better, but we are required to produce it, to act on it.

1085 Much of what Amendment 5 sought to achieve already sits within that framework, but as has been pointed out by Deputy Rochester and Deputy Strachan, who sits on HSC and therefore has visibility over the CYPP, it has lost its way a little bit from what it was originally intended to do, which is that broad strategy of young people.

1090 What has been missing is political visibility, co-ordination and renewed oversight. That said, this amendment is not duplication, it is a correction, and is much needed. We must make the CYPP a living document again, not just with HSC, ESC or ESS or any of the other acronyms, it has to be across Committees.

In answer to Deputy Leadbeater's earlier question and Deputy van Katwyk's mention of what he envisaged could happen for young people, that is exactly the piece of work that needs to happen. Without a strategy, that co-ordinated work does not happen, so you just have bits of requests for funding to improve the social life of young people on the Island, as opposed to a fully co-ordinated

1095 strategy across Government. That is, crucially, why this needs to sit as a priority in the GWP, which is what this amendment is asking for.

In the debate that we have had on the amendment so far, we have spoken at length about how important the economy is and the difficult choices that we need to make about long-term resilience. If we are serious about that conversation, then we, as an Assembly, must acknowledge something
1100 fundamental: unless we invest in our young people, we do not have a future economy at all. No amount of fiscal discipline, infrastructure planning or workforce strategy will succeed if the generation meant to inherit this Island is struggling, disengaged or leaving.

There was some narrative earlier about what the people clearly want, particularly in reference to the election. I understand that instant, and I agree that elections tell us important things, but I would
1105 caution us against treating election outcomes as a readymade set of solutions. Elections are at their most powerful when they surface problems, anxieties and lived experiences, and our job as an Assembly is not to lurch towards what we think people want in response, but to take those signals seriously, examine the evidence and design solutions that will actually work for all.

While youth participation in the election was low, which in itself should concern us, there was a
1110 consistent theme through the wider electorate that young people were being left behind. We do not know this because it was shouted the loudest or because it came from the largest voting bloc. We know it because the evidence tells us so. The Guernsey Community Foundation Quality of Life Report was one example. Our reports from Health & Social Care and from Education tell a similar story, as outlined by Deputy Rochester in her opening speech.

The voices of community organisations are telling us that this is needed, a co-ordinated response
1115 to see the gaps that exist between services, between transitions and between policy intent and lived reality. I think that goes to Deputy Camp's question. We might have the best intent, but it needs to respond to the lived reality of our children, and the only way that we can do that is by engaging them in the conversation and getting that data.

There is temptation, particularly in times of fiscal restraint, to frame investment in children and
1120 young people as optional, aspirational, or to borrow a phrase once used by the previous Assembly, 'social vanity projects'. That framing is profoundly mistaken. It is a false economy. The evidence is clear and consistent across jurisdictions and over decades: early sustained investment in children and young people, whether through mental health support, education, skills pathways, youth
1125 employment or participation and inclusion, delivers both social and fiscal returns.

Programmes like Sure Start in the UK demonstrated long-term savings to the public purse, alongside improved life outcomes. Youth employment interventions show measurable returns through increased economic participation and reduced welfare dependency. Early mental health support reduced later pressure on acute health services, social care and the criminal justice system.
1130 The conclusion from that evidence is unavoidable: every pound we choose to invest now does not disappear, it reappears later, multiplied. That is why I do not accept the argument that we should wait until we have resolved our wider fiscal position before acting.

There will always be a reason to wait, there will always be competing pressures, but waiting comes at a cost, and that cost is borne disproportionately by young people themselves. They will
1135 end up paying twice, once now through lost opportunities and unmet need, and again in the future when they are expected to carry the weight of our economy, support our ageing population and deal with the consequences of today's underinvestment without having been given the tools or the foundations to do so.

If we do not act now, we risk failing an entire generation, and I do not believe this Island will
1140 recover from that, because the cost is not just financial, it is the loss of confidence, of opportunities, of connection to community and civil life, and ultimately it is the loss of the very people we are relying on to sustain the Island in the decades to come.

This amendment matters because it restores focus, it strengthens co-ordination, it re-anchors
1145 our work in the Children and Young People's Plan, while insisting the plan be refreshed, visible and driven by the voices of young people themselves. It recognises that investing in children, young

people and young adults is not a distraction from our economic challenges. It is central to solving them. For those reasons, sir, I support this amendment.

The Bailiff: Alderney Representative Hill.

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Alderney Representative Hill: Thank you, sir.

I would first of all like to make it clear that I am going to support this amendment. I think it is extremely well crafted.

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I would like to echo some of the comments that were made by Deputy Camp, in particular in the notes that I have seen about the third sector, which I presume is charities. I would like to ask – and I would like clarification – will you be interviewing charities that work with your office about some of the obstacles young people are facing, in particular with over-regulation or unrealistic regulation?

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Obviously in Alderney we had to have a very difficult conversation with Liberty Transport Authority (LTA) because they asked us who in our team had done the safeguarding course on motorway driving, while Alderney is three miles by two miles. These are the sort of stupid blocks that we get. Having worked in that sector and offering a service in that sector, it is continuous. I think one of the areas that we really need to look at is interviewing charities that can provide activities, clubs, associations, outdoor events or whatever it is: are they getting blocks?

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As a result of that, the people who run those charities get demotivated, and I would really like to see that. I think that links also with Deputy Camp's observation: are we at risk of running a state-controlled programme, which is all a little bit about freedom? Also reflecting where we find ourselves. Our Island is three miles by two miles. We have limited resources and a limited amount of people to do things.

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We are going to have to cut our cloth according to our circumstances and having a one-size-fits-all I think needs to be looked at. Flexibility is important, and also to motivate the community as a whole to get involved with young community projects and not have so many blocks and challenges.

The Bailiff: Deputy Oswald.

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Deputy Oswald: Thank you, sir.

I wish to thank Deputy Rochester and colleagues on the ESC Committee for the phenomenal amount of work done in short order to bring Amendment 9 to the GWP before this Assembly for debate and voting thereon.

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As with Deputy Montague, I could not have supported Amendment 5 in its original iteration. One of the advantages of government by committee is the ability to have meaningful dialogue with colleagues and hence to allow solutions to difficult issues to emerge for the greater good of our community. Amendment 5, as it stood, aimed to introduce system-wide change over a period, which may have exceeded the length of the fiscal term and would have diverted resources from already established States' programmes.

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I refer of course to the Children and Young People's Plan, approved originally by the States back in 2008. This plan, established in law, is, in my view, now beginning to show both its age and its lack of resourcing, despite the very considerable efforts of the officers concerned to ameliorate this. Amendment 9, with its seconding by Deputy Montague and support from the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture, is a very powerful tool and an example of successful cross-Committee preparation and delivery.

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I refer to Deputy de Sausmarez's speech earlier today to point out the advantage of such work. Success in the vote here in the Assembly today would allow rejuvenation of the Children and Young People's Plan, aided by resources hopefully becoming available under super priority 4, which is to:

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... shape and strengthen the focus on early years and families.

1200 This I hope will act to achieve the progress we are all aiming for in this Assembly. We need to make the lives of the young people on this Island better. We have heard the very worrying data from young pupils and the wellbeing surveys. Addressing these issues is a passionate ambition and a driver for the authors of this amendment.

I can now speak as President of HSC and confirm unanimous support from my Committee in backing this amendment. I urge my fellow Members to support it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Bury.

Deputy Bury: Thank you, sir.

I am very grateful to Deputies Rochester and Montague for bringing this really important amendment and for their impressive speeches in presenting it to the Assembly.

1210 I worked closely, as a member of HSC, to the Children and Young People's Plan last term as part of the Corporate Parenting Board and for the Children and Young People Board. Deputy Rochester is absolutely correct, it is very focused on a very important group of children in the Island, but it is a minority group. It is not wide enough, it does not really have enough teeth and its actions and focuses are quite internal.

1215 I am not necessarily sure that even the young people that it impacts would be aware of it. Absolutely, if we are serious about our next generations, we need something more meaty, and this gets us on the road to doing so.

1220 I was brought to my feet by Deputy van Katwyk's, 'There is not enough to do'. Not to be dismissive of any of the ideas that he has suggested – I think actually they are fantastic – but I really wish it was that simple, but unfortunately it is not. The data and information that we do have so far from things like the Quality of Life Report from the Guernsey Community Foundation show us that mental health, loneliness, confidence and self-esteem among our young people are at rock bottom.

1225 These issues are displaying themselves as really serious illnesses with their mental health, self-harm and eating disorders and they cannot be solved by more things to do, but the two are not mutually exclusive. Eating disorders, for example, since I have some stats from a Freedom of Information in 2024: in 2019 there were six young people referred to CAMHS for anorexia. In 2020, it was 16, and then it goes up into the 20s, until 2024, so it is increasing at a rapid rate.

1230 Of all the mental health illnesses, it is one of the biggest killers: 46% of people do not make it. I am just looking at a table with a number, but potentially 10 of those 20 people will not make it through that illnesses. You cannot solve that with a festival. £100,000 is a lot of money and we do have to be serious about money here.

I am sorry I had to miss some of the debate. I had to take a call relating to my young person and I am sure lots has been discussed about that.

1235 On Deputy Strachan's point, I am echoing really that £100,000 as an invest to save in our future generations, if we are not just paying lip service to the fact that we think this is important, then £100,000 is really a teardrop in an ocean.

If we have children and young people with poor mental health, self-esteem issues, identity issues or confidence issues, they become adults with those issues as well. When they become adults, access to drugs and alcohol and other unhealthy coping mechanisms becomes easier and then they become the adults in our justice system.

1240 We will take care of them at some point, one way or the other. We could do it positively now or perhaps in a more negative and more difficult space to get out of in the longer term. In addition to that, if they become parents themselves, they then often pass on the issues that they have and it becomes intergenerational. Those are the points I wanted to make on the merits of the amendment.

1245 A more practical one I wanted to make was, for those that were here last term, I am a member of the Children and Young People's Plan Committee of the Assembly. It was submitted as an appendix report, which left it a bit of a melee of who was presenting it and who was leading it. Everybody at that time in the Assembly pointed out that this needed to be a proper policy letter so that people were able to discuss it in a meaningful way and reply time for them.

1250 Unfortunately, our Committee reports do not tend to get that, even when we do get knocked on to the agenda, so whoever – I guess it will be the responsibility of P&R – will advise that such an important matter is given some decent time on the agenda for Members to discuss, absorb and hopefully approve.

Thank you.

1255 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Rylatt.

Deputy Rylatt: Thank you, sir.

1260 I welcome this amendment from Deputy Rochester and Deputy Montague, although re-reading it yesterday evening, I have to admit it was slightly dispiriting to read about an amendment aimed at young people aged 5 to 25, which would now no longer include me. (*Laughter*) Shall I get the violins out, Deputy Collins? (*Laughter*)

1265 I think Deputy Rochester and Deputy Montague have honed in on a genuine gap in how we think about the issues facing young people. In particular, I think they are right to highlight that the Children and Young People's Plan, as has been highlighted by many speaking in the debate, in title at least suggests a wider scope than it currently holds in reality.

1270 Deputies Strachan, Rochester, Montague and Hansmann Rouxel have already covered much of what I planned to say in a far more articulate way, so I will keep this succinct. I was especially encouraged to see the emphasis placed on young people's civic voice and participation. I think it was well raised by Deputy Montague saying that the Youth Forum should be a broad church of young people, while it was also recognised in the explanatory note, which speaks to the fact that over 60% of young people surveyed disagreed with the statement:

I have a say in what Government does.

1275 Now, that statistic feels like something that is easy to brush away as something to be expected, but I am convinced that that sentence speaks to something much deeper that we are actually seeing, which is a shift away from the stereotype of youthful disinterest in politics towards something more worrying, which is that disinterest is beginning to harden into apathy, and research supports that concern.

1280 A report last year from the Future of Democracy programme at Cambridge University found that satisfaction with democracy has fallen most steeply among young people. As Dr Roberto Foa observed, who is also a researcher from that programme, he said:

This is the first generation in living memory to have a global majority who are dissatisfied with the way democracy works while in their twenties and thirties.

1285 Now, that experience was borne out for me during last year's election campaign. As Deputy Hansmann Rouxel alluded to, we do not yet have a full age breakdown of turnout, but we do know that voter registration among 16 to 25-year-olds was significantly lower than that of other groups, essentially meaning that the next generation, the ones who will live longest with the consequences of our decisions, had the least to say in shaping them.

1290 Taken together, I think that should concern all of us. Building trust with young people is not just about the services we deliver, it is about helping them feel as though they have a genuine stake in the decisions that affect their future. That is why this amendment feels timely. The cheesy slogan that I used in the election was that:

When young people have a say in the future, they are more likely to stay for the future.

1295 That is something I continue to believe. The opportunity is there. Guernsey is one of the only places in the world – I believe one of only 10 jurisdictions – that allows people to vote from the age of 16, yet feedback I have received from students, some of whom are members of the Youth Forum,

has suggested that the current level of civic education in their curriculums has not always translated into understanding of or greater participation in our local democracy, which I think renders our uniquely low voting age somewhat less meaningful.

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I would therefore welcome if Deputy Rochester, in replying to the debate, could elaborate on whether greater emphasis on civic participation could be one of the outcomes explored through this work. As Deputy Strachan mentioned, it does look as though there is scope for synergy between this aspect of the amendment and the potential work that may begin with the States' Assembly and Constitution Committee.

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Finally, I would also briefly note that the emphasis on young people's emotional and mental health is particularly welcome. As I hope most Members would agree, I think it is easier to grow healthy young people than it is repair broken adults. I think that is one of the underlying preventative principles, which I think stands this amendment in very good stead, so I would encourage Members to support it.

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The Bailiff: Is there any Member who wishes to speak against Amendment 9?

All right, on that basis I will call Deputy Matthews, on the basis that he is on the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture.

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Deputy Matthews.

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

I am sorry to disappoint you, sir, I will not speak against the amendment as such, but I do have some commentary on how we got there, which is perhaps of interest, I hope.

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Deputy Rochester and I actually had some consultation about how this amendment would be formed in its early form, and I had initially thought about bringing an amendment along similar lines or with a slightly different focus, which I have not brought partly because there may have been a bit of overlap between the two amendments. Deputy Rochester had a slightly different focus on wanting to do this survey and plan and there was a slight difference between where we were going with it.

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The amendment that I had wanted to bring, sir, was to look at changing the focus of the Government Work Plan to really look at the interests of young people in the Island and young people in general, so children, young people and families, because really the issues that we are facing as a Government are mostly – nearly all of them – to do with our adverse demographics and where we are going as an Island. If we support children, young people and families, we should hopefully aim to try to reverse some of those issues.

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I entirely support this amendment, sir, from Deputy Rochester in that it revitalises the Children and Young People's Plan, but there is a question about why we would need to do that. It is an intriguing story. I think it shows the value of the consultation that took place during this amendment, because I am a member of Health & Social Care, along with Deputy Rochester, but it was really at the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture that we learned a lot about some issues with this amendment and how it could be improved.

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Both Deputies Rochester and Strachan have spoken in their speeches about how the Children and Young People's Plan has a relatively narrow focus on safeguarding, welfare and statutory duties. Deputy Bury also talked about how the Children and Young People's Plan development in the Children and Young People's Board really focused on those areas, which are really important areas, but had not had the broader impact across issues facing children and young people in general.

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As Deputy Rochester said, it focused really so much on the floor and not so much about the issues that face young people and families in general. That is quite an odd thing really, because when we discussed this – and we did discuss this at quite great length in ESC – we said, 'Well, that was not really what the Children and Young People's Plan was intended to do.' It was originally intended to have a much broader focus than that.

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1350 If you read the legislation – we are a legislature and we often do not read legislation. Deputy Montague read out part of the provision in the Children Law, 2008 and I will read out another part. Section 28(1):

Within one year of the coming into force [this is from 2008] ... and at least once in every three years thereafter (or such other interval as the States may by resolution provide) the Department ...

In this it is now the Committee *for* Health & Social Care:

1355 ... shall prepare, and submit to the States, a plan setting out a strategy for the provision of services to promote and safeguard the welfare of - (a) the children of Guernsey and Alderney, (b) the families of those children, and (c) such other class or description of the population of Guernsey and Alderney, as may be prescribed.

1360 Which I think covers pretty much everything. In fact, part (b), ‘the families of those children’ indicates how broad this was intended to be, because there are an awful lot of issues that might not just be affecting people between the ages of 5 to 18 and might be affecting the family. If you cannot afford housing, if you have to work many long hours, these are all issues that will affect children and young people, which there ought to be a plan to try to address.

1365 The reason why it has not, sir, is I think an example of – as Deputy Helyar often reminds us, very presciently – us not really driving the bus as politicians. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) I think that really what we should have been doing on the Children and Young People’s Board – and I took over from Deputy Bury as the HSC representative, along with Deputy Gollop, chaired by Deputy McKenna and former Deputy Haskins as the representatives on the Children and Young People’s Board – is looking at a much broader set of issues that affect children as a whole. I think that is what we actually all wanted to do. In those meetings, we wanted to look at issues that affected children and young people in the very broad sense.

1370 Actually, it was with some disappointment for me, sir, that the Children and Young People’s Board was actually dissolved at the end of last term. It was not at the request of those who were members of it, and it was with some consternation. I remember Deputy Gollop shared with me and other Members that it should continue and it should broaden its scope.

1375 We have, as the Committee *for* Health & Social Care, written a letter to the Committee for Policy & Resources to ask if we could have some equivalent of that board reconstituted so that it could actually produce this Children and Young People’s Plan and really have a very broad look at the issues, exactly the sorts of issues that Deputies Rochester and Strachan, in bringing the amendment, and Deputy Montague have found, issues that are facing our young people – I think it is important to suggest the families of those young people as well – in order to try to make Guernsey a really good place for children and young people and families.

1380 I think that is something that the Government Work Plan should be doing as its emphasis. If we want to do something as a Government, we should be trying to make Guernsey a good place for children and young people. I have been reminded by Deputy Ozanne it is not all just about children because it is young people in general. That is the area of the age range that we need to be focusing on as an Island. I think that that is already actually covered by this Children and Young People’s Plan.

1385 I hope that we are able to broaden it out and do much more with it and really try to address those issues that affect our Island so deeply that we all know about. We all know the Island, and it should be, sir, that Guernsey is a very attractive place for young people. It is a very safe place; it is a very secure place. It should be somewhere that people look at and say, ‘Well, Guernsey is somewhere that I want to come and start a family and raise a family and somewhere I want to stay’.

1390 That is where I think, as a Government, I would actually like the whole Government Work Plan to focus on that, but I think that we should certainly be looking at a Children and Young People’s Plan that helps us to do that, so I will support this amendment for that reason. But as I said, sir, it is with a bit of disappointment that we had not been quite going in the right direction. I do feel a little

1395 bit like we were perhaps a passenger on the bus and not in charge of it and we perhaps need to take the wheel a little bit more, sir.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: I am going to call Deputy Helyar and then Deputy Inder.

1400

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

I have a lot of young people at home and one thing does not fit every size. They all have different needs, different requirements and different feelings. They change rapidly at different times, they go through different stages, according to their personal development and their emotional development.

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If I am going to support this amendment – and there were some great speeches made, particularly Deputy Bury's, I think, focusing on need – it would be because I believe in the need for data and for Government to make informed decisions, and because this is the Government Work Plan and we do not have any money, to prioritise services where they are most needed. The reason I say that, and I could quote Nietzsche, which Deputy Montague might appreciate:

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Freedom is the will to be responsible for ourselves.

Because a lot of speakers in this debate have said 'our young people.' I do not consider my young people to be the Government's responsibility and I do not want a pamphlet coming home from the Government in the hands of one of my young people saying, 'You need to do stuff like this because the Government says so'. *(Laughter)* My young people are not the Government's responsibility.

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The more people that have that approach to raising their children the better, in my view, and that is my political philosophy, so there is some political philosophy behind the approach to deal with these sorts of problems. On the other hand, there are lots and lots of people in need of help when they need to call for it, and we need to make sure that Government provides the right service at the right level to be able to focus on it.

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I would just temper the talk about, 'The Government does this and we need to do that' and everything else, because there are a lot of people like me, I know, in society who do not consider that raising children is the Government's responsibility. It is my responsibility and I would like to keep it.

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Thank you very much.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

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Deputy Inder: Thank you very much, sir.

Yes, I doubt anyone is going to vote against the children, with the exception of me. *(Laughter)*

I entirely understand Deputy Rochester's passion for bringing children forward into greater focus. What I did not understand is the 10-minute speech we got from Deputy Matthews, talking about the amendment he never actually laid.

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I am just going to read from foundation.gg, and this is the bit I genuinely do not understand. It touches a little bit on what Deputy Helyar says: Government again has got to get involved. Now, from foundation.gg:

The Quality of Life Report is the result of a year-long research project that draws on a wide range of reliable data sources, in-depth interviews with charities, and fresh insights from a community-wide survey.

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That did not cost Government a penny. It has already been done. Now, if you look at the outturns, and I will admit I actually used AI for the first time. The last time I looked at AI I checked myself; it did not end well. I actually threw the report through an AI doofa – I do not think it is quite called that – and I asked a question. This is about the £100,000 and locking it again into a bunch of

1445 technocrats sitting somewhere in a white room, who basically are just going to cogitate on something and do nothing.

My view, my political view, is I think that foundation.gg should be the centre of all this, because they have already done the work. I asked, 'What were the main issues for children in the report?' 'Bullying and school experience'. Deputy Montague: one-third of the children surveyed reported
1450 being bullied at or near their school in the 12 months before the survey.

Deputy Montague has supported this, but the question to him really should have been, 'Well, you already have the information. Why do I need to spend a load more money on a report where, quite clearly, someone who has been put in the frame here is the bullying and school experience?'
Number one.

1455 Mental health and wellbeing: increasing demand – I think Deputy Bury touched on it a bit – was reported with schools. Again, schools referring many children for concerns such as anxiety. Why do I need to spend some more money on something that is already reported by the sector?

Food insecurity: food insecurity was notably higher in households with children, with a significant percentage experiencing food shortages and reduced meals in recent months. I suspect that is
1460 related to ESS. I am not blaming them for food insecurity, but they are the ones who effectively support it. Again, why do I need – or this Government need – to put something when a centre of government foundation is already telling me what the problems are?

Broader social economic pressures on young people: while not exclusively about children in the stricter sense, a number of broader issues in the report that affect older children, young adults in
1465 their early 20s, including low self-esteem, anxiety about the future, poor mental health, a sense of Guernsey's high cost of living and, in short, in terms of policy, strengthening children's mental health support. There we are, Education again.

Taking a stronger system-wide approach to bullying: Education again. Improve children's experience and voice in education: Education again.

1470 I think you are asking me to give way, Deputy Montague.

Deputy Montague: Thank you very much. I did give way for you yesterday.

Just to say, Deputy Inder, you are looking at the Foundation report. What that did was drew on
1475 previous surveys. The one you have been referring to is the 2022 Young People's Survey that formed their report. That is now four years ago. I referred in my speech that we had come to the point where we were looking at those reports. We did not think they were robust and reliable enough and that is why we have done subsequent reporting.

The Foundation put together – they drew on previous surveys, and 2022 until now in schools, it is time for more information. By the way, the information we have in Education, we have a new
1480 survey system. We have lots of data. It is not the case that we require loads of sums of money. We just need the focus to get that data out again. The data you are referring to, a lot of that is from the 2022 Young People's Survey.

Deputy Inder: I am not entirely sure that is correct. Foundation.gg, this is what they said, and
1485 I will repeat it, because I did state that in the first part of my speech:

The Quality of Life Report is the result of a year-long research project ...

So this was published on 23rd May 2025, a year-long project, so I assumed it was not a year in
1966. I am assuming it was the year before 2025:

1490 ... that draws on a wide range of reliable data sources, in-depth interviews with charities [so that is current], and fresh insights from a community-wide survey.

So that is current. That is not from a long time ago. This is from, give or take in glacial Government terms, practically yesterday, but I will give way to Deputy Hansmann Rouxel. All right, sorry. It is my turn. *(Laughter)* I was going to sit down and speak; that would be a first.

1495 So in short, Members, where I have some sympathy – and there is not a lot of it – I am not entirely sure Government should be near this. I honestly think that Government should be talking to those people doing these surveys of today, of yesterday and the current. I think foundation.gg did a fantastic piece of work. I did not agree with all of it, I did not at all.

1500 But, Members, I cannot see an output of £100,000 is going to benefit any more than which we already know unless – and this is where I am looking at it now, having reminded myself of the 23rd May report – it feels like Government doing something again, getting wrapped in something that it was never very good at in the first place.

1505 When you have real, decent charity sectors out there that could be led by people like foundation.gg, I just think Government is in the wrong place again, but those are entirely my politics. I simply do not Government contending it can do something when it fails year after year after year. You have support from the charity organisation that is current. The data was drawn recently. The surveys were done recently. Deputy Montague is shaking his head but I will trust entirely what foundation.gg – I am willing to give way. If he wants to challenge foundation.gg via a vocal headshake, I am willing to give way.

1510 **Deputy Montague:** Just for clarity, sir, thank you, Deputy Inder.

Let us take page 61 of the report. The data there is from the Guernsey Young People's Survey 2022. They did the work last year but they drew on information that was produced from things like that survey report. Okay, that is four years ago and it needs to be done again.

1515 **Deputy Inder:** The exception does not disprove the rule. As I will repeat again, fresh insights from a community-wide survey. So that is the third time I have said that; the third time I have said that. I explained yesterday that I went and made some very quick communication. I hope Deputy Montague – he has not done the same.

1520 In short, I am just going to make a minor commentary of what I think happens in Government. Where Deputy Rochester is right to a degree, Deputy Matthews and, to a degree, Deputy Montague, I think what I have found is those who have the greatest access to politicians usually have the most money and the most leisure time and they are organised. The children are not organised. On Economic Development, Aurigny came and saw us every week; passengers did not. Guernsey Finance always got access to Guernsey. Those who have a certain amount of wealth, a certain amount of – we never heard from the kitchen porter over COVID. We never heard from the shelf stacker. We heard from the Guernsey Hospitality Association who wanted more money. We heard from the dentists. We did not hear from the foreign workers living in the hotel rooms in some quite miserable circumstances. We always heard from people who wanted more from Guernsey and they were usually wealthy.

1530 So in that regard I entirely agree with Deputy Rochester that the youth voice needs to be heard. The difficulty I have with it is I think the information is already there. I genuinely do. I disagree with what Deputy Montague says. I think he is protecting the realm far greater than he needs to. I believe entirely in the third sector. I think foundation.gg do a great job, and I think all you have to do is deal with the recommendations, of which education is four of the seven recommendations. Education just needs to have a re-foundation.gg, not spend another £100,000, and just consider bullying, more support for SEND, and I do not know about the costs of living and the – it is all there in the report when you have a browse through it. I may have just saved you £50,000.

1540 I am going to sit down now.

The Bailiff: Deputy Humphreys.

Deputy Humphreys: Sir, I will be brief and have reduced this speech significantly.

1545 I stand for fear of criticism over supporting the costs following my amendment yesterday and I just want to quickly reiterate some things I said then that may make people feel more comfortable who supported me voting for this. I said that spending the right money in the right way is very

important, and I believe this does somewhat feed into my grandma's mantra that a stitch in time saves nine. The children and young people are the bricks and mortar of our future. I do trust the money will be spent carefully and that perhaps the proposers will heed some of the things that Deputy Inder has said, but I do therefore support this amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Thank you.

I wish I had given Deputy Matthews's speech in a way. He mentioned me a few times and I think it was pertinent, despite what Deputy Inder said. I got a little bit of grief yesterday for saying that AI will not replace all jobs and would still give a certain prominence to the important roles of COVID, like carers and retail, but of course some people would aspire to supposedly better paid jobs like becoming – a very good skills presentation today and a focus on inclusivity and on confidence building and on developing skills, according to Deputy Montague and Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, on what those skills are and how we can develop soft skills as well.

But Deputy Matthews, in a way, had a vision that ideally this report, this Government Work Plan, could have focused even more completely on the whole area of family life and children and young people. I was delighted and excited when Deputy de Sausmarez told us that that was going to be at least one of the five priorities. Some Deputies say instead of talking about the issues, and we have heard a lot of issue-based speeches today, I just want to talk about myself, and I will talk about myself for a little bit and not just the opportunities that I maybe lost when I was a younger person, unlike you, sir, the Bailiff, who was obviously doing well at school.

My issue is going back to Deputy Helyar's bus and being a passenger on the bus. I, in the last term, sat on Employment & Social Security. I chaired for 18 months the Corporate Child. So the point that actually one Member made – Deputy Helyar – about targeting resources was well made but, of course, as we are corporate parents we really do have to target services when there are not loving parents and a stable family environment. I am still a member of that Committee. I also sat on the Special Needs Group and I also chaired the Children and Young People's Panel, and I was aware that its main purpose in the last term was to deliver over the line, which it succeeded in doing, the changes to the Children's Law and working closely with the professionals and the Children's Convenor. But sometimes I felt I was more a member of the audience or a member of the – not congregation exactly but a mat spectator while the players were playing and the players were professionals in their discipline. I would like to see more political engagement, and I think we pay the price in a way when we abolished the old Children's Board.

I remember, again a little bit of history, that the Children and Young People's Plan was a feature about 15 years ago. Although it was very well thought through, I felt even at the time that it should be broader and not just focused on children in what we might define as need but young people across the Island. Because I think young people, regardless of their parents' social status, can have social media issues, mental health issues, special needs, career decisions to make, whether they want to go off Island or not. Therefore, I think the more data we get the better. I am sure there is data out there already. We have had a lot of surveys, some of them better than others, but surely as this is one of the five priorities of this plan that we will support and indeed is closely linked to Health & Social Care as well, is it not essential that we have the right data to kick this off?

So I do support the Deputy Rochester amendment. It is broader than the original version in co-ordinating and performing a coherent strategy, but strategies need to be acted on. I think what this will do is it works in with the material we already have. But if we are going to actually make progress we have to have meaningful political involvement. We have to drive related issues with arts and sports and youth organisations and involve the third sector. We need to have material progress at the end because it will not work unless we have joined-up support. It is interesting that in the public mind probably young people are associated with education, but in reality it crosses many mandates. I am still involved with the Home Committee, and I think if we spend the money now we will succeed.

Thank you.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Ozanne.

Deputy Ozanne: Thank you, sir.

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I would like to make two brief points, if I may. I do support this amendment for many of the reasons stated, but I am glad it specifically mentions young adults as well as children and families. Because as Deputy Matthews has pointed out, that was something that I felt was critical here. Understanding what will encourage our young adults to stay and what challenges they face in terms of housing, healthcare and social attitudes I think is key, as we have heard from Deputy Montague and others, to ensuring our long-term viability as an Island. But it is not just about children and it is not just about families. Most of those young adults are single adults at the start of their life – not all – and therefore understanding those challenges they face I think are key in the modern world.

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My second point relates to research. You will not be surprised perhaps – because I was a research consultant – I am a firm believer in it. It is what so much of international business rests its huge business decisions on, but it does need to be done by experts who understand how to ask questions that are not weighted in the way that Deputy Camp had set out.

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One of the significant pieces of research that has been I think touched on today is the 2022 Schools Health Education Unit Survey, which was done primarily among those in years 8 to 10, I believe. Where I stand, one of the important things there was that it pulled out the differences between the LGBTQ+ students and what we call cisgendered, i.e. the non-LGBTQ+ members, in that school. There is a page of about 30 significant differences as to what those students who are LGBTQ+ in our community experienced in our schools. Three times as many, 33% versus 10%, of those pupils said they had been discriminated against in the last year and were treated unfairly by being insulted or shouted at. Nearly double – 45% versus 21% – of pupils responded they had been discriminated in the last year because of their age, sex, gender, religion or disability; 48% versus 70% of pupils had said that they felt happy talking to other pupils, i.e. only half felt that they could engage with other pupils; and 41% versus 22%, i.e. double, of the LGBT students felt that they had been bullied, i.e. we have a significant problem in our schools, it seems, for many of those in the LGBTQ+ community.

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We need to track whether our progress in that area and indeed our plans are having any impact. Indeed, it is only with research like that that we can find out we have a problem at all. I am concerned that that research which showed significant issues is almost swept under the carpet and there is no plan that has been actioned, as far as I can see, to address those concerns. But it is in tracking that process that we find out where our problems lie and that, for all the other reasons, is why I support the amendment.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: Thank you very much.

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Sir, I beg your indulgence and also like Deputy Gollop feel a need to talk about myself. I have an eclectic collection of philosophies that inhabit my mind and one of those is actually I have a benign view of state intervention based on the fact that in the first 10 years of my life I was effectively brought up by the state or in an environment controlled by the state. We lived on defence bases for the first 10 years, albeit it was a very patriarchal upbringing. So I share with Deputy Helyar my view that my children's upbringing is my business, but I am also happy for the state to intervene and ensure *[Inaudible 11.59.52]*.

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However, and I was lazily going to just agree with this amendment *[Inaudible 11.59.57]* right thing to do. But I apologise for being lazy about this. I am persuaded by the arguments of Deputy Inder about the need to have further consultation. I had read the evidence and I did read the views of the Foundation. Deputy Montague has very articulately made, as has Deputy Rochester, why you feel the need to conduct more research to mediate in this case. It is compelling, you have

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sufficient to act. My concerns, therefore – and I would like this explained in the summation – are that that would get in the way of action, knowing how long consultation, terms of reference, *[Inaudible 12.00.51]* from the consultant, how much longer would accountable in terms of acting? Why is it even necessary when I *[Inaudible 12.01.01]* at the end of each base, and with that request I will *[Inaudible 12.01.11]*.

The Bailiff: I am now going to turn to the President, Deputy de Sausmarez, to speak to Amendment 9.

Deputy de Sausmarez, please.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

I have to explain that because of the timing of this amendment the Policy & Resources Committee has not actually had a chance to properly discuss it, so I cannot stand here and communicate any Committee view. I know we were all very supportive of it being laid, to suspend rules so that it could be debated, but I cannot speak to the voting intentions of any of my Committee colleagues. So what I will say next is my personal view.

First of all, I really would like to commend those involved and Deputies Rochester and Strachan for taking on board the feedback from the two main Committees involved and coming up with what is effectively a more workable compromise, which I think still does a very important thing.

To a couple of Deputy Montague's comments, like Deputy Helyar I have a house full of young people. I spend a lot of my day talking with young people, and I can confirm that they are very individual and have a range of views. I love talking with their friends as well. It is fascinating how often I am surprised actually by what they have to tell me. But I can absolutely reinforce what Deputy Montague said about how putting children's voices at the heart of a matter really can change it.

My children have all been at or one of them still currently is at St Martin's Primary School, one of the schools he mentioned, and they have moved mountains. They have managed to achieve, by taking that very approach, so much more progress than what I know politicians have been trying to achieve for years. They have been absolutely blindingly effective. So I thorough endorse it.

I also was very moved and thought Deputy Bury's speech contained a lot of valuable points. To those that have raised the issue of families, not to disaggregate those issues, I could not agree more. I sat on the Send Alliance Political Oversight Group and I, like Deputy Bury, was very alarmed at some of the trends in some of those things. Anorexia was one that caught my eye. I had a sibling that was very nearly one of the 46% growing up, and I can testify to the impact that has on the entire family for a very sustained time.

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel, I thought she made a very valid point about the dangers of framing investment in children and young people as a social vanity project. Deputy Blin in an earlier debate today talked about the best time to plant a forest being 20 years ago; the second best time is today. I thought actually those two points are quite relevant to each other, as well as the anecdote that Deputy Strachan used about the prisoner and if those life skills had been communicated and passed over earlier then actually different life choices could be made. So I am very persuaded of the merit of getting it right when it comes to our children and young people and all the very valid points that have been made to that effect.

Deputy Camp did introduce something that became a little bit of a theme during the debate, and it is one that really interests me about children's freedoms and the extent to which that is influenced by Government. It is an issue that I have done quite a lot of research into in the past, and there are actually a very broad range of different factors that play into it. There are cultural and parental shifts, changes. So around risk aversion we know that parents are becoming a lot more risk averse, which is interesting because actually empirical evidence is suggesting that life is becoming safer for children and young people. Nonetheless, as a culture we are becoming much more structured and supervised about how we rear our children.

1705 When I was a child we were much more free range as a general rule. There have been some really interesting studies on how far children are allowed to travel unsupervised from home and that has been geographically mapped. Two generations ago it was miles; I think it was something like children were generally allowed eight or nine miles from home, and these days you can measure it in metres. Technology has had a really interesting role in some of this as well. So there are all sorts of different factors that play into it.

1710 Then I think to Deputy Inder's point and others that have spoken about it, and Alderney Representative Hill, there are some factors which are institutional, and certainly some of those institutions are private – he mentioned one – but some are public sector institutions, schools being the most obvious one, where actually we know that some of the constraints around children's autonomy can be felt through that and, indeed, reversed through that. There are also some economic conditions which are restricting children and ultimately young people's life paths, and Deputy Ozanne among others raised the issue of housing, which is a major one, and also employment opportunities and training and that kind of thing.

1715 So I think it is absolutely fair to say that there are a whole range of issues in which Government is not directly responsible and, to Deputy Helyar's point, should not be responsible. But there are, nonetheless, some key factors where Government really does have at least a major part of the responsibility to get those conditions right. My personal view is I think this is a very good opportunity to make sure that we are doing that well. So, sorry, that is my personal view.

1720 It is quite close to lunch now; I will sit down.

The Bailiff: I will now invite the proposer of Amendment 9, Deputy Rochester, to reply to the debate, please.

1725 **Deputy Rochester:** I did say at the beginning of my speech this is my first amendment, so thank you for the challenge in summing up what I feel has been a comprehensive, thoughtful and broadly supportive debate. If nothing else has come out of this debate, I know that young people will understand if they listen to this that this Assembly recognises their importance.

1730 Actually, reflecting as I listened to you all speak, I am going to ask for the *Hansard* and take it to HSC because much of what you have all contributed absolutely should shape the work that we go on to do if this amendment is supported. The themes that we have been talking about are, firstly, cost – thank you, Deputy van Katwyk, for your observations there – and, secondly, reach of the work that we do to hear young people's voice. I intentionally bring those two things together. This amendment is not prescriptive in the way that the voice of young people is heard or in the way that the Children and Young People's Plan is shaped, but the cost covers both of those. I think this amendment takes us from where we are now to where we bring back the Children and Young People's Plan to the States' Assembly for their consideration.

1735 So that cost is intentionally generous. I am personally frustrated where we say there is not a cost if things are resourced from within Government. There is an opportunity cost of whatever we do, and so in an attempt to be honest and transparent about the financial cost of this work I put unilaterally – and I think others were keen that I put a lower number – up to £100,000. The reason I did that is because if we are genuinely going to hear the voice of young people we need to collect that information in a number of different ways. One survey will not do it, and it is not right to do it that way because, as Deputy Inder highlighted, we have a lot of information. As Deputy Montague pointed out, the schools are collecting information. This is about taking thoughtful time to create a programme of engagement through a number of different mechanisms to fill the gaps. It may well be that third party youth organisations are best placed to do that work.

1740 So that cost is intentionally generous. I am personally frustrated where we say there is not a cost if things are resourced from within Government. There is an opportunity cost of whatever we do, and so in an attempt to be honest and transparent about the financial cost of this work I put unilaterally – and I think others were keen that I put a lower number – up to £100,000. The reason I did that is because if we are genuinely going to hear the voice of young people we need to collect that information in a number of different ways. One survey will not do it, and it is not right to do it that way because, as Deputy Inder highlighted, we have a lot of information. As Deputy Montague pointed out, the schools are collecting information. This is about taking thoughtful time to create a programme of engagement through a number of different mechanisms to fill the gaps. It may well be that third party youth organisations are best placed to do that work.

1745 What I do know is in creating the plan that responds to the information that we are able to collate and supplement is that co-creating the Children and Young People's Plan with the young people whose voice we need to listen to is also critically important. So there is a cost to that. If we take the voice of young people and then tell them what the solutions are through the Children and Young People's Plan, I think we would miss an opportunity to do more.

1755 Evidence has been a theme from the responses that you have given, and I think that is absolutely right that we need to spend the money and time and effort in engaging young people across the community of all types, of all socioeconomic backgrounds, of all sexualities, to make sure that we are hearing everybody's voice and, as I say, co-designing the outcome.

1760 I will just try and respond to a few of the specific questions that have been raised. I hope, Deputy van Katwyk, you feel that the cost question that you asked has been answered. Deputy Leadbeater, thank you for your belated recognition of my contribution through my speech; that was very kind. You asked who is going to be responsible for this. As a new Deputy, I cannot answer that question with authority. What I can say is that the consultation I have had with ESC and HSC has helped me understand better the obligation and authority that is afforded to health and social care through the Children Law. So the requirement for the plan, the expectation of the resources and effort comes from that legal power that sits with HSC. For me that is the starting point. Obviously, this amendment is to the Government Work Plan to ensure that we have access to policy and financial resources to support both the surveying and the co-creation of the plan, but then, of course, I think it is for this Assembly in responding to the plan that is produced to determine what the best governance body or mechanism is for delivering that plan, depending on what sits within it. So I really would not want to front run the delivery.

Deputy Leadbeater: I thank Deputy Rochester for giving way.

1775 Can she give some assurance, then, that when this does return to the States there will be some suggestions of a governance structure and some recommendations for the States to accept then?

Deputy Rochester: Yes, I would be happy to do that.

1780 While we are talking about that, I thank Deputy Bury for the very sensible suggestion that we carefully consider how it is presented to the States to give it the best consideration. Reflecting on the debate today, much has been said that has been really valuable. In what we do next I would hate to miss that opportunity when the plan comes back.

Deputy Camp, you raised three questions. I hope some of what I have said addresses these very valid concerns, so not listening just to privileged voices—sorry, Deputy.

Deputy Goy: Thank you very much for giving way, Deputy Rochester.

1785 Can Deputy Rochester please assure the Assembly that this £100,000 is not going to go to a consultant survey company to get that information required?

Thank you.

1790 **Deputy Rochester:** I do not think it would be appropriate for me to give that assurance at the moment, given that I am not an expert in how we ensure that competence of engagement. What my instinct tells me and what we have already discussed and what the comments have been made, is that those third sector organisations that support young people are probably best placed, those not-for-profit organisations, to support the voice of young people in this process and co-creation. But I cannot make any commitment as to how this is delivered.

1795 So, the voice of the privileged versus the voice of the many. I hope Deputy Camp is comforted that a number of different means of engaging with young people is envisaged in the work that we want to do. I agree a survey is simplistic and often biased, and for that reason I think there is a huge opportunity to consider – not necessarily use but consider – the Youth Assembly, focus groups and other ways of engaging, probably in a way that we have not done with young people in the past.

1800 Then you talked about the Government having a tendency to stop listening unless it can control outcomes, and I hope that the co-creation of the plan mitigates that to a certain extent, but I also recognise the comments that were made by Deputy Helyar and to an extent Deputy Sloan that we need to use resources prudently to address needs and support young people where that is required and not deliver blanket solutions to a population that, as we all know, are nuanced and differing in their wants and needs.

1805

Thank you, Deputy Hansmann Rouxel, for your support. Deputy Snowdon, you talked again about obstacles – sorry, not Snowdon, Hill, apologies; thank you, gentlemen. You talked about obstacles to the extant organisations in our community that are seeking to provide support and space and pastimes to our young people. Obviously, this plan needs to respond to the voice of young people – I do not apologise for that – but if that issue is identified as part of the challenges that young people face, then of course it will be addressed in the plan. But I think we all want to do more on that topic, and that can be pursued outside the plan if needed.

Deputy Rylatt, Civic Voice is important; I totally agree. Actually, looking at the Children’s Law, it does particularly address that point by saying that the matters that the children’s plan needs to concern itself with is their contribution to society. I see that Civic Voice was very much into that.

Deputy Inder, I found your contribution fascinating because while saying you were not necessarily going to support the amendment you raised a number of excellent points that align with certainly my intention of how this plan would be delivered. So I heard what you said and then I came away with the feeling that actually we are very much aligned.

The Foundation Report I am very close to and I had the absolute privilege of spending time with Alex and Jim, who put so much work into it. So I do have better – I am sorry, that is unfair; I am sure you have an excellent understanding of how it was put together – a detailed understanding of how it was put together. I agree with Deputy Montague that those broad statements about society-wide, community-wide consultation and current data relate not necessarily to young people in the context of that report, and they relied very heavily on the Children and Young People’s Survey of 2022. So I agree with Deputy Montague that updated data is necessary in some areas.

Congratulations on joining some of us in the world of artificial intelligence. I am sure you will enjoy that journey. You say that the cost is important to you and using organisations beyond Government, and I hope what I have said so far addresses those concerns. I very much see the young people’s third sector organisations that operate in our community as being best placed both to support and understand the voice of young people and co-creating the plan.

So I think I will pause there. Apologies if I have missed any questions. I will happily follow up on those afterwards, but just to say that I feel delighted with the quality of debate and the contributions you have all made. I will reflect on the *Hansard* and pull those all through as HSC considers how to make progress with this if the amendment is supported. So I shall rest, as I say, and thank you for your thoughts and I hope you feel able to support this amendment so we can get on with the very important work.

The Bailiff: Well, Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 9 proposed by Deputy Rochester, seconded by Deputy Montague. I will ask the Greffier to open the voting on Amendment 9, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 34, Contre 2, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 3

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Inder, Neil	None	None	Curgenven, Rob
Burford, Yvonne	Van Katwyk, Lee			Malik, Munazza
Bury, Tina				Williams, Steve
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
de Sausmarez, Lindsay				
Dorrity, David				
Falla, Steve				
Gabriel, Adrian				
Gollop, John				
Goy, David				
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah				

Helyar, Mark
Hill, Edward
Humphreys, Rhona
Kay-Mouat, Bruno
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha
Laine, Marc
Leadbeater, Marc
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
Vermeulen, Simon

1850 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Amendment 9 proposed by Deputy Rochester and seconded by Deputy Montague there voted in favour 34 Members, 2 Members voted against, no Member abstained, 2 Members did not participate in the vote, and therefore I will declare Amendment 9 carried.

1855 We are now going to move back into general debate. What I am going to do is just remind Members about the successful amendments. So the five propositions that were originally put by the Policy & Resources Committee have grown to 13 propositions. Proposition 5 has been amended with words inserted at the end of it by Amendment 1. We are then going to take the additional propositions that have been inserted in the order in which they were debated during the course of the amendments debates, so that means that Proposition 6 derives from Amendment 3. Propositions 7 and 8 come from Amendment 2. Proposition 9 comes from Amendment 8. Proposition 10 comes from Amendment 7. Proposition 11 comes from Amendment 6 and
1860 Proposition 12 comes from Amendment 11. Finally, Proposition 13 comes from Amendment No. 9, which you have just approved.

Who wants to speak in general debate?
Deputy Leadbeater.

1865 **Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, sir.

I thought I would rise now because I just have to advise you, sir, and Members that I have a medical appointment I need to take my son to after lunch and I probably will not be back in this afternoon.

1870 It seems like it has been a bit of a marathon just to get to this stage now. I think pretty much most of us thought we would not be back in today at the start of this process, but here we find ourselves on a Friday. I think we have kind of slipped into this over the last couple of terms, and I can see us doing that again now when we debate everything to the nth degree. But it has been a good process. I think the Assembly have all engaged well. I think P&R have done a cracking job and I think there are some brilliant amendments. It has created some really good, interesting debate
1875 and I hope that that just sets the tone for the rest of this term.

The Government Work Plan for me is a kind of P&R plan. I know it was probably a P&R plan actually at one point, but it is pretty much owned by that Committee. I know that, as has been mentioned by Deputy Rochester, it is owned by this Assembly. Yes, of course it is but it is more P&R's Committee plan, I think, with the Committee work plans dovetailing into it, etc.

1880 If we are going to focus on Home Affairs, we have some really important work to do this term. We have already started on the Police Complaints Review process. We have already started on the

1885 first phase of the Population Management Review. We are entering into the second phase and we hope to get that completed this term. Sentencing guidelines is another one, and there are other bits within that whole justice framework that we are going to be auctioning and working on this term. So we want to put our heads down and put our noses to the grindstone and crack on with the important work that we have as a Committee.

1890 I think it was a good idea not to redebate the GWP and go through all of the resources it takes on a regular basis to put that and for this debate to happen. It takes up valuable officer time. It takes up valuable States' time as well. We would not have had a succession of policy letters coming from E&I thick and fast at the end of the last term if we had had more opportunity to concentrate on those issues rather than concentrate on redebating everything within the GWP. I am not going to be here to be able to support the propositions, but I just put everyone on note that I would be supporting every one of the propositions and I would have been supporting the sursis as well, if I had been around. So that is my position.

1895 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne.

1900 **Deputy Ozanne:** Just very briefly, sir. I completely endorse everything that Deputy Leadbeater has just said about the way we have engaged with this debate and actually the ability for us all to hear each other and for P&R to respond where needed to either criticism or to input. My big question for P&R is how they intend to communicate the work plan. Because otherwise it will just be something that I suppose interests us but perhaps Islanders do not understand why we have set sail in the way we have with the priorities we have. So I am wondering if there are any plans on how this can be communicated.

1905 In doing so, I want to congratulate both Deputy de Sausmarez and Deputy St Pier for their engagement with the public last night on Facebook, which I think was the first time they have done a live event as such. Naturally, it focused on GST because that was where so much of the public's concerns were, but I wonder if there are opportunities to do more of that. I know it took considerable time and for Members who perhaps were not able to be there, they actually went on an extra 30 minutes and took many questions afterwards. So I am using this as an opportunity to thank them for doing so and saying more, please.

1910 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Hansmann Rouxel.

1915 **Deputy Hansmann Rouxel:** Thank you, sir.

1920 Just to wrap up a theme that I think has developed from the votes and amendments, it is about the process of actually having this plan. I know that P&R strove to make the process more streamlined, and by not putting the Committee plans into this debate we still have managed to have quite a debate. But when the Committee plans are presented as part of the debate, there is an opportunity for the whole Assembly to endorse those plans and also to raise amendments and make speeches and therefore contribute and give substance to what the whole plan is. Particularly if it is a Committee that you have experience on but you are not sitting on that Committee this term, you might have a direction of travel that you wish to nudge that Committee into and you can test the Assembly's resolve whether your idea, your desire to move that Committee or the Government in that particular way, that happens at that time.

1925 So in not having those Committee work plans in this debate I feel we might have swung the pendulum a bit too far. I do not know what the answer is, but I think as part of the work that P&R needs to do, by the mid-term debate have some input into how the streamlining of this process can actually work so that when the next Assembly starts we are able to give them a better starting point so that this process is not quite so rushed and messy and that we learn from the experiences of this debate and how we are putting together the Government Work Plan.

1930 But I think there are a lot of factors that are going to feed into that, and one of the crucial things at the heart of this is the restructuring or the work that the Chief Executive is doing and how the

1935 Civil Service supports the Government and supports the Committees in their work. I think the reticence from Members like myself in creating more work for officers stems from how the structure of the Civil Service feeds into our working pattern. We cannot do the transparency that is necessary, like producing the very relevant KPIs visually, extended for the public such as Amendment 4 wished to have, the intent behind that amendment, but once we have that restructure I believe that we should be able to have a more transparent and better communicated process with the public.

1940 I would just like one other small point because I can see that we are going to lunch. It is this. Looking back at the previous Government Work Plans, in 2016 we had Brexit, which was an external thing that we had to respond to. I remember very clearly at the beginning of term Home Affairs was going to do a big justice review and so many of the resources of the Government Plan, all of that, got subsumed into Brexit preparations and therefore we did not get the justice review. Last term, 1945 looking at the Government Work Plan, it was COVID and COVID recovery. We have an opportunity here – touch wood – to actually get on with the work of Government without having to spend so much of the resources in that recovery or responding to Brexit. So therefore it is a positive. We can actually get some real meaningful work done this term without being distracted by these larger issues. So that was all I wanted to add.

1950

The Bailiff: Members of the States, I am just going to remind you of Rule 17(1), which says that when speaking in the States a Member shall always address me and must not address another Member. Just to remind Members of that particular rule, but we will now adjourn until 2.30.

*The Assembly adjourned at 12.32 p.m.
and resumed its sitting at 2.30 p.m.*

**Government Work Plan 2026-2029 –
Debate completed –
Propositions carried as amended**

1955

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Yes, make it short and sweet so we can hopefully do a bit today.

1960 Some interesting speeches already, though. I commend Deputy Hansmann Rouxel on her points and I will pick up on perhaps two of them.

1965 The first is that I think a theme today has been empowerment of Policy & Resources and the relationship with the relatively new Chief Officer, which we have high hopes for. It is interesting, I know there was some nuanced difference between 'mandate' and 'shall', but I think the point is we want to see a reorganisation or at least an efficiency drive across the Civil Service and serious consideration being given to the restoration of chief officers in areas, and maybe not a chief safeguarding officer exactly but a Chief Officer for Family & Children's Services.

1970 Because I was relating earlier how I was on diverse bodies, and there were others, too, that worked across departments, but it was not entirely clear whether the leadership should be politically based or officer based or function based. I think that in order to implement not only the health and care super priority but particularly the families and young people priority. That is important.

1975 Deputy Montague might have been hand-bagged a bit by a journalist about the headline of Guernsey does not have a large enough family, but I think it does raise a serious point. I know sometimes those sentiments are rooted in the far left or the far right of verbal politics, but actually Jersey are aware of the same problem of the demographic time bomb; not exactly, but the reduction. I was stunned to hear that only 400 or so babies were born in Guernsey last year and we spent so much on super-proofing the maternity services, perhaps at the expense of other specialist functions.

1980 My point is if you are prioritising as a super priority family and young people, you really have to put resources into it. That is not just money, it is everything from housing, looking at not just social and affordable housing but how you can kick start the free market for younger people, how you can ensure that people do not put off having children to the point where it is impractical, maybe looking, as they are doing in Jersey with the Tiny Seeds, at helping fertility for parents who have perhaps become parents at a more mature age now, and a whole range of robust family projects. So I think it is cross-departmental and it is also linked to job creation and job resilience.

1985 The other point Deputy Hansmann Rouxel made that I resonated with was the decision as to whether you should include principal Committee plans within the policy planning document. I have been in States where you had huge documents, over 100 pages long, that are padded out and are hard to make progress and the debates become very unwieldy. This time around we have seen a commendably slim – or slimmer than me, I think, to work on. It does seem to be getting too weighty to go through the corridor, but never mind.

1990 There is a downside to that, and I think maybe we could look at, at least once a term, every principal Committee putting for debate, not just as an appendix, a report on their philosophy, their principal plans. I know we hear that in Statements, but the Statements are more the cut and thrust of quick politics in the context of holding Committees to account. I know some go to scrutiny, but if we take Deputy Sloan and his team, a lot of resources go into every Committee once a year, which I was on a Scrutiny Committee and we tried that but it was a bit gruelling. So I think there is scope for the Committees to be more open about their priorities and to publish.

1995 I do support the super priorities. The harbour one is potentially extremely expensive and the financial plan is essential. Leale's Yard, I could talk a lot about Leale's Yard but I will not. But I think sometimes myself being on the former Committee that bought the site, we had to compromise between the ideal business models and business plans and getting on with it before time ran out and before the opportunity was missed for the umpteenth time in 20 years. So on occasion I am a little bit of a Donald Trump-type who will make a decision on Monday, and if it is not right on Tuesday or Wednesday that is the way it is, but at least you are doing something.

2000 I think we have good focus with building resilience, the foundations and wellness, even if the wellness icon looked a bit like a Buddhist claim, but that is a bit fluffy. I would like to have seen a little bit more. I saw all the amendments coming in and I was so weighed under with other things, the transport licensing, the planning inquiry, that I did not get around to doing an amendment.

2005 But, if I had, and I would have benefited enormously working with Deputy de Sausmarez and the Committee, because we have had a much more collegiate approach this time. There has been a real effort from Policy & Resources to work with Members old and new, to get things over the line and to at least represent the whole House.

2010 But my amendment would have been on perhaps maybe a fourth focus. My fourth focus, which is really six focuses, would have been on the three I's. It would have been inclusivity, and that has come up several times today, of including everybody in our community and giving them maximum opportunities to, not only live, but also to progress economically, if appropriate. So inclusivity would have been my first.

2015 My second would be innovation, which we have covered to a degree in Economic Development, but we as an offshore Island, a small community, with big needs, we have to be very innovative and really support everything from start-up enterprises and the digital sector, to growing our own food, to arts, to creativity, and many other things.

2020 My third, which is linked to the second, is identity. Because the one thing that, to me, is slightly lacking in the report at this stage is a sense we are Guernsey. Guernsey Finance is not Guernsey, but we are not emphasising what is particular about our history, our progress, our culture, our unique mix of French, Norman, English, of our traditions, of our agriculture, countryside, coastal benefits, the reasons people relocate here, to Locate Guernsey, and everything from our takes on bonfire night to our language.

2025 Because we did vote to have the Guernsey French, Guernésiais, as one of our three languages. The stronger the identity we have, and we are doing that a little bit more than Jersey, the more we

2030 appeal to, not only people staying here and settling here, but also newcomers. In an increasingly disconnected and globalised world, possibly a less safe world, Guernsey's identity is what will maintain us. As Deputy de Sausmarez has frequently said –
I will give way to Deputy Montague.

2035 **Deputy Montague:** Sir, can I thank you, Deputy Gollop, for giving way.
I just wanted to alert everyone that the Education, Sport & Culture Committee have met with the Language Commission several times, and we are really keen to get some progress on that. I agree with you absolutely that we do need to celebrate what makes us different. A genuine focus on what it means to be from Guernsey, what Guernsey culture is, is absolutely something that our
2040 Committee is taking very seriously indeed.

We hope to bring something back to the Assembly in due course. But I am absolutely with you on that and, of course, a significant date is 2027, the whole of that year, which is the millennium year for William the Conqueror, and we will be doing everything we can to make everyone understand exactly what Guernsey means.

2045 **Several Members:** Hear, hear.

Deputy Gollop: I thank Deputy Montague for his useful intervention. Of course, I have been impressed at the speed at which the Victor Hugo project has set forth as well and the Language
2050 Commission did good work under Sir Richard Collas's stewardship.

I take part in the Eisteddfod, but usually I come bottom. But I won a cup in French, but then I was the only entrant. But the Eisteddfod, although it is of Welsh origin, is another thing that is very local to Guernsey. I know you, sir, as the President, have even taken part occasionally, but always support the Eisteddfod.

2055 So our arts, the wonderful sports events, sports event of the year, which went ahead despite the terrible winds. We punch above our weight in many of these areas. We have so many sporting champions and, again, I just hope that this plan, this strategic plan, encourages, enables, and facilitates more of that and is not just a bureaucratic or academic exercise.

2060 But I will vote for the plan and all of it, even if I have a degree of scepticism about the efficiency. Because I do not want saving money for efficiencies to come down to extra charges, as Deputy Osborne and others said.

The Bailiff: Deputy Helyar.

2065 **Deputy Helyar:** Thank you, sir.

I am going to vote for everything and support it. I have always been a sceptic of the Government Work Plan, because it has become something of a black hole in terms of if you pass the event horizon, will you ever be seen again? Let us be honest with ourselves, there are some really significant undertakings in the top priorities.

2070 Deliver tax reform. That is an easy one. No problem with that. I think we could knock Leale's Yard down quite easily. But agreeing a sustainable health and care system is quite a challenge. The one I really wanted to talk about was design future harbour requirements. The reason I wanted to do that is because we have had a theme a little bit today about everybody trying to listen and be more communicative about what is going on and to deliver progress on these objectives. There are some
2075 very critical, key objectives around future harbour requirements that need to slot together. They are co-dependent and they represent points of potential critical failure.

I wanted to highlight that because Black Rock is one of the moving parts of the jigsaw that goes with that. Do we carry on using the harbour in the north of the Island as our industrial base? Do we close that effectively by building Black Rock and turn it into a marina? What comes with that? There
2080 is a whole load of decisions that go with it. If we make a mistake, we will end up in generational failure. It is something that we will be living with long after we are gone. Ten terms from now, there

will be people going, 'Why did they do that? Why did those two individuals bring that amendment to that huge piece of work and scuttle it all at the last minute?'

2085 I will give you an example. In short order, we have got Guernsey Electricity will be bringing proposals to the States, cable link proposals to back up its generating capacity. It has a lot of old kit down on the north side dating back to the 1970s. Some of that uses heavy fuel oil. When I say heavy fuel oil, it is what you would normally associate with tar. You cannot get tar out of a ship into a fuel bund or into the containment area without it being heated with steam. So you need pipes that are pretty much connected to the shore. You cannot get heavy fuel oil into a floating void, 2090 which is what is suggested if we do Black Rock, which then informs what generating plant will need to go into the electricity station. Once we have made one decision, if we then alter the next one, it will cause any number of really significant problems for the next decisions that we have to make.

2095 We also have to think, for example, if we stop using St Sampsons, there will be thousands of extra truck journeys into town. Thousands. Every scrap metal boat that comes in, every coal boat, every aggregate boat, every sand boat will need to be unloaded in St Peter Port and the trucks that many people on the Island do not see, because they go on a very short journey at the moment between the north side and the Vale to the holding grounds and other places which are quite close to it, those will be coming right through the middle of town.

2100 Those are big decisions to make. We need to be very careful that we do not make one decision and then alter that uncontrollably because of our involvement in it. Black Rock at the moment, we are stockpiling inert waste which we hope will go into that reclamation at some point. We like to call that affectionately Mount Roffey. I did promise Deputy Roffey, we did not get around to doing Black Rock, but if it became too high and visible from Jersey that we would invite him and we would put a flagpole on the top and run a flag off it.

2105 We have only got limited time. That is the point I am trying to make. We have only got a limited time of storage there. We can expand that by doing other things, but some of these decisions now are becoming imperative. They are not nice to have anymore. They are becoming imperative. We need to get them done. In my view, I have attended at least one project meeting and been impressed with the teams that are there, but there is too much process and not enough leadership. 2110 It is our job to put the leadership into those meetings to ensure that the timetables are being tested, the budgets are being pushed back on if you think they are too much or if they are a little bit soft, and we need to make sure that we are all playing a part in that.

2115 As we come up to these big projects, I just urge Members, as I am sure Members of P&R will do, please continue the collegiate working. If you want to know what is going on, ask and send an email, it is much easier than doing it through a formal process. But if you are thinking about doing amendments, engage with the Committee, with STSB, or whoever it may be that is undertaking that work. Because scuttling it in terms of some of these projects like Future Harbours will have really, really, really significant consequences in terms of money and things that our grandchildren and great-grandchildren will be having. Please, I urge Members to engage as much as they can and 2120 I support the process.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Niles.

2125 **Deputy Niles:** Thank you, sir.

I will be voting for all the propositions in the Government Work Plan and the investments into our economy through the super priorities are needed, and I welcome the stimulus that they bring to the Island. I commend P&R for their positive engagement with all of those bringing the amendments over the last two-and-a-half days. However, I do have some concerns about how all of this is going to be paid for, but perhaps for another day. 2130

What does concern me a little was the debate that we had yesterday regarding cost savings that was brought by Deputy Humphreys. When we debated the amendment to target structured 1% cut

in baseline public expenditure, there were some Presidents of Committees who felt that they might take this as a target, but that perhaps it would be delivered or perhaps it will not happen at all.

2135 I am sure that our Presidents who put themselves forward for leadership in our system of Government have probably held senior leadership roles in the real economy and I have got every empathy with them because growth is fun, but cutting costs is hard, and it is a very lonely game and the buck always stops with you. Because these cuts cannot be just pure salami cutting, they must be structured, they must be nuanced and focused, and I recognise that it is going to be
2140 incredibly difficult to do.

I was just going to say that if there are Presidents here who do not genuinely feel that they can take these actions away and that they perhaps will not deliver the savings that we have agreed, then perhaps we can give them the assurance that it is okay for them to step down and allow others to deliver in their place. There is no shame in this. However, if they do retain their position and then
2145 they do not deliver, then we must all question our confidence in them in the future.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Goy.

2150 **Deputy Goy:** Thank you, sir.

Sir, I would like to share a parable with the Assembly, and I can assure you that this is 100% relevant to the Government Work Plan. I shall begin, there was once a toothless man who went to a restaurant with his friends to have a buffet dinner. Not you. So he arrived at the restaurant and he got a big plate and he piled his plate with food, so he went to one counter after another and he
2155 went to the special food stand and he said, 'Oh, can I have that amendment – I mean food, please' and the promoter across the counter at the stand said, 'Yes, of course, please help yourself'. He took one and he went to another stand and he said, 'Can I have that piece of meat please?' The promoter said, 'You will not regret it', he picked it up and put it on his plate, and so on and so forth. He piled his plate full of food, delicious looking food.

2160 But a kindly gentleman from one of the staff of the restaurant saw that this man does not have teeth, so he approached him and said, 'Sir, we do this as a service for all our customers, I realise you do not have teeth and I realise you have got lots of food, really delicious food on your plate. Here, I have got this special advanced denture that will curve around your mouth and allow you to feel like you have natural teeth.' The old toothless man flew into a rage, he said, 'How dare this stranger point out that I do not have teeth?' So he said to the man, 'I do not want your dentures, after all they are expensive'. The young man said, 'No, no, no, sir, this denture is free because you have already paid for it when you paid for your buffet, so you can take it, it will help you to chew your food properly so that you do not choke on your food and when the food goes into your stomach it does not cause you to have indigestion.' 'Go away', said the old man and so he stormed off with his
2165 plate full of really nice food and, as he was walking back towards his friends and the table, he thought to himself, 'You know what, what that young man said is true, but I cannot be seen as losing face. How can I go back to my friends and then they said, 'Hey now it takes a young stranger to tell you that you do not have teeth and you need dentures', and they would laugh at me.'

2170 So he thought to himself, 'I need to do something', and then he had a brilliant idea, so he put his plate down on the counter and quickly popped out of the restaurant across to the next street and to a sports shop and he bought himself a pair of mouthguards. If you do not know, a mouthguard is what boxers wear, they look like teeth from afar, but they are not teeth, they are just there to protect the teeth. So he bought a pair of mouthguards and he came in and he put on his mouthguard and he walked back with his plate of food and then he smiled at his friends, 'See, I
2175 have got a mouthguard, I can chew my food now', and he sat down and he tried to eat his food and they know, but they just kept quiet anyway.

2180 Now, why do I share this? The Government wish list, sorry, the Government Work Plan is like that toothless old man without proper teeth, very likely as experience has shown, it will cause indigestion and it will cause potential choking and we have enough of that already over the last few years. We

2185 have seen all the debacles, multi-million-pound debacle that has now pushed our economy to £98 million deficit this year. So I shall not be supporting this Government wish list.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

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Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Sir, I am not sure I can follow that, but I was going to use one of the words that Deputy Goy has just used, a wish list. Because ultimately that is what currently the Government Work Plan is. It is an unfunded wish list with no understanding really of how we are going to pay for it or deliver it resource-wise.

2195

I do keep now talking about the need to bring out fiscal debates, about policy planning debates, into one. If we look at the UK Government, it is the budget when they come out and really showcase how they will deliver on their manifesto through their fiscal rules, through their budget planning process, taking the long-term view through that budget process.

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While we have spent it, no one had expected how long we would spend on the Government Work Plan, which has been a really lengthy debate so far. I think it made me more confused about the Government Work Plan side of priorities versus the Committee Work Plans. Because, as a President of a Committee, I was coming with quite a clear view about what was under my mandates and the types of initiatives I was going to be developing and bringing forward. The debates on the AI has confused things for me and there are a huge amount of things being listed on the Government Work Plan which have been chosen to be there because effectively they have some cross-Government element, a huge amount of things.

2205

However, what is less clear to me than ever is how are we going to be delivering this increasing workload of cross-Government priorities through our existing system of Government. Because we ultimately have a Committee system of Government and it is through the work of especially the principal Committees that some of the core public services are being delivered. This system of Government is set up to really enable the core public services to be delivered through the committee system of Government.

2210

I have only been in politics for five years so this is my personal reflection; I really feel there has been a very strong acceleration of centralisation. We have seen that through how quickly the Corporate Services have gone, but also increasingly, if you notice, policies keep landing or keep being absorbed into the remit of the Policy & Resources Committee. So, for example, remember the original Harbours debate, it was a policy that was brought by STSB. STSB was quickly removed from that equation and not really involved. The Alderney Runway was originally an STSB and P&R policy letter. The only role P&R was playing was from the point of view of reviewing potentially the Public Service Obligation (PSO) arrangements in helping fund the project.

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Somehow, a couple of years later, this policy letter is entirely driven by P&R and is being brought by P&R next month. To me, we have got to be very careful. You could understand that and you could say, listen, all of the issues we are dealing with are quite complex so they require cross-Government co-ordination and technically P&R is best positioned to be doing that. But is that really the case, because that is not how our system of Government is set up. That is very much the direction to a more executive system of Government by the back door, which I know what some Members of P&R think about the word Executive Government, and if that is truly the direction of travel, and to be honest this need for much stronger cross-Government co-ordination was highlighted as one of the absolute weaknesses of our previous systems of Government that occurred 20-25 years ago, for the Harvard report. It already recognised that our systems of Government were not set up well to deliver on more complex cross-Government issues.

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But we have continued, we rejected any concept of Executive Government. We have continued with our systems of Government. So, if we are to deliver this huge workload that we are wishing to deliver, especially the policy areas where cross-co-ordination is required, there has to be a really important discussion taking place between communities and between P&R in terms of how we are going to be delivering that cross-Committee work.

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2240 What I would personally hate to see is that it suddenly becomes a proxy, that somehow it is P&R
tasked with leading all those areas. So, if you look at the rules of procedure or the mandates of the
Committees of Government, well yes, absolutely, P&R has the leadership and co-ordination of the
work of the States as the headline. If we start looking at the specific elements of their mandate as
prescribed by the rules of procedure under the annex of the Mandates, there are some interesting
points that are more relevant than ever and should be looked into. One of those elements under
the Committee of Policy & Resources Mandate is promoting and facilitating cross-Committee policy
development. It is also to require any Committee to examine any issue whether within or extraneous
2245 to its mandate.

So it is to say, 'Listen, there is an issue here, let us give it to another Committee to explore'. I do
not think these levers that P&R has got has been exercised. What happens is that more and more
things get landed on the very busy schedule of P&R. Their agendas are not getting any shorter and
the way we are running our Government, they are getting busier and busier. Especially when there
2250 are any funding decisions that are required, we know what happens, they go to P&R. There is an
opportunity that potentially policy is made.

So, my key point is that if we have got the ambition to deliver on the current issues we have got,
we really have to openly examine how we are going to be doing it constructively through our system
of Government, but especially with the role of P&R to enable especially the principal Committees
2255 to run with their Mandates and to absorb some of the work that might have been landing on P&R.
I really think it is an absolutely crucial discussion if we were not to repeat what we have been already
doing.

Because, as I said, we have got a huge list of things that we want to deliver with extremely limited
resources and to me it is going to be fundamental how we organise ourselves, how we work
2260 together, how P&R supports principal Committees and small Committees in executing their
Mandate. I would really encourage P&R to have that discussion and consideration as soon as
possible because, if we are moving into a much more significant centralisation of how the States of
Guernsey works, that is fine, but let us take this as a direction of travel through the Machinery of
Government, let us examine it properly and let us then give the right levers of power, but at the
2265 same time the checks and balances, the scrutiny or other checks and balances that are required to
have that. Because I do not think we have got that.

So we have no idea how, for example, when budgets are requested for Corporate Services, who
is scrutinising P&R. Well we do not. We do not see how those budget requests are ultimately
proceeded. So, again, we have got this unequal distribution of power created in our system of
2270 Government where effectively the centre absorbs more and more attention and resources and the
Committees effectively, especially the small Committees, are left in their orbit.

The other important thing to note, and I felt there has been an unhelpful suggestion that the
Committees can only examine their little areas of mandate, so if it is Economic Development, they
are only looking at things with a very narrow lens of the economy, even though in the last couple
2275 of days we have all said economy is everywhere and should be absolutely central to everything.
That is not a helpful narrative to have because through our Committee Mandates we absolutely can
examine through the big picture lens. It is absolutely not the case that suddenly only P&R Members
can examine the big picture. So that narrative again is not helpful and undermines the Committees'
ability to go and deliver.

2280 The reason I am saying that is because ultimately what Deputy Helyar said, we need the
leadership to really drive the project, we need the leadership to go and make things happen, and
that is not going to happen through having a 20-person meeting for every single co-ordination
project. It is going to be done by passionate leaders driving projects through smaller units. Our
principle of governance is supposed to be based on the principle of subsidiarity. It is not supposed
2285 to be based on the principle, let us centralise everything and make decisions with these massive
meetings at the top.

So, if we were to support the change in the Civil Service that we have all unanimously supported
with Deputy Laine's amendment, these are essential considerations of how we organise ourselves,

2290 where does responsibility lay, how do we support things, to get things happening to really make a
difference in that. So, to me, if we do not look in ourselves and how we organise ourselves, we have
just nothing to deliver, and we are going to be doing a bit more of the same as we have done in
the last few years.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kay-Mouat to make what I think will be his maiden speech.

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Deputy Kay-Mouat: Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.

I was hoping to make my maiden speech in a similar capacity to that of my fellow Deputies, but
after much to-ing and fro-ing, I must accept that their oratory and rhetoric far outweigh mine.

2300 I find myself in a bit of a crossroads with regard to the Government Work Plan, based on a simple
commercial principle. We all understand the Bailiwick is lacking funds, that projects need to be
undertaken and completed. I must however question why we continue to go to the Rolls Royce
shop to buy a car. We could in fact go to the Mini shop to buy a car, or even better still we could
review our need to buy a car and buy a bicycle, or even better walk and save the funds for a greater
need.

2305 What I am trying to say is that we need to carefully consider some of the super priorities in this
Work Plan and assess their real necessity and, equally importantly, their deliverability both
financially and practically. *(Applause)*

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

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Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

I am pleased to see in Proposition 1 the three Government areas of focus and the key words for
me are foundations, sustainable and resilience, because we all need to have that and it points to an
area, perhaps it is mentioned in the Mandate of the Committee *for the* Environment & Infrastructure,
being that it is infrastructure, foundations and resilience certainly. As I said, I was pleased to see
those.

2320 But, more importantly, I would like to build on what Deputy Helyar said, and I am pleased also
to see that the site development at Leale's Yard is going to be commenced. Again, that should not
be too hard. But, again, one of the key factors is the future harbour requirements. Deputy Helyar
went on to explain what our harbour does and the ramifications of moving that, closing that, but
underpinning that is what our infrastructure is of our Island. We need to get that right and this
forms a small part of it and it should be an underpinning theme.

2325 The trouble with infrastructure is that nearly everyone takes it for granted until it is either broken
or not there or does not deliver what you want. Take for example the electricity network, the water
network, the fibre network, now everyone relies on it until it is not there. Government infrastructure
should be, and in my view it is the same, although it has not had the level of investment that we
have needed in it over the last 30 to 50 years. Determining our future harbour requirements will fall
into that, especially the commercial activity at St Sampson's and the Bridge area and the vision that
the GDA have for the area, coupled with now the Government Work Plan's clear super priorities
around that for Leale's Yard and future harbour requirements, will come into play.

2330 But it is really important that we do it correctly because, as Deputy Helyar said, and I cannot
stress this enough, if we make a mistake now or of course set sail in the wrong direction, it is very
hard to unpick it, so we have to do it correctly and we have to get our critical path sorted out. For
those of you that have done a bit of project management, or any project management really, you
will know about the critical path and how things are dependent on each other. There are so many
dependencies around, and harbours is one of those about getting our infrastructure correct.

2340 As Deputy Helyar mentioned, we have got the electricity generation plant at Northside, the
power station, and all of the ageing infrastructure in there. Going way back even more before the
1970s, there is ships generator engines in there which are on standby to provide us with electricity
at peak times because our interconnector at the moment, the link to France, does not provide

adequate enough electricity. So, we have to decide what we are going to do with that and a policy letter is coming, a joint policy letter with STSB around how we provide electricity for the Island. Working on that critical path, that is one of the key interdependencies, whether a second interconnector is in or not. Because, again, effectively, if it is not progressed, then we have to keep
2345 St Sampson's commercial harbour open with heavy oil.

There is also the storage down there, the fuel storage and the unloading arrangements. Again, those have to be correct and essentially play part again of our infrastructure. There is the sewage yard at Griffith's Yard as well which also plays a part and links into Black Rock redevelopment. We have already, as the States, agreed that Black Rock is an inert waste disposal site, and again we have
2350 the mountain that is growing at Longue Hougue, we are double handling inert waste there as it is, unloading it, moving it around, putting it into storage, and then we are going to have to move it again to wherever we decide, hopefully Black Rock as we have already agreed.

There are the cement silos and also the bulk carriers as well that need relocating. So, when those are out, there is also another vital piece of infrastructure that needs to happen, and that is to protect
2355 against sea level rise due to climate change and what we do with that there as well. So, again, if we get that wrong, that has critical impacts on Leale's Yard and the whole development and what we do down the rest of the east coast as well.

So, in closing and conclusion, yes, I am really pleased to see that certainly those two items are super priorities again with a healthcare system and, as Amendment 9 went on to say around
2360 strengthening focus on early years and of course the one that is going to decide how we get out of the mess that we are in financially, is decide and deliver tax reform. But, underpinning that, in my view, is infrastructure and at E&I we are developing a strategic infrastructure plan which will hopefully support all of these, and when you hear about it and it is published, I would like you to, if you have got any comments, of course make comment, but support us and P&R in going forward
2365 and delivering this Government Work Plan.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Camp.

Deputy Camp: Thank you.

I know we are all really eager to get this debate through, but I was not sure if I was going to speak, but I do feel compelled because I want to put myself on record in this debate on three points. I find myself at a quandary, obviously having put a number of amendments in, I still find this is a really flawed process. It is a plan without funding, it is a plan without any measurable targets in it,
2375 it is just a moving feast and a wish list. I agree with everybody who has used that term.

But the one that worries me the most is that it is not a Government Work Plan. Every debate has turned into Committees defending their own Mandates and their own positions. I know people hate us talking about the business world, but in my previous business, the guys who did the valuations every day did not know what the accountants did, they did not care, neither of them knew what
2380 I did in terms of running the whole business.

But the problem is it is that whole business level you have to consider your planning from, and we just seem to come about this process in a really bottom-up, very strange, which does not go to subsidiarity, it goes to that the subsidiary is running the top shop. By the time it gets here, we have got people who talk about protecting their lot and really that is all they bring to the table is around
2385 their own narrow remits and their own narrow mandates.

So, yes, that might be a deeply unpopular statement, but this does not feel like a Government Work Plan, it feels like a real mash up of lots of Committees and what happens when you get to the end of it, you go native and you start to see perhaps your own Committee areas being the owner, be-all and end-all of the work that you do.

I would like to see that this does become a Government Work Plan and that is why, contrary to Deputy Kazantseva-Miller's point, I believe there probably is a role for P&R, because if we are not going to treat this as a Government Work Plan, at some point there does need to be co-ordination

of this at a Government level. Unfortunately, that is falling to P&R because we do not seem to be ready to take up that mess ourselves.

2395 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: Sir, thank you.

2400 I just want to briefly explain why I am minded to abstain on the Government Work Plan. It is not that it might be excluded from the discussion, wrong though it is. No, it is not because technically, as I am regularly reminded by the advice that was given to me, as I am not a member of any principal Committee. But let me be clear at the outset, this is not an objection of the idea that Government needs priority structure and direction. On the contrary, growth, fiscal sustainability and strategic
2405 focus are precisely why I am going to support this amendment.

But before I go any further, let me also be clear about what I do agree with. I agree with the objectives of the five super priorities. I want to see improvements in early education. I want us to get to grips with healthcare spending and long-term sustainability. These are serious issues and deserve attention. I just take these as a given. So the problem is not what is listed in the plan, the
2410 problem is for me what is missing.

Most of you will have guessed I learned my politics in the 1980s when the economic landscape was less of the voting Chamber and more about the working people. That probably leaves me a little less anti than some when it comes to economic ideas. I am instinctively sceptical of coming to consensus for its own sake and the idea that hard choices can be indefinitely deferred without
2415 prejudice.

It is not that new ones are absurd, when you start thinking seriously about economic growth it becomes hard to think about anything else. He was right, because growth is not just another policy objective, it is the foundation on which everything else rests. Without it, every development becomes zero sum. We talk endlessly about fairness, sustainability, resilience and outcomes, but far
2420 less about the underlying engine that makes those things affordable. There is a sense that growth is frankly embarrassing, that growth is too crude, too material a concept, too redolent of a world that according to some in a sustainable and wellbeing world we have moved beyond.

Sir, this instinct is not compassionate, it is complacent. In my view, it reflects a view of the good, largely inherited from the political left. As I said, I am a child of the 1980s, so I occasionally still think
2425 in such crude terms that societies that can somehow become steadily poorer and yet fairer, become more cohesive at the same time. It is an appealing thought, particularly if you have never had to explain to voters our taxes are rising, services are poorer, and opportunities are narrowing. History is not especially kind to that view.

Declining prosperity does not produce harmony, it produces retrenchment, resentment and above all, a politics of blame. That is exactly where the United Kingdom has been for the last 15
2430 years, which is why the Government Work Plan, yes, growth now appears everywhere in the Government, it is described as an enabling condition, a cross-cutting consideration and a whole of Government responsibility. But it never becomes a set of choices. Growth is not something you can wish into existence without better growth. Growth is not something that emerges by accident or by
2435 good intentions. It requires a clear strategy and to be controlled, in fact throughout the 2020s.

Sir, other than putting our own house in order and improving the basic competence of our Government itself, economic growth should be the permanent priority of this Assembly. Yet this plan does not articulate a growth strategy. It does not articulate where growth is expected to come
2440 from. Instead, growth is treated as a background assumption, something that will simply happen if we stay busy. Stripped of its rhetoric, the Government Work Plan is an inventory, a list of things that the States pretends to busy itself with, slightly by our terms, but largely disconnected from the preferred view of how the economy is supposed to grow.

Yes, we should ensure that worthwhile projects are delivered competently. Yes, we should monitor progress. I wrote this speech before yesterday's debate. But that is not the same thing as

2445 having a strategy and it is not the challenge that keeps me awake at night. Last month, I published a book, 'This is what a rich death feels like'. It was published with one eye on the election, I admit, but the argument was nonetheless hard-felt. We are sleepwalking into a decline and doing so with a dangerous degree of self-satisfaction.

2450 We missed that and frankly not much of our business in the first six months gives me confidence it is properly understood. But serious plans are afoot to confront this. For those reasons, sir, while I recognise the intent behind the Government Work Plan and the work of P&R and its approach to engagement with all the Committees, I support it and I support many of its stated objectives. I feel I cannot endorse it as a credible response to the economic reality. So therefore, sir, I am going to abstain.

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The Bailiff: On the basis that no one else is rising to speak in general debate, I will turn to the President to reply to the debate.

Deputy de Sausmarez please.

2460 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Thank you, sir.

It has been a longer debate than I was anticipating at the start. Someone told me at the lunch break this is the first time in this political term we have ventured as far as a Friday afternoon and I can assure new Members who have not experienced this before that speeches will get increasingly more concise as we head towards the weekend, or that is what typically happens anyway. This already appears something of a graveyard shift, even though it is not the last item in the Agenda.

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I appreciate as ever with these things that much of this substantive debate and probably most of the most interesting discussions have already taken place on the amendments, but general debate has given rise to a few worthwhile comments and valid points as well. The first one I really have to address, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller alluded to this when she noted all the people bringing amendments, the new Deputies, and perhaps that reflected a degree of cynicism of the more-experienced Members for this type of enterprise.

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I have to say that I am not a fan of a major, unwieldy, all-encompassing plan for that plan's sake. But the fact remains that we have finite resources and I mean resources in terms of time, money, and people. We need to have a way where this Assembly, this Government, can agree between us where those resources would best be placed. That is the whole purpose of having a GWP, a Government Work Plan. So, while I can acknowledge the points that people have made about what is the point in the rest of it, ultimately the point is, if you had infinite resources we would not need one at all. But we do not, so we really do need to make some decisions about what we want to prioritise.

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2480 Deputy Inder was the first to talk about, he raised this issue of which should come first, why are we debating Government Work Plan priorities before we talked about the money. It is a circular argument that comes up every year. I did address it in the presentation that I gave to Members. I am not sure if Deputy Inder could make that. It is absolutely chicken and egg, and we have this conversation every time. Every time you can argue it both ways. But the fact remains that we have budgeted for the GWP. There is a budget set aside. To those people who say how are we going to pay for it, there is a specific budget that this Assembly has already agreed for the GWP works, notwithstanding any big projects that come out of it. Those would be individual decisions brought in policy letters and whatever.

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2490 So, really, for me, one of the best answers is, do we want to get on and deliver stuff, or do we want to sit around and ponder things a bit more until we can get even more ducks in a row? You can argue it both ways, but frankly, I do sense an appetite within the Assembly and within the individual Committees to be able to get on and deliver the Mandates that they have been elected to deliver.

2495 So, I have not had a chance to go through my notes and highlight the bits that definitively need responses to, so I thank everyone for their comments. Deputy Ozanne did pose a question. She asked how P&R intends to communicate the GWP? We continued that conversation over the lunch

break as well. Communicate it. I have to say, as someone who has come from a background involving a lot of communication, I came into politics thinking, 'Crikey, you politicians are rubbish at this communication lark'. I quickly discovered that communicating what Government is doing is a lot more challenging than people in the public might assume it is.

That does not mean to say we can just put our feet up and say, 'Oh well, tough'. We absolutely need to strive to improve it all of the time. Deputy Ozanne was very kind in her comments, as have other Members been, about the new initiative that we trialled last night, the Facebook Live question and answer. I am very grateful to everyone, and many within this Chamber who engaged with that. I think one of the most helpful things about it was we had Members of this Assembly in the comments helping to answer questions; Deputy van Katwyk, Deputy Ozanne, and Deputy Burford among them, so that was very good.

We do need to make it as easy and accessible for members of the public as we can, and different forms of communication are going to work better for different people, so we do need to just keep trying to use all of the avenues available to us. But I do appreciate it is important. We recognise that in designing this policy letter in the way that we have and introducing the super priorities, part of that was to help with that navigation and that communications piece. Because we recognise that, especially in something as large as the previous iteration of the GWP, all of the detail just got lost, and so it was really difficult to identify what the really salient priorities were. That is why we have introduced this concept of super priorities, and I thank Members who have spoken to the importance of those.

So, the short answer is, judging on the feedback so far, I am certainly very keen that we use that format, however appropriate, and maybe on different topics, certainly for other Committees, but very much still open for feedback on Members' ideas and indeed members of the public's experience as well. But I thank all of the people from the public and the Chamber who have given us feedback so far.

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel raised a really good point about Committee plans. That is, we have tried to do a few new things with this situation in the GWP. One of those things was streamlining in terms of the content, and I will come back to that in a moment. One of the other reasons that it used to take a lot longer was because, if Committees are going to be able to submit their completed work plans, that does take more time. So we were trying to compress the amount of time needed to bring this to the Assembly compared with what the old-style timeline would have had us do. But I do agree with Deputy Hansmann Rouxel that there is a trade-off at the heart of that. I am not sure I have the answer for her now, but it is something that we do need to give consideration to.

Obviously, there are other parliamentary tools that can, and I am sure will be used for people who have strong views about a direction or anything a Committee is or is not doing that they feel is not quite right. We have got the most obvious one is with SACC, but obviously we have got the ability to ask questions in the form of Rule 11, Rule 14, questions, questions without notice after General Update Statements, but also other parliamentary tools, and I do not need to tell the President of SACC about those. But I do take her point, and that is something that the Committee will take away and consider. I do not have an answer for her at this point in time, but I do think it is a fair challenge. She has asked if we can do that by the mid-term reset, and that is a reasonable time for us to have given consideration to that, but earlier if we can.

She also talked about the restructure of the Civil Service, and a number of Members have alluded to this, and I do think that is pretty foundational to how effectively we can operate as a Government, and I am feeling cautiously optimistic that we can make improvements, real improvements, to make sure that that is the case.

I did like Deputy Gollop's three I's. He did miss the amendment deadline, otherwise we would probably be still debating this in February, but I thank him for his contribution.

Deputy Helyar, I could not agree more about the need to get some of these critical decisions right.

Deputy Gabriel also talked about that critical path, and the fact that if we get one of those pieces wrong in that picture, then it is catastrophic, it causes a consequential catastrophic failure right the

2550 way through. I also agree with him when he says that projects tend to suffer from too much process and not enough leadership. That is a theme that is coming through loud and clear from the work that the Chief Executive has been undertaking, and that is again an area where I very much hope that we can together make significant improvements. But I do agree with Deputy Helyar that it is on us; it is our responsibility to make sure that we put that leadership in.

Deputy Niles talked about investing into the economy, and I will come back to that.

2555 Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, we get the whole wish list criticism every time. Obviously, there is a budget for the work in the GWP, and obviously any of the larger workstreams will need to be considered in their own right and in that context. We are looking, I can reassure her. She has mentioned it, she has been very consistent about mentioning the need to consolidate, that is a message that we are giving proper consideration to wherever that is possible.

2560 The Alderney Runway is very much – in fact Deputy Helyar and I were discussing it just before this session started again, it is still very much an STSB workstream, but Policy & Resources is bringing the policy letter, primarily because it is the funding mechanism that needs to be decided really. So that is it, but it is very much – I am sure Deputy Helyar will confirm that it is not being taken away from STSB, no matter how much you might wish that at times.

2565 I would like to extend my congratulations to Deputy Kay-Mouat on his maiden speech; it was great that he has been able to do it in this debate. I thought he raised some important points about keeping our feet on the ground, if I can paraphrase, making sure that everything we are doing is necessary, affordable and deliverable, were his key points, so I congratulate him.

Deputy Gabriel has talked about infrastructure.

2570 Deputy Camp talked about this being a plan without funding, a plan without targets, but perhaps not at this level, but I hope that Deputy Camp will be more reassured as some of this work comes to fruition, individual things come to the Assembly, to see that is the case. The debates around reporting and also the structuring and the process, all these strands can come together. That message about making sure that we do have clearer plans, we communicate them well, etc., has 2575 very much landed and we are very receptive to it, obviously.

But I appreciate that Deputy Camp possibly was not involved in all of the discussions that led to the creation of the Government Work Plan, but I would say, as someone who was part of those discussions, where we were lucky enough to have good representation from all of the principal Committees who contributed, I did not at all feel as though it was each Committee just defending their corner. I got a very different sense from that, and so I do not think that is how this Government Work Plan was created. But the proof is in the pudding, and we need to make sure that, as we deliver it, anything that does require Committees to work together, we need to make sure that happens.

2585 That touches on another of the points that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller raised, and P&R does have an important role to play – Deputy Camp mentioned this too – in facilitation and co-ordination. I can assure Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, P&R is certainly not looking for any land grabs in that respect, and there is a very significant difference between leading the project and facilitating and co-ordinating it. But, again, the proof is in the pudding, and so we will have to demonstrate, and I hope to be able to allay those concerns by showing that we can work in exactly that way.

2590 Deputy Sloan was talking about growth being the underlying engine of everything that makes everything else possible. One of the things that we focused on when pulling this Government Work Plan together was we did not want it to be pie in the sky, and motherhood and apple pie. We wanted it to have its feet on the ground, and we wanted to talk about the nuts and bolts and the practicalities. I would say, in response to Deputy Sloan, what does a Government investing in growth look like? Well, to me, it looks like investing in our critical national infrastructure. It looks like 2595 investing in housing. It looks like investing in ports. It looks like investing in skills and workforce participation. If we actually break down what Government can do – taking on board Deputy Niles's very valid comment the other day that, actually, a very significant majority of growth is derived from the private sector activity – what can Government do directly to stimulate growth?

2600 Well, my response to that is we have included those key elements here and made them top priority. This is what investing in growth looks like on the ground. We are not just sitting on the word 'growth' and talking about growth strategies. We are doing the things that actually deliver it, but the proof will be in the pudding; so probably the last time I will spend talking about it, the better. I thank all Members for their contribution to what has been actually a very interesting and
 2605 constructive debate and I hope Members will support the proposition as amended so that the Government Work Plan can reflect the will of this Assembly.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Members of the States, I have decided that we should take each of the propositions discretely, so there will be a vote on Proposition 1 and then Proposition 2, etc., and I would invite
 2610 the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 1, please.

There was a recorded vote.

2615 *Carried – Pour 32, Contre 2, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 1, Absent 3*

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

The Bailiff: In respect of Proposition 1, there voted in favour 32 Members; 2 Members voted
 2620 against; 1 Member abstained; 4 Members did not participate in that vote, but I will declare Proposition 1 carried.

The next is Proposition 2, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on the super priorities, Proposition 2.

2625

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 30, Contre 4, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 1, Absent 3

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

2630

The Bailiff: So, in respect of Proposition 2, there voted in favour 30 Members; 4 Members voted against; 1 Member abstained; the same 4 Members not participating, but I will declare Proposition 2 also duly carried.

Now Proposition 3, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 3, please.

2635

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 34, Contre 1, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 1, Absent 3

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Goy, David	None	Leadbeater, Marc	Curgenven, Rob
Burford, Yvonne				Malik, Munazza
Bury, Tina				Williams, Steve
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
de Sausmarez, Lindsay				
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
 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

2640

The Bailiff: So in respect of Proposition 3, there voted in favour 34 Members; 1 Member voted against; no Member abstained; the same 4 Members not participating and therefore I will declare Proposition 3 also duly carried.

2645

Now Proposition 4, please, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 4.

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 32, Contre 2, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 1, Absent 3

2650

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

The Bailiff: In respect of Proposition 4, there voted in favour 32 Members; 2 Members voted against; 1 Member abstained; the same 4 Members not participating in that vote and therefore I will declare Proposition 4 duly carried.

2655 Proposition 5 is as amended by Amendment 1, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 5, please.

There was a recorded vote.

2660 *Carried – Pour 32, Contre 2, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 1, Absent 3*

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

The Bailiff: So on Proposition 5, there voted in favour 32 Members; 2 Members voted against; 1 Member abstained; the same 4 Members not participating, and I will declare Proposition 5 as amended duly carried.

2665 Now Proposition 6, which comes from Amendment 3, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 6, please.

There was a recorded vote.

2670 *Carried – Pour 34, Contre 1, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 1, Absent 3*

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Goy, David	None	Leadbeater, Marc	Curgenven, Rob
Burford, Yvonne				Malik, Munazza
Bury, Tina				Williams, Steve
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				

Collins, Garry
 de Sausmarez, Lindsay
 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
 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

2675 **The Bailiff:** So in respect of Proposition 6, there voted in favour 34 Members; 1 Member voted against; no Member abstained; the same 4 Members not participating, and I will declare Proposition 6 duly carried.

Proposition 7 is the first of those from Amendment 2, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 7 then, please.

2680 *There was a recorded vote.*

Carried – Pour 32, Contre 1, Ne vote pas 2, Did not vote 1, Absent 3

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Goy, David	Ozanne, Jayne	Leadbeater, Marc	Curgenven, Rob
Burford, Yvonne		Sloan, Andy		Malik, Munazza
Bury, Tina				Williams, Steve
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
de Sausmarez, Lindsay				
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				
Matthews, Aidan				
McKenna, Liam				

Montague, Paul
 Niles, Andrew
 Oswald, George
 Parkinson, Charles
 Rochester, Sally
 Rylatt, Tom
 Snowdon, Alexander
 St Pier, Gavin
 Strachan, Jennifer
 Van Katwyk, Lee
 Vermeulen, Simon

2685 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Proposition 7, there voted in favour 32 Members; 1 Member voted against; 2 Members abstained; the same Members not participating, all 4 of them, and therefore I will declare Proposition 7 duly carried.

Proposition 8 is the second part of the successful Amendment 2, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 8, please.

2690 *There was a recorded vote.*

Carried – Pour 33, Contre 1, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 1, Absent 3

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Goy, David	Sloan, Andy	Leadbeater, Marc	Curgenven, Rob
Burford, Yvonne				Malik, Munazza
Bury, Tina				Williams, Steve
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
de Sausmarez, Lindsay				
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				
Matthews, Aidan				
McKenna, Liam				
Montague, Paul				
Niles, Andrew				
Oswald, George				
Ozanne, Jayne				
Parkinson, Charles				
Rochester, Sally				
Rylatt, Tom				
Snowdon, Alexander				
St Pier, Gavin				
Strachan, Jennifer				
Van Katwyk, Lee				
Vermeulen, Simon				

2695 **The Bailiff:** So in respect of Proposition 8, there voted in favour 33 Members; 1 Member voted against; 1 Member abstained; the same 4 Members not participating in that vote and therefore I will declare Proposition 8 duly carried.

Proposition 9 comes from the successful Amendment 8 and, once again, I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 9, please.

2700

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 31, Contre 3, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 1, Absent 3

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

2705

The Bailiff: So in respect of Proposition 9, there voted in favour 31 Members; 3 Members voted against; 1 Member abstained; the same 4 Members not participating in that vote and therefore I will declare Proposition 9 duly carried.

Proposition 10 comes from the successful Amendment 7 and, once again, I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 10.

2710

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 28, Contre 6, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 1, Absent 3

2715

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Bury, Tina	Sloan, Andy	Leadbeater, Marc	Curgenven, Rob
Burford, Yvonne	Gollop, John			Malik, Munazza
Cameron, Andy	Goy, David			Williams, Steve
Camp, Haley	Inder, Neil			
Collins, Garry	Oswald, George			
de Sausmarez, Lindsay	Strachan, Jennifer			
Dorrity, David				
Falla, Steve				
Gabriel, Adrian				
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah				

Helyar, Mark
 Hill, Edward
 Humphreys, Rhona
 Kay-Mouat, Bruno
 Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha
 Laine, Marc
 Matthews, Aidan
 McKenna, Liam
 Montague, Paul
 Niles, Andrew
 Ozanne, Jayne
 Parkinson, Charles
 Rochester, Sally
 Rylatt, Tom
 Snowden, Alexander
 St Pier, Gavin
 Van Katwyk, Lee
 Vermeulen, Simon

The Bailiff: So in respect of Proposition 10, there voted in favour 28 Members; 6 Members voted against; 1 Member abstained; the same 4 Members not participating in that vote and therefore I will declare Proposition 10 duly carried.

2720 Proposition 11 comes from the successful Amendment 6 and therefore I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 11, please.

There was a recorded vote.

2725 *Carried – Pour 34, Contre 1, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 1, Absent 3*

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Goy, David	None	Leadbeater, Marc	Curgenven, Rob
Burford, Yvonne				Malik, Munazza
Bury, Tina				Williams, Steve
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
de Sausmarez, Lindsay				
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				
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

2730 **The Bailiff:** So in respect of Proposition 11, there voted in favour 34 Members; 1 Member voted against; no Member abstained; 4 Members did not participate in the vote, but I will declare Proposition 11 also duly carried.

Proposition 12 comes from the successful Amendment 11, the Committee amendment, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 12, please.

There was a recorded vote.

2735 *Carried – Pour 34, Contre 1, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 1, Absent 3*

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Goy, David	None	Leadbeater, Marc	Curgenven, Rob
Burford, Yvonne				Malik, Munazza
Bury, Tina				Williams, Steve
Cameron, Andy				
Camp, Haley				
Collins, Garry				
de Sausmarez, Lindsay				
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				
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				

2740 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Proposition 12, there voted in favour 34 Members; 1 Member voted against; no Member abstained; 4 Members did not participate in that vote and therefore I will declare Proposition 12 also duly carried.

Finally, Proposition 13, which comes from the successful Amendment 9, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 13, please.

2745

There was a recorded vote.

2750 *Carried – Pour 31, Contre 3, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 1, Absent 3*

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

2755 **The Bailiff:** In respect of Proposition 13, there voted in favour 31 Members; 3 Members voted against; 1 Member abstained; the same 4 Members not participating in the vote and therefore I will declare Proposition 13 also carried, which means that all 13 Propositions have been carried but by varying majorities.

The next item, please, Greffier.

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

5. Guernsey's Fiscal Policy Framework – Sursis approved

Article 5.

The States are asked to decide: –

Whether, after consideration of the policy letter entitled "Guernsey's Fiscal Policy Framework" dated 21 November 2025, they are of the opinion to:

Adopt the Fiscal Policy Framework as set out in the policy letter and commit to the principles of long-term financial stability defined within it.

Direct the Policy & Resources Committee to include within any policy letters dealing with projections of States finances, analysis of how decisions will impact compliance with the Fiscal Policy Framework.

Agree that the States retain a Fiscal Policy Panel to:

a) provide independent oversight of the appropriate application to the Fiscal Policy Framework; and

b) consider, at the direction of the Policy & Resources Committee, specific matters impacting future compliance with its terms.

4. Direct the Policy & Resources Committee, working with the Committee for the Environment & Infrastructure, to develop a Long-Term Strategic Infrastructure Framework and present this for States approval.

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The States' Greffier: Article 5. The Policy & Resources Committee, Guernsey's Fiscal Policy Framework.

2765

The Bailiff: I think I am going to invite the Vice-President of the Committee, Deputy St Pier, to open the debate, please.

Deputy St Pier: Thank you, sir.

2770

Today, the Policy & Resources Committee brings forward a revised Fiscal Policy Framework, which of course is our highest-level guide for managing the Island's public finances over the long-term. It was first established in 2009 and this framework is designed to endure across political terms in seeking to promote sustainability, consistency and of course responsible stewardship. I would describe it as the first layer of fiscal policy and it sets out the long-term principles that underpin our decision-making and more detailed objectives in the medium-term funding decisions.

2775

Next year's Budget will come before the States of course later this year. Likewise, the specific tax reforms required to address our structural deficit are not before us today and those debates will come. The framework is about establishing the principles that future decisions must adhere to and, since 2009, our fiscal landscape has evolved considerably. The original framework had a much narrower focus. It was largely I think that in strong debt ahead of – I think it was then Deputy Parkinson who was the Treasury & Resources Minister presenting the first foreign proposals to the States sought to limit operation deficits within the general revenue budget.

2780

Experience since then has shown that broader, more holistic approaches be both necessary and appropriate. For example, in monitoring the original framework, it became apparent that deficits could simply be moved off book to the Social Security Fund and the framework was extended in 2016 to capture this. We also learned, with the benefit of the independent reviews, that a narrow definition did not adequately capture the infrastructure investment made by trading entities or indeed our indirect liability for the debt they might incur to make those investments, and neither did it capture the need to replenish depleted reserves in order to maintain a financial safety buffer.

2785

The current framework was adopted in 2020 and it has served us, but it has been overtaken by events. Changes to the way GDP is calculated and updates to our financial statements – and International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) themselves welcome prudence and transparency – mean that the numerical benchmarks underlying the framework are now updated, and that is why the review became necessary. To avoid such disruption in the future, the revised framework intentionally focuses on principles rather than rigid numerical limits. It is self-consciously a principles rather than a rules-based model.

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2795

Our financial planning now covers a wide range of entities across the private sector, not only traditional public services, but also commercial and quasi-commercial organisations for which the States ultimately bears responsibility and a principles-based framework gives us, we contend, the resilience and flexibility to manage the financial realities of that larger and more complex group. But please let me emphasise that the core principles remain unchanged. We should not spend more than we can afford in the long term. We should limit our exposure to debt. We should protect our

2800

assets and invest in our economy. These are concepts that I expect Members right across this parliamentary Assembly support in principle. The revised framework provides the flexibility to meet these principles sensibly, even if circumstances change.

2805 So Members will have seen the Scrutiny Management Committee's letter of comment raising five key concerns and I am just going to address them briefly and directly.

First on terminology, Scrutiny makes the move from speaking of long-term permanent balance to financial sustainability. The previous term was technical and requires explanation for most people. Financial sustainability is clearer and more widely understood and better reflects our objectives, and not just balancing the books today, but ensuring our finances are resilient to future shocks.

2810 Second, Scrutiny argues that replacing numerical limits with principles weakens our ability and we disagree. Numerical metrics, however precise, are always vulnerable to technical changes within accounting plus certification of presentation, but do not affect the underlying financial reality. We have seen that repeatedly since 2009. By setting principles rather than targets, we prevent behaviour designed merely to meet the metric rather than the policy intent. As Goodhart's Law of course
2815 reminds us, when a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure. We contend that a principles-based approach independently assessed – and that independent assessment is critical – provides stronger and not weaker oversight.

I will take the opportunity to note that having tightly defined parameters has not prevented previous States taking decisions which have pushed our finances further than sustainability (**A**
2820 **Member:** Hear, hear.) when presented with decisions about expanding services. Of particular note, in 2020, the Assembly voted to extend the provision of medical care services to cover National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) technical appraisals (TA) with a value of up to £40,000 per quality-adjusted life-year at an estimated ongoing cost of in excess of £8 million a year and without a long-term plan supporting that crucial added expense.

2825 Again, in 2025, the States voted to increase the grant funding for the residential care sector to stabilise the market, but the full package of balancing measures which would have addressed the impact that this decision had on the Long-Term Care Fund never reached debate. This decision has placed the Long-Term Care Fund on an unsustainable trajectory increasing its long-term funding payment to around £7 million a year.

2830 Third, Scrutiny highlights the absence of strict limits on borrowing of deficits, but rigid limits in the current framework have not driven timely action to address our structural the deficit. The truth is well-known. Our finances are not sustainable. In some years recently, we have had annual operating services in our accounts, but we have been under-investing in our infrastructure and we are regularly running down our general and core investment reserves, and that is the structural
2835 deficit which the States ultimately need to address in the long term.

Returning to sustainability is a super priority of the Government Work Plan, which has now been approved, but it must be done responsibly, and prematurely imposing arbitrary timescales before decisions on tax have been made would be counterproductive or be ignored or both. Sustainability means more than a balanced bottom line. It does require thoughtful investment, careful
2840 management of assets and liabilities and an economically viable long-term plan.

Fourth, Scrutiny questions that proposed reserves target 50% of GDP. Previous frameworks said nothing about reserves at all, a weakness regularly highlighted since 2011, and the Fiscal Policy Panel advised that, ideally, Guernsey should hold reserves between 30% and 50% of GDP in the core investment reserve loan. Reaching that level would take decades and so the Committee is proposing
2845 a pragmatic approach. In other worlds, maintaining the total of four reserves of not less than their current level at around 43% of DGP in the short-term with a long-term aspiration to grow these where it is 50%. More detail will come within the Funding and Investment Plan.

Finally, Scrutiny queried the role of the Fiscal Policy Panel, and we accept that the revised framework places greater emphasis on the panel's independent scrutiny, and I agree that enhancing
2850 transparency around its governance is important. So taken together, the Scrutiny Management Committee's concerns stem largely from the shift away from rigid numerical thresholds to a

principles-based model, but this shift is deliberate and we will contend necessary and rooted in the lessons of the past decade.

2855 A high-level framework must allow for balance across competing priorities and must recognise that trade-offs are inevitable and what this should require and what this framework does require is any compromises are transparent, justified and are aligned with our long-term fiscal policy. We will face a series of difficult debates on the future of the States' finances over the next six months, particularly in the context of the upcoming tax reform debates. Until any material reforms take effect and not before 2028 at the earlier, we will face unavoidable tensions between capital investment, 2860 debt issuance and reserve levels, and this framework should help recognise that these tensions are managed responsibly and openly.

The Institute of Fiscal Studies has recently published a paper which suggests that while the UK's October 2024 Fiscal Rules target a current budget surplus and falling public sector financial liabilities by 2029 aimed at sustainability, they are constrained by limited short-term headroom. The IFS warns 2865 against relying solely on tight potential unrealistic spending targets to meet these rules advising instead for structural tax reforms and managing the fiscal challenge, and this is exactly what P&R are proposing.

The IFS has said that the UK Government is operating under tight, rolling, forward-looking targets to ensure that the current budget – in other words, day-to-day spending – is in surplus and debt is falling by the 2029 to 2030 forecast year. While the Office for Budget Responsibility initially 2870 suggested the rules would be met, the margin of success– headroom in other words – is narrow, making the targets vulnerable to economic shifts, and they have said that to avoid that they have turned a half-baked dash for revenue through short-term fixes and that there should be structural long-term changes and the tendency to adopt rolling targets. In other words, shifting the target 2875 year forward risks undermining credibility and allows Government to declare necessary tough choices.

They say that the future is uncertain when crises keep coming and assessing debt sustainability is an art and not a science. Yet all too often, the fiscal debate in the UK boils all of this complexity down to a single number. The amount of headroom against the Government's past failed fiscal rules 2880 as assessed under the OBR's central forecast. There is an increasing sense that this focus on headroom in the framework more generally is not delivering the outcomes. In summary, they are saying that targets rather than principles is not assisting the UK in its good fiscal management.

Finally, before I close, I want to quote from a letter two days ago in the press from a commentator who actually knows the States' finances very well and someone known even better to 2885 Deputy Strachan:

It is increasingly accepted that rules-based approaches not being effective, not least because in a highly volatile world the rules suggested quickly become redundant or are either too loose to be useful or too tight, and quickly broken often in a crisis. One only has to look at France, the UK, Germany and similar small economies to Guernsey to see the impact of the rules.

The concepts of control are included in the FPF with key elements being the maximum debt target, the infrastructure target and the level to which we need to build up through reserves. Indeed, 2890 the infrastructure model was improved on as being determined by the specific requirements for Guernsey. The rules are insufficient unto themselves. Ongoing financial discipline could be managed through a regular 5-year revolving economic plan, which of course is what we call the Public Investment Plan, reviewed annually that goes across the political term, and this is a much better mechanism to control current and medium-term expenditure within the more general Fiscal Policy Framework. 2895

This document is not wallpaper. It is a clear, well-presented statement of general principles with which the management of the economy can be based for the long term. It is particularly valuable, given the background of considerable uncertainty. This is considered to be the modern approach used in hybrid form with success by, among others, Sweden, Ireland and New Zealand. The

2900 framework is not perfect, can be approved upon, and I am sure will be fully scrutinised within the States, the correct forum. I think that actually very neatly sums up the Policy & Resources position.

2905 So, Sir, this framework is, as I have said at the outset, intended to be the long term policy position for the States. Consequently, the Policy & Resources Committee recognises that the views of the Committee's current Members are not the be all and end all. We have been and we remain in this mode which is why we have indicated to Members that we will be supportive of the sursis motivé laid, and indeed had intended to bring our own to provide an opportunity for further reflection. We look forward to any debate that follows.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.

2910 Deputy Sloan, do you wish to move the sursis motivé?

Sursis motive

To sursis the propositions and to direct the Policy & Resources Committee to return to the States by no later than 15th July 2026 with a revised Fiscal Policy Framework which shall address the matters identified by the Scrutiny Management Committee in its letter of comment, including:

(a) the articulation of a clear and consistently applied core fiscal principle;

(b) the inclusion of clearer and more transparent constraints governing deficits, borrowing and cash-flow management, sufficient to enable prospective assessment of compliance;

(c) a coherent and justified approach to the treatment, accessibility and replenishment of reserves; and

(d) strengthened governance and independent oversight arrangements, including clarification of the role, remit and independence of the Fiscal Policy Panel.

Deputy Sloan: Yes, Sir.

2915 **The Bailiff:** Thank you very much, then please do so now.

Deputy Sloan: Sir, I rise to propose a sursis motivé, which would delay this proposition and direct Policy & Resources to commit to return to the Assembly with a revised Fiscal Policy Framework, addressing the concerns set out in Deputy Camp and the Scrutiny Management Committee amendment.

2920 Sir, let me be clear what the sursis is not about. It is not an attempt to frustrate borrowing, it is not an attempt to invite ideological *[Inaudible 4:07:49]* and it is not an attempt to embarrass anyone. Indeed, I want to acknowledge that Policy & Resources engaged constructively with Scrutiny, and I thank them for their participation and evidence in the public forum. As Deputy St Pier just said, P&R have previously publicly indicated their support for a sursis, and that matters.

2925 This sursis is about one thing only, that the Assembly should approve a Fiscal Framework that is fit for purpose, albeit we take a short pause now and get it right. The Fiscal Policy Framework is not meant to be statements of its aspirations and not constricted documents. There are meant to be constraints. A good framework constrains decisions before they are taken. It gives future Assemblies clarity, it gives the public confidence, and it provides both something meaningful to test compliance levels. If a framework permits almost everything then in practice it constrains nothing. That is the lens through which Scrutiny examined this policy letter. Scrutiny did not approach this *[Inaudible 4:09:03]* we examined the text, the history, and crucially we tested it through a public hearing of Policy & Resources. Five concerns emerged.

2930 First, the absence of a clear, organising *[Inaudible 4:09:18]*. Previous examples were anchored explicitly on the principle of long term, permanent balance. The proposed framework relies on language of financial sustainability and actually at its outside financial stability, following the concept *[Inaudible 4:09:37]*.

2940 At the hearings it was never clearly established whether this represented a change in wording or
a change in substance. At different points it was described as both. That ambiguity matters. A
framework without a clear anchor cannot guide decisions or constrain behaviour.

2945 Second, the shift from rules to discretion. The proposed framework removes numerical reference
points and timebound constraints almost entirely, replacing them with qualitative judgements.
Scrutiny accepts that rigid rules have limits, but removing measurable benchmarks altogether
weakens accountability. It replaces discipline with interpretation, without explaining how that
interpretation will be tested. Which brings me to borrowing and deficits because this is where the
framework was most exposed.

2950 During the hearing Scrutiny asked a simple question: what level of borrowing would be
considered sustainable under this framework? The answer was not evasion; it was honesty. The Chief
Resources Officer explained that she could not state a sustainable borrowing level because
sustainability depends on future decisions which have not yet been taken. Sir, that exchange
matters, not because of who said; because of what it reveals. If the senior official responsible for the
public finances cannot under the framework articulate what level of borrowing is sustainable at the
point decisions are taken then the framework is not operating as a constraint; it is operating as a
2955 description.

That is not a criticism of the official; it is a criticism of the framework. The policy letter implies
that borrowing will be affordable, referencing historic external advice. At the same hearing evidence
confirmed something equally glaring, borrowing alongside persistent structural deficits is not
sustainable because debt must be repayable, not merely serviceable. Those two propositions sit
2960 uncomfortably together, and it was very uncomfortable participating in the hearing and I am sure
for those watching.

What is missing for the framework is clarity. How long deficits may persist, what scale becomes
unacceptable, what corrective action is required, and how compliance is assessed before – and I use
that with an underline – borrowing decisions are taken. A framework that can only tell us whether
2965 borrowing is sustainable after the event is not doing the job we asked of it. The framework also
commits to short-term borrowing for cashflow management. It does not distinguish between
in-year liquidity sleeving and multi-year cash shortfalls caused by repeated deficits. That ambiguity
risks long-term imbalance to be masked as cash management, potentially for repeated use of
short-term high-cost facilities.

2970 In fact, cashflow management is not fiscal policy and the fiscal framework should not blur the
two. As walls are removed the framework relies more heavily on judgement and, therefore, more
heavily on independence oversight. The Fiscal Policy Panel remains commissioned by the same
Committee whose decisions it is assessing. At the hearing – and just now – Policy & Resources
acknowledged openness to alternative governance arrangements, including suggestions from
2975 Scrutiny. That is welcome but it strengthens the case for fixing governance before approval, not
afterwards.

Sir, these are not drafting issues, they are structural, conceptual and governance issues. Trying
to repair them through amendments would be poor governance. It would entrench ambiguity rather
than resolve it. Frameworks set the rules of the game; they should be right before we start playing.
2980 This sursis does not block borrowing. It does not leave Guernsey without a framework. The existing
framework will remain in place. What it does is require Policy & Resources to return with a revised
framework which is a clear, organising principle, provides realistic discipline on borrowing in deficit,
distinguishes cashflow from structural imbalance, and strengthens and improves oversight. All of
this can be done quite quickly, if I may add.

2985 Approving a framework that cannot tell us at the point of decision what sustainable borrowing
looks like is not prudent. Taking a short pause, with cross-Committee support, from the Assembly
and from P&R, to raise the standard of fiscal governance is prudent. This sursis offers the Assembly
a constructive way forward, supported by evidence and – as has just been said – supported by
Policy & Resources themselves.

2990 I ask Members to support it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Camp, do you formally second the sursis motiv  ?

Deputy Camp: Yes, I do, sir.

2995

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.

I am going to remind Members of what Rule 24(5) says, which is that when a sursis of a matter has been proposed and seconded, as it now has, debate should be limited strictly to the sursis and no other issues relating to that matter, including proposed amendments, shall be debated until the sursis has been voted upon.

3000

Deputy Dorrity.

Deputy Dorrity: Thank you, sir.

Sir, I would like to begin by thanking Deputy Sloan, members of the Scrutiny Committee, and Members of the panel at the Scrutiny hearing, who treated those of us in attendance to a very edifying morning with the team responsible for the Fiscal Policy Framework document. I know you helped us to gain a better understanding of its shortcomings.

3005

Sir, I find that I am in support of this sursis. If we are to structure the Fiscal Policy Framework correctly we must be clear about its purpose. At its core it should be about balance and good governance. It must recognise the importance of long-term planning in securing the Island's future, while grounding that ambition in clearly defined benchmarks, realistic timescales, accountability, and democratic oversight.

3010

The framework should be a tool to guide decision-making without constraining it, supporting ambition without undermining sound fiscal judgement. It should not prevent this States from making difficult or exceptional financial decisions, as flexibility will always be necessary, but it must ensure that when such decisions are taken they are taken openly and with full understanding of their consequences.

3015

By insisting that any departure from the framework be explicitly identified and brought before this Assembly, democratic accountability will be strengthened and the framework's role as a meaningful guide will be re-enforced. Acting outside the agreed principles should always be a conscious, transparent decision taken on public record. More broadly, the framework should rebalance how we think about fiscal responsibility. Sustainable public finances are not delivered from revenue-raising measures alone, but also through disciplined choices about how public money is spent and outcomes achieved.

3020

By grounding the framework in the principle of the Island living within its means you re-enforce its role as a tool of economic stewardship. Deficits, debt, and reserves should be used prudently, not as substitutes for affordability or sound decision-making. A well-structured framework should promote discipline above all, and transparency by requiring regular reassessment of expenditure, service effectiveness, and value for money, supporting a more resilient and sustainable approach to public finances that delivers real benefits to the Island and its community. That is what I believe we should be seeking to achieve with this framework.

3025

Thank you.

3030

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

3035

Deputy Gollop: I would like to see the sursis succeed. It is time dated; indeed it is time dated by 15th July 2026, so that is well before the Budget. It is a six month process. I was one of those who – as Deputy Dorrity said – was edified, made me whisper at times, through the proceedings, and I have been relooking at them as well. I think it was a very useful session.

3040

Although some of what Deputy Sloan said were difficult economic concepts, and therefore in one sense goes slightly beyond the sursis, the sursis does identify the need for the revised Fiscal

Policy Framework to address all those matters identified by the Scrutiny Management Committee. That is a clear reason to support it.

3045 I too was struck by the ambiguity of the language used at the time between sustainability, stability, and a balanced budget, because they are not necessarily the same things. I could see that the original seven principles had mutated into looser principles and we lacked a golden rule or really any other kind of clear rule. Perhaps more they could comment and the *[Inaudible 4:20:32]* but, nevertheless, I considered there is work to do on that.

3050 I think too the points made by Deputy Sloan about short-term borrowing, which seemed a figure extremely difficult to know, we need more clarification on that and how that has evolved over 15 years. Indeed, the broader question about what rates Guernsey would command at the present time and factor that. We also of course do not have firm knowledge yet on Pillar Two or the corporate review or the GST debate, and July would give put us more clearly into that.

3055 I think too the inclusion of more knowledge of the borrowing and the cashflow management sufficient to enable prospective assessment of compliance, because when one looks at the – the original report was commendably short, but for once was too short, in quite simplified language like what does success look like. When you look for concentric circles in the report that need further amplification, which a sursis would succeed in doing, they mention balanced income and expenditure, sustainable infrastructure investment, healthy financial reserves, and sustainable and well-managed debt.

3060 Well, the latter one we might get a half score on but it seems to me I am unclear about how healthy our financial reserves are, how sustainable our infrastructural investment is, and how balanced is our income and expenditure. This sursis would surely help with that. There are points about strengthening governance that are absolutely helpful to know in more detail than I did at the time last year on P&R about the criteria for membership of this body, what their role is and whether they are a critical friend or academic analysts, or perhaps more ideological advisers that we might have had a decade ago. There is lots of thinking there. Whether they are regulator, to a certain extent, or whether they are effectively people beefing up Government thinking and policy.

3070 Because of the hard work Scrutiny have done, and the able performances from their panel, which included a former Chief Minister of this Assembly – I think that there was a danger after that, and the discussions that took place between Members, that it would run the risk of either throwing out this report all together and we would be left without an updated Fiscal Framework and have to rely on an outdated one; or approve it today, which I possibly would do, knowing full well that it is not quite fit for the purpose; it has aged, it needs threshing out, it needs development and clarity, and really – as Deputy Inder and others might say – insight into where we are going financially.

3075 So do we want to reject it or accept it? No. We have a better option with the sursis.

Deputy Inder: 26(1), Sir.

3080 **The Bailiff:** Can I invite those Members who wish to speak on the sursis motiv   to stand in their places? Is it still your wish, Deputy Inder, that –

Deputy Inder: No.

3085 **The Bailiff:** Okay. *(Laughter)* Thank you very much.
Let me call Deputy Camp next on the basis that she seconded the sursis motiv  .
Deputy Camp.

Deputy Camp: Thank you.

3090 Yes, I thought it was probably only right that I do speak, given that I did second this. I will start by saying I am not an economist but immediately on reading the framework I was concerned that it was a too loosely worded document that asked more questions than it answered. So I was relieved when I watched the Scrutiny Management Committee’s panel and watched officials struggle to

3095 clearly and consistently articulate what this document meant in reality, and that I was not alone in my thoughts.

I spent much of Christmas concerned about the direction of travel we seemed sure to head off in. Such was my concern that I toyed with submitting a total rewrite of this document as a proposed amendment. In the end I penned five amendments before discussions with Deputy Sloan took place, and we mutually agreed to seek Scrutiny support to lodge something that asked for consideration of this document to be put on hold to allow P&R to go and address all the concerns raised.

3100 To my mind, as it currently stands, the document speaks to taxation and borrowing only and did not feel like a framework designed to improve fiscal stewardship, but a foretelling of a dystopian future where we have taxed the population out of existence and borrowed until the wheels came off. A document where economic growth is little more than a footnote, and one that is met with instant dismissal. A sense that we cannot rely on it, therefore, we should not even try frankly blew my mind.

3105 Sir, I was worried about the borrowings level, up to 30% of GDP was being bandied about in this document based upon a third party's historic view, against the moving feast of a deficit, which is rising at a fairly alarming rate dependent upon which financial interpretation you choose. This document is a permission slip for borrowing without guardrails and without a real sense of how its repayment might be funded, recognising there is a place for borrowing in Government but without good financial discipline fiscal stewardship will never find a comfortable home.

3110 Coming from a regulator background it has been instilled in me that if you did not say it, it does not count. Having seen the impact of an overzealous approach to regulation and compliance, while I am not a fan of overcomplicating things through complex rules and even harder compliance with them, a framework based only on loose principles risks exposure to weak and opaque decision-making at a time when being open and transparent really cannot be any greater of a priority. How can anybody be held to account when the rules are so wishy-washy?

3115 I am grateful that P&R have recognised that there is both an opportunity and a need to strengthen this document and turn it into a real document articulating our model of fiscal stewardship. I would ask that in taking that opportunity P&R considers economic growth, ensuring robust borrowing guardrails are in place, a measured approach to infrastructure spend that balances out ideologies with present fiscal planning, and introduces sound governance to this document to allow its impact to be measurable.

3120 For that reason I am more than happy to support the sursis.

The Bailiff: Deputy Collins.

Deputy Collins: Thank you, sir.

3130 I was also one of those that attended the Scrutiny hearing. For me a very brief question really. The deadline for this is 15th July, which makes submission date 8th June, which means this report is going to be written probably in May. I just wondered whether that was enough time, given at that stage we will be halfway through how we are going to tax any of this and whether we have any spare money to okay borrowings. Maybe that was enough time.

3135 That is really just the observation I wanted to point out, that at that time I might not have everything I need to think about in order to approve this framework.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Strachan.

3140

Deputy Strachan: Thank you, Sir.

I thank the Vice-President for quoting my husband's letter. I guess the Assembly can imagine how boring our dinner table conversations are. (*Laughter*) I get the sense, and I am probably right, that I will be the only one speaking against the sursis motivé, but I think it is important to consider an alternative view.

3145

My concern is that we have been presented with a proposal intended to serve as an overarching framework and it is my view that it already offers much of the coherency that Scrutiny says is missing. Its four pillars give us a solid, long-term structure to guide financial decision-making in volatile environments. Is it the best we could do? I do not think so. That is the purpose of amendments. There are sensible changes we could make here and now, so I do not support sending it back to P&R. This would divert officer time from critical workstreams, many of which have only increased in the past week. I am sceptical that returning it to the Committee would do much other than delay the progress.

A quick work on economic growth. My proposed amendment to the Fiscal Policy Framework – which I am not going to speak about – seeks to make the role of Economic Development clearer within the framework, one area that Deputy Sloan’s speech said was one of his concerns. If the sursis succeeds I would strongly encourage P&R to revisit the place of economic growth as part of our fiscal toolkit. Right now the framework overwhelmingly focuses on taxation and borrowing and references to growth only appear as constraints, yet economic growth is essential to meeting cost of living challenges, housing strategies, and the demographic pressures. It should sit alongside tax and borrowing as a core lever for fiscal sustainability, so I agree with Deputy Sloan on the importance of growth.

I wanted to touch on oversight, which is something that has been discussed in various areas, but there is a debate about whether oversight belongs inside the framework. In truth, whether we have a backward looking arbiter or including our style, forward-looking oversight can be created separately. The framework does not prevent this addition.

In the letter of comment the Scrutiny Committee has proposed that it should commission the Fiscal Policy Panel. I remain unconvinced. I struggle to see how Scrutiny can both commission and then scrutinise the same body without a conflict.

Now on to borrowing and reserves. Scrutiny argues that this framework removes hard constraints on borrowing and lacks clarity on reserves, but the framework does set expectations, sustainable debt, rebuilding reserves, and requiring all decisions to align with a long-term fiscal principle. It also requires a professional assessment at least 24 months prior to issuing any new long-term debt, so this is before not after, as Deputy Sloan states. It is a critical safeguard that ensures we consider purpose, affordability and market conditions. Debt itself is not inherently bad. What matters is why we borrow and how responsibly we manage it.

As a sidenote, the 2014 Government bond is a good example of how we got it right. We borrowed to fund major infrastructure, the funds were on-lent at slightly above cost, and the remaining £165 million was invested with returns exceeding the bond’s interest rate. By my estimate we have made around £26 million from those investments. This illustrates the limits of *[Inaudible 4:32:20]* rules. At issue the bond represented just under 15% of GDP, underneath the borrowing ceiling at the time. Today it sits around 9.5%. The rule was of limited practical use. What really matters is sustainability. Can we service and repay the debt?

Finally, I wanted to consider P&R’s capacity. As President of Overseas Aid I recently sent a letter that has only now just been addressed, not because of lack of will but because officers were already running at full stretch. In the past few days alone P&R has launched a new internal audit into the Agilisys debacle, taken on several new priorities via the Government Work Plan amendments, including tasking the Chief Executive with a major organisation reform. I am concerned about adding yet another major workstream by returning this framework and personally believe these new workstreams are a much higher priority.

So this debate is not about the performance in a Scrutiny hearing; it is about the framework itself. We have the opportunity here in the Assembly to amend what needs to be – economic growth, clarity of principles – this is how frameworks are strengthened. Sending the entire framework back will not deliver better policy in my view, it will simply delay action and place even more strain on already stretched resources. For these reasons I believe we should amend where appropriate and adopt the framework now.

The Bailiff: As no one else is rising to speak on the sursis motivé I will turn to the Vice-President to address the sursis motivé please.

3200 Deputy St Pier.

Deputy St Pier: Yes, thank you.

3205 Just to respond to the debate. The question of borrowing has come up in a number of different forms, and the issue of sustainability of that borrowing. The challenge for the Scrutiny Management Committee was that in the hearing we were unable to be specific about it, but I think it is – the question of sustainability I think has been addressed very well by Deputy Strachan, and an acknowledgement that it is sustainability of debt at any time. It will change from time to time but the period at which that debt is taken out is the time at which you need to make that judgement. It would depend on the interest rate environment, it would depend on the market's appetite and willingness of course to lend.

3210 The borrowing landscape has become considerably more complex because of the debt permissions having been extended to incorporate our trading entities. But certainly I would say that Deputy Strachan's analysis of the sustainability of the 2014 bond was one that I would agree. Indeed I would say to the States I argued on a number of occasions since that the States missed an enormous opportunity, particularly in the post-COVID era, to significantly leverage borrowing in a low-interest environment. That would have been entirely sustainable, but that opportunity has now passed. The assessment of sustainability in 2020 or 2021 is very different from the sustainability test that would be applied now.

3220 Deputy Dorrity said that it needs to be a tool to guide decision-making, and I absolutely agree with that. Deputy Gollop also noted that it has aged, and the bar has fallen. Indeed I would agree with that. I think in relation to where the guardrails for borrowing really lie, they do not lie in the framework alone, they ultimately lie within the votes of the Members of this Assembly.

3225 Deputy Strachan's observation about resources is a very valid one. I think had we been consulted ahead of the lodging of this amendment we would have expressed concern about the 15th July deadline, which requires – as Deputy Collins said – a 12th June lodging with the States' Greffier. Given that the resources that would be devoted to looking afresh at this are the same resources that are now prioritised on the tax reform work, and particularly the Corporate Tax consultation, but we know that priority needs to be executed as quickly as possible to ensure a – as Deputy Helyar has said publicly, in order to remove the uncertainty we need to make those decisions and we cannot delay that. That is now our priority. So if the Assembly is minded to approve the sursis motivé I just put that note of caution on the deliverability of that date, given the resource constraints that Deputy Strachan has identified.

3235 Finally, in relation to Deputy Strachan, indeed she is the only person who has spoken against it and thinks she may be the only person who votes against it, but I would certainly invite her as an interested stakeholder, and indeed her husband, if they wish to share the benefit of their dinnertime conversations over the next few months as part of the process of any review. But, more seriously, this an open invitation at this point for those who do have an interest in this matter to express a view. This is not just a matter either for the Policy & Resources or indeed for the Scrutiny Management Committee; it is a matter ultimately for this Assembly. At this point it is an opportunity, if the sursis is accepted, for interested stakeholders to express their view, particularly on this important question of whether a framework should be more principles based or more rules based.

3240 With that, sir, just to confirm that the Policy & Resources Committee will be supporting the sursis motivé.

3245 **The Bailiff:** Now I will turn back to the proposer of the sursis, Deputy Sloan, to reply to the debate please.

Deputy Sloan: Thank you, sir.

3250 There were a quite a few aspects to the debate. Clearly I disagree with my colleague to my left, Deputy Strachan, that the concept that, 'Is this the best we can do? No, but let us carry on anyway'. I would like us to get into the habit of making sure that we do things properly. The argument that I heard that we do not have the resources to do this now because we are doing other things, is an argument for doing everything badly and I really do not like that.

3255 Several Members have rightly emphasised the importance of growth during this debate, and I want to be very clear there is no disagreement on that point. Growth matters profoundly. The Fiscal Framework is not an alternative to growth; it is the bedrock on which sustainable growth is built. There is no distinction or choice between the two, growth or fiscal discipline. Credibility, stability and clarity of public finances are what allows growth to take root by giving business confidence by lowering risk and ensuring a difficult choice is not [*Inaudible 4:39:50*].

3260 So this is why the sursis matters. It is not so much stopping things happening, it is about making sure that when we do borrow, when we do invest, and when we do take risks in pursuit of growth, we do so in a framework that is clear and transparent, as Deputy Gollop said. That transparency is very important to this Assembly. In the times I sat on presentations of budgets and accounts and the glazed eyes and initially trying to understand what they came to say, it is the confidence in the framework that is brought ahead of transparency and clarity.

3265 It is transparency and clarity that actually Scrutiny, in its hearing, found to be lacking in the Framework as drafted. That clear, organising, fundamental principle, and clear discipline around borrowing and debt, and set some clear arrangements for oversight. They are not taking whether the Framework constrains decisions in advance. I dispute that we make the decision as you go along, it is clearly something that needs to be predetermined in time and variant, if possible.

3270 I also want to say something on how we arrived at this point. Obviously when Scrutiny first raised concerns the instinct might have been to press ahead amend from the floor. But that is not the way I think is the right way to make a set framework such as this.

3275 In particular, I want to thank colleagues and suggestions. Deputy Collins about actually presenting and providing a briefing to colleagues, which was here on Monday, and I thank him, and to those 20 or so colleagues that attended and gave up their time to ask questions and change their thinking. That engagement actually genuinely improved the way this proposal has been brought forward today. But that type of cross-Committee and cross-Member discussion is exactly how we should be dealing with issues of this importance.

3280 Finally, I also want to acknowledge the constructive approach taken by P&R in supporting this sursis. [*Inaudible 4:41:55*] it is not about point scoring, but it is about getting the foundations right. This is, as Deputy St Pier said, the fundamental foundation for our fiscal policy, which I do believe [*Inaudible 4:42:07*]. I do believe there is the opportunity in this day and age with the tools available to actually produce a better framework in a short period of time

3285 Sir, apologies for referring to some of them directly there. This sursis gives us the opportunity to strengthen those foundations calmly, collaboratively, and without delay. For those reasons I commend the sursis to Members.

3290 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, it is now time to vote on the sursis motiv  , proposed by Deputy Sloan, seconded by Deputy Camp, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on the sursis please.

There was a recorded vote.

3295 *Carried – Pour 27, Contre 3, Ne vote pas 2, Did not vote 4, Absent 3*

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Bury, Tina	Montague, Paul	Cameron, Andy	Curgenven, Rob
Burford, Yvonne	Humphreys, Rhona	Ozanne, Jayne	Inder, Neil	Malik, Munazza
Camp, Haley	Strachan, Jennifer		Kay-Mouat, Bruno	Williams, Steve
Collins, Garry			Leadbeater, Marc	

de Sausmarez, Lindsay
Dorrity, David
Falla, Steve
Gabriel, Adrian
Gollop, John
Goy, David
Hansmann Rouxel, Sarah
Helyar, Mark
Hill, Edward
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha
Laine, Marc
Matthews, Aidan
McKenna, Liam
Niles, Andrew
Oswald, George
Parkinson, Charles
Rochester, Sally
Rylatt, Tom
Sloan, Andy
Snowdon, Alexander
St Pier, Gavin
Van Katwyk, Lee
Vermeulen, Simon

3300

The Bailiff: On the sursis motivé proposed by Deputy Sloan and seconded by Deputy Camp, there voted in favour 27 Members, 3 Members voted against, 2 Members abstained, 7 Members did not participate in that vote. Therefore, I will declare the sursis motivé carried, which means there will be no debate on Guernsey's Fiscal Policy Framework until, at the earliest, 15th July 2026.

The amendments that have already been lodged will carry forward but they might need to be revised in the meantime depending on what happens.

STATES' ASSEMBLY & CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

6. CPA BIMR Election Observation Mission Report, 2025 – Deferred to next meeting

Article 6.

The States are asked to decide:-

1. Whether, after consideration of the policy letter entitled "CPA BIMR Election Observation Mission Report 2025" dated 1st December 2025 submitted under Rule 17(9) of "The Rules of Procedures of the States of Deliberation and their Committees", they are of the opinion:-

To agree the following workstreams should be undertaken by the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee:

a) Consider the possibility of including a supervisory authority to oversee complaints and appeals as part of the workstream to establish an independent Electoral Body;

b) Explore additional approaches that could be adopted to foster youth engagement in politics and elections.

The above Proposition has been submitted to His Majesty's Procureur for advice on any legal or constitutional implications in accordance with Rule 4(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees.

3305

The Bailiff: Now, before I ask the Greffier to call the next matter, Deputy Hansmann Rouxel, this is a Rule 17(9) general propositions matter. At best we have got 40 minutes, subject to your opening,

unless Members are minded to sit later than half past five. Do you really want to start this now with the risk that it might be adjourned part heard; or do you want to defer it to the next meeting?

3310

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel: Sir, it should not require a lot of debate, however –

The Bailiff: But the whole point of a Rule 17(9) is that you want to get as many Members' views as possible.

3315

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel: This is true.

The Bailiff: If you want it called, we will call it.

3320

Deputy Hansmann Rouxel: There is no time and urgency on this matter so, therefore, if it is available to not start it now.

3325

The Bailiff: So I will put the motion to Members that the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee matter of the CPA BIMR Election Observation Mission Report, 2025, should be deferred to the next meeting and we will simply deal with the schedule. Those in favour. That is the loudest you have been all day long. *(Laughter)* Those against.

Members voted Pour.

3330

The Bailiff: I think I can declare that carried. We will move finally to the Schedule for Future States' Business.

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

7. Schedule for Future States' Business – Proposition carried

Article 7.

The States are asked to decide:-

Whether, after consideration of the attached Schedule for Future States' Business, which sets out items for consideration at the Ordinary States Meeting on 25th February, 2026, they are of the opinion to approve the Schedule.

The States' Greffier: Article 7. Policy & Resources Committee, Schedule for Future States' Business.

3335

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez, is there anything you wish to say in respect of the schedule?

Deputy de Sausmarez: No, sir.

3340

The Bailiff: There have been no amendments to the schedule that need to be considered and, therefore, there is no need to debate it and I will simply ask the Greffier to open the voting on the schedule for the next meeting.

3345

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 31, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 5, Absent 3

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

3350

The Bailiff: In respect of the schedule for the next meeting there voted in favour 31 Members, no Member voted against, no Member abstained, 8 Members have disappeared by now and, therefore, did not participate in the vote. Therefore, I will declare the Schedule duly carried and I will ask the Greffier to close the meeting please.

3355

The Assembly adjourned at 4.48 p.m.