



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

STATES OF DELIBERATION

OF THE

ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

HANSARD

Royal Court House, Guernsey, Wednesday, 25th March 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	M. S. Laine
Y. Burford	M. P. Leadbeater
T. L. Bury	M. Malik
A. K. Cameron	A. D. S. Matthews
H. L. Camp	L. J. McKenna
G. M. Collins	P. S. N. Montague
R. P. Curgenvén	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
L. T. Goy	A. S. Sloan
S. T. Hansmann Rouxel	G. A. St Pier
M. A. J. Helyar	J. D. Strachan
R. M. Humphreys	L. C. Van Katwyk
N. R. Inder	S. P. J. Vermeulen
B. R. Kay-Mouat	S. Williams
A. Kazantseva-Miller	

Representatives of the Island of Alderney

The Clerk to the States of Deliberation

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

Absent at the Evocation

Alderney Representative E. Hill; Alderney Representative E. A. J. Snowdon

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States of Deliberation

*The States met at 9.30 a.m. in the presence of
His Excellency Lt Gen Richard Cripwell
Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Bailiwick of Guernsey*

[THE BAILIFF *in the Chair*]

PRAYERS

The States' Greffier

EVOCAATION

CONVOCATION

The States' Greffier: Billet d'État V of 2026. To the Members of the States of the Island of Guernsey, I hereby give notice that a Meeting of the States of Deliberation will be held at The Royal Court House, on Wednesday, 25th March 2026, at 9.30 a.m., to consider the items listed in this Billet d'État, which have been submitted for debate.

Alderney Representatives delayed

The Bailiff: Good morning, Members of the States. I have been forewarned that the two Alderney Representatives are stuck in Alderney. They are hoping to join the meeting before it concludes, but we will see.

The first Item of business is a Statement pursuant to Rule 10(4) from the President of the Economic Development Committee. I will invite Deputy Kazantseva-Miller to deliver that Statement.

STATEMENTS

General Update Statement – Statement by the President of the Economic Development Committee

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Sir, much has happened since my last update in September. Our Committee Work Plan, due to be published shortly, focuses on eight core priorities. The priority of Guernsey and the sustainability of our public services is fundamentally linked to the strengths of our primary export industry and financial services, alongside the professional, digital and creative services that support it.

The Finance Sector Growth Strategy, commissioned at the start of this political term, has now been delivered on time and on budget. It was developed under a project board chaired by Deputy Niles, bringing together Government, industry, regulators and Guernsey Finance. This

collaborative model has secured strong alignment and buy-in across the sector, which will be critical for successful implementation.

25 The project board is now transitioning into a Finance Sector Growth Forum, which will oversee delivery of the strategies throughout this term. Regular updates will be provided to Deputies and the wider community, focusing on delivery against actions, KPIs and clear accountability. The Committee has also worked closely with Guernsey Finance to strengthen governance oversight with three new Directors appointed: Deputy Humphreys, Glen Tonks and Andy Finch.

30 Tourism remains our second most important export industry led by Deputy Van Katwyk, alongside non-voting member Barrie Duerden. Passenger numbers continue to grow. Total air and sea traffic was up 3% 2025, ferry passengers up 14% and the day trip market up 31%, including a 69% increase in visitors from France. The Net Promoter Score has also risen significantly from 55% in 2024 to 68% last year.

35 Our ambition is to sustain this growth across both sea and air, with tourism representing a key opportunity for Guernsey's economy. Visit Guernsey continues to deliver targeted marketing campaigns and international PR, generating strong results. The Island of Guernsey brand has been refreshed to better position the Bailiwick as an archipelago of distinctive islands, supported by a new trade-focused website to strengthen engagement with the travel industry. We also have a very busy events calendar ahead, including the first ever Breton Market taking place next week, and the
40 launch of the Big Eat Food Festival in April.

The Tourism Management Board recently marked its second anniversary, and I would like to thank its founding chair, Hannah Beacom, for her leadership during this formative period. We are also pleased to appoint Charlie Walker of the Little Big Hotel Group, and Claire Crowson of Premier Holidays, as joint interim co-Chairs, as we work closely with the board and industry on its next phase.

45 A major development of our cultural tourism offering is the Victor Hugo Centre. The £7.5 million fundraising target has now been achieved, with the States' contributing one-third and providing the former Guernsey Information Centre as the site. This project has already attracted strong interest from our French partners and will be a significant cultural asset, strengthening Victor Hugo's legacy and deepening our links with France.

50 Our tourism growth and wider economic connectivity have been significantly strengthened by our partnership with Brittany Ferries. This week marks one year since it began operating ferry services between Guernsey, the UK and France. The relationship continues to go from strength to strength and reflects a generally cross-Government effort. Brittany Ferries is working closely with Visit Guernsey, Guernsey Ports, Customs and Immigration, the Port of Saint-Malo, and regional
55 tourism authorities in Brittany to maximise the opportunities this connectivity presents.

When needed, Brittany Ferries has shown real flexibility in responding to community needs, including additional Christmas sailings, at the request of the retail sector, and support for the Guernsey Rally.

60 I am also grateful to the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture, and Deputy Montague, in particular, for working to strengthen our cultural, sporting and education links with France. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

The Committee for Home Affairs did an excellent job to extend the French ID card scheme, and we hope that this can be made permanent from 2027 as well.

65 The Committee has also established an inter-island ferry group, bringing together operators serving Hermes, Sark and Guernsey, to improve co-ordination and enhance inter-island travel. One example is the new cross-ticketing partnership between Islands Unlimited and Brittany Ferries. We remain in active dialogue with the Government of Jersey and DFDS on inter-island connectivity and have invited them to join the ferry group. The Committee also recently hosted Deputy Morel, ahead of Jersey's upcoming election.

70 Perhaps the most significant development since my last update has been in the space of air connectivity. In November, we saw the unfortunate collapse of Blue Islands, which had served our community for years. I would like to place on record our thanks to its staff and crew for the years of service to the Bailiwick. Its collapse highlighted the vulnerability of the Bailiwick and regional air

75 connectivity. The Committee acted swiftly to designate the Jersey-Guernsey route as essential, requiring operators to apply for licences through the Transport Licensing Authority.

We will continue to closely monitor the performance of Aurigny and all airlines serving Guernsey as part of developing a new Air Policy Framework. This is a key priority for the coming year. Work is well underway and consultation began with stakeholders.

80 On 19th April, Guernsey will welcome the return of British Airways, operating Airbus A319 and A320 aircraft, on the Heathrow route. The importance of this direct link to Heathrow and its global network has been strongly reinforced through the Finance Sector Strategy and our engagement with industry. A programme of activities is planned around the inaugural flights, alongside joint marketing with British Airways and Heathrow. We remain in dialogue with other airline operators and continue to explore opportunities to further strengthen connectivity.

85 Improved connectivity with France is also driving a new Committee priority, strengthening trade links and diversifying supply chains through our southern route. This is important not only for economic opportunity, but also for resilience, improving access to goods, such as fresh produce and construction materials.

90 Since last year, around 10 trade delegations have taken place between Guernsey and France. The Committee recently partnered with the Guernsey Chamber of Commerce to host a sold-out connectivity and trade event, welcoming a French delegation, including representatives from the Brittany Regional Government, the Port of Saint-Malo, the Saint-Malo Chamber of Commerce and a range of businesses. There is clear appetite on both sides to deepen commercial links. However, changing supply chains takes time, and cross-border trade has become more complex following

95 Brexit. The Committee therefore intends to establish a trade forum to better support businesses developing these relationships. We are also engaging States' procurements so the States can play a more active role as a buyer.

100 Our wider trade work remains equally important. Progress continues on extending Guernsey's participation in free trade agreements via the UK, and this week we also hosted Lord Marland, Chair of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council. Guernsey has long been a strategic partner, and the network provided valuable opportunities to strengthen trade with links to the Commonwealth jurisdiction, aligning with the Finance Sector Strategy.

105 Guernsey is a small jurisdiction with natural monopolies, an international finance centre and a global trading network. It is therefore essential that our regulatory framework is balanced, proportionate and supportive of growth, while continuing to meet international standards and protecting consumers. Deputy Camp leads the Committee's work on financial services, utilities, and competition regulation, as well as innovation, including digital assets.

110 The Committee is progressing a review of the Guernsey Competition and Regulation Authority. This is a complex and technical exercise with differing stakeholder views on the future direction of regulatory policy, and will be a major piece of work completed this year.

115 The importance of pro-growth financial services regulation has also been reinforced in the final sector strategy. Following the successful Moneyval assessment, it is encouraging to see the Guernsey Financial Services Commission taking a proactive approach to emerging asset classes and technologies, including digital assets, which the Committee strongly supports.

120 Guernsey's digital infrastructure continues to strengthen as well. The Island-wide fibre rollout laid by Sure is now complete, with work ongoing to connect the remaining properties. The copper network will be switched off later this year, and we urge remaining households to transition to fibre, which can be done at no additional cost. The first 5G licence was issued by the GCRA to Sure at the end of last year, paving the way for services in the near future.

125 The Committee has also strengthened governance of the digital greenhouse by appointing an interim governance board drawn from the Innovate Guernsey board, including our non-voting member, Barrie Duerden. Working with the Innovation Board, we will develop a medium-term innovation plan and funding model. This will feed into the updated digital AI and innovation framework a cross-Government strategy involving multiple Committees.

The Committee has been active in promoting AI awareness and adoption within the public service, including a targeted course for Committee officers and Deputies. The impact of AI on business, public services, and the economy can be transformative, but also exposes vulnerabilities in an increasingly complex geopolitical environment.

130 As part of the Digital Strategy, the Committee will engage on digital IDs, data trusts and data infrastructure. Guernsey's Company and Aircraft Registry are important economic levers and platforms for growth. We will work closely with both to further commercialise opportunities and ensure they act as effective economic enablers.

135 Verification of company data via APIs will be a key extension of the registry functionality. Developing a digital ID for businesses, alongside making it easier for local trading businesses to register, is also a priority.

140 Finally, a key strategic priority for the community is the development of a new Economic Strategy for Guernsey. With economic growth now further reinforced through amendments to the Government Work Plan, the need for a coherent Government strategy has never been greater. The Committee will undertake preparatory work this year with a view to finalising the strategy in 2027.

As part of this process, we will engage with the Institute of Directors through their work ahead of the IoD Convention in November, which will focus on economic growth. Engagement with industry, business bodies and the wider community will be central to delivering our mandate.

145 For this reason, the Committee's Work Plan will shortly be published in draft, allowing stakeholders to provide feedback. While we aim to shape our own economic future, we must recognise Guernsey's exposure to external macro and microeconomic factors, including the health of key trading partners, such as the UK and Europe.

150 The impact of Donald Trump's policies, developments in the Gulf, and wider global pressures remain uncertain, but are likely to have inflationary effects on Guernsey, as we are already seeing through increasing gas prices.

While I outlined the Committee's eight strategic priorities, our mandate remains broad. From tuna to media, the blue economy, retail and construction, we will continue to maintain a watchful brief.

155 As an example of the smaller pieces of work, the Committee has worked closely with Floral Guernsey, the Association of Guernsey Charities, building on the work of the Guernsey commissioning team to develop a new year's funding model for Floral Guernsey linked to RPIX. This is designed to provide greater stability with anchor funding to help unlock private sector sponsorship.

160 The Committee is also a founding member of the Institute for Screen Arts Guernsey, with Deputy Camp serving on the board. Its ambition is to develop a film and creative industry in Guernsey.

Economic Development is also one of the three Principal Committees providing political oversight of the Guernsey Development Agency, a key enabler for economic development in the long term.

165 In conclusion, sir, I feel a strong sense of momentum and positivity within the Committee and our engagement with stakeholders across Government, industry, and community. I have seen both officers and political Members working tirelessly to meet demanding deadlines and progress key priorities together, and would like to thank them all. This remains our greatest strength, our ability to pull in the same direction, and we look forward to working with the wider States and the
170 community to drive this agenda forward with energy, determination and focus.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.

There is now an opportunity to ask any question within the mandate of the Committee *for* Economic Development.

175 Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Thank you very much.

180 I might have been a bit too premature there, but I thank Deputy Kazantseva-Miller for an excellent Statement. I know she has been participating in workshops with the Chamber of Commerce and other bodies to encourage greater connectivity with France, maybe air links as well – we have got ...

185 But my question is: how can we develop more fully links to France, not just on a tourist passenger level, but on a level of importing food, raw materials, building materials, and other areas that might reduce prices, as I know she has inherited a good policy from her predecessor Committee?

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: I thank Deputy Gollop.

190 Increasing trade with France, especially around fresh produce and construction materials, is absolutely the focus of the work we are trying to do. This work has already been supported through a number of delegations, so both Guernsey businesses traveling to France, but also French businesses traveling here.

195 We are engaged with the Customs as well to make sure the processes are explained, so webinars have taken place. This will be the central focus of the trade forum that we are seeking to establish to really help facilitate those cross-border trade. But very much support the priority that Deputy Gollop outlined.

The Bailiff: Deputy Ozanne.

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

I too want to congratulate the President on an excellent update, and particularly the momentum and positivity that so many of us witnessed at the Chamber lunch last week.

205 My question though relates to the current macro situation around what is looking more and more likely like a global recession. The President mentioned that there is a Strategic Work Plan that will be, I think, published shortly, and it will be finalised in 2027. Will that have an impact assessment about the impact that a recession may well have on our economy? Will it also look at how we increase our resilience, perhaps by looking at new ways of diversifying our economy or looking at the impact that that recession may well have on significant parts of our economy?

210 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: I thank Deputy Ozanne for an excellent question.

215 I think the last 12 months, and especially the election of Donald Trump, has highlighted the need to look at our economic strategies, I would say, in a completely different fashion, and really look at the longer-term resilience and strategic resilience, strategic partnerships and alliances, which perhaps would have been different if we were designing the strategy even 12 months ago.

220 In terms of the shorter term, a potential for recession, we are keeping a watchful brief. I think it is too early to say, but I think what is important, and this came very strongly from the visit of Lord Marland that just took place yesterday, that he really highlights that Guernsey has a very strong value proposition and superpowers in terms of what we actually offer the jurisdiction. From the stable political environment, taxation system, safe place to live, great place to visit, we have got the superpowers to really capitalise on that, that actually few jurisdictions have.

225 If anything, we are probably very well-positioned to withstand any recessionary pressures. But we do have to be mindful about inflationary pressures because we do import obviously a lot of inflation over which we have limited control.

The Bailiff: Deputy Oswald.

230 **Deputy Oswald:** Thank you, sir.

I welcome, of course, the uptake of numbers of day-trippers from France in particular, and hope this will be sustained. I have a concern that, at some point, one or more of our very welcome French day visitors will have an unexpected medical crisis on Island. I stand to be corrected, but expect many of these visitors will not have medical insurance.

235 Many States' Members will know that many French alpine resorts offer a *carré neige*, day insurance rate, at minimal cost; a widely taken-up opportunity. Could Economic Development consider a similar offer locally?

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

240 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** I thank Deputy Oswald for this question.

I must say we have not thought to consider that as part of our Committee's work, and I would very much like to take it perhaps offline and discuss this further with the Committee *for* Health & Social Care.

245 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater.

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

250 The Committee is going in the right direction. She mentioned, she was keeping a watching brief on a few things and she mentioned the word 'tuna'. I think last term every time Deputy Inder rose to speak in this fashion I asked him about tuna. Obviously our fishing industry is on its knees at the moment. Jersey have now got catch and release, and I think they have got some access to quota as well. I just want to know if there is any update from Defra about International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and everything related to tuna, please.

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

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: I was expecting this question from Deputy Leadbeater.

260 We are cautiously optimistic that we are moving in the right direction. While I cannot pre-announce anything, I think we are in the right track. This process is ultimately led by Defra, but I think we are gradually moving forward.

265 Deputy Leadbeater also mentioned the issues of our blue economy and the fishing industry is facing also in relation to fuel prices. It is an area of work that Deputy Van Katwyk is also looking into. We have had engagements with the fishing industry, I think for the first time in many years, because it is not an organised industry. We are definitely keeping a watchful brief in terms of the issues that industry is having and understanding what can be done going forward.

The Bailiff: Deputy Cameron.

270 **Deputy Cameron:** Thank you, sir; and I thank Deputy Kazantseva-Miller for her update.

Given that public funds and incentives have been used to support British Airways' Heathrow route, what specific assessment has the Committee made of the impact this will have on Aurigny's financial sustainability and its ability to continue delivering lifeline routes?

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

280 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** The Committee has worked on the basis of core strategic objectives that, first of all, the 2018 Air Policy outlined around the importance of reliability, connectivity and affordability. We have engaged with industry about what are the important connectivity objectives that were essential to be fulfilled going forward, especially in light of the Finance Sector Growth

Strategy work we have been doing. That has really fundamentally highlighted the importance of having a connectivity partner, such as the national airlines, British Airways, flying into Heathrow.

285 As part of developing the Air Policy Framework, we are developing a much more detailed framework around assessing impacts. But we ultimately also do not run Aurigny, and we need to be able to maintain confidential discussions with airlines while being able to analyse that is available to us. We have had data around the Frontier Economics report, previous work we had done.

The Bailiff: Deputy Strachan.

290 **Deputy Strachan:** Thank you, sir; I thank the President as well for her update.

It was a question on the Victor Hugo Centre. I have to declare an interest as I am a financial supporter of the Centre, and I wholeheartedly approve of the support model where for each pound we are investing, £2 has been raised from the private and corporate local business sector. The result will be a world-class tourism and learning centre for visitors and locals.

295 My question is: given the year's-long development for such a project, do Economic Development have any new similar projects in the pipeline? If not, would you see that this model of support could be replicated to further improve our tourism sector? Would you invite proposals for such projects?

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

300

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: The Victor Hugo Centre is an example of a visionary community project, one of many that are starting to emerge, such as La Vallette bathing pools. Absolutely, I think we want to develop more tourism products. Not only tourism products, but cultural products that can follow that joint venture, to some extent, public-private partnership model.

305 I am very keen to discuss such opportunities further with the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture, because we actually own quite a lot of heritage assets. I think there is an opportunity there. But absolutely we would welcome project proposals like that.

310 As part of the Tourism Strategy, one of our other pieces of work is to develop a tourism product strategy. I think there are a lot of opportunities for these kind of projects to come forward going forward.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

315 **Deputy Gabriel:** Thank you, sir; I thank the President for her update, building on progress from last term.

One of the items in last term highlighted was the price of aggregate and concrete in Guernsey, which she touched on briefly in her speech, saying that they were materially higher, and that they spoke with the GCRA and then commissioned them to do a market study.

320 When will the results of that market study be out, please, because aggregates and concrete are a key player in accelerating our housing requirements on the Island?

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

325 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Thank you.

We have received the first draft presentation from the GCRA in February. We had some clarification questions. I believe we have just this week received back an updated report. We need permission for that report to be published from the entity that was researched, and so we hope to share those findings in due course.

330

The Bailiff: Deputy Rylatt.

Deputy Rylatt: I thank the President for her update.

335 Like many mature economies, stagnant productivity growth has been identified as a barrier to economic growth. In that context, has the Committee given any consideration as to how this issue might be addressed, particularly for small and medium enterprises, and whether targeted measures such as productivity grants, similar to that available in Jersey, could form part of the solution?

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

340

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Thank you.

345 Deputy Rylatt makes absolutely an excellent and spot-on point in terms of what we need to stimulate going forward with our Economic Strategy. So productivity is a factor of many factors. Skills and technology adoption are probably two of the most fundamental. Capital intensity, actually infrastructure, health in the overall community are all key factors that influence productivity. I think as part, first of all, of the work at looking at the Economic Development Strategy, part of the work looking at the digital updated framework, part of the finance sector strategy, productivity is basically central to all of those discussions.

350 I think as we shape our thinking, then the policy levers will come out of that. But, yes, we are keeping a watchful brief in terms of what other communities have done, and productivity grants is one of those policy interventions that we could explore.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Montague.

355

Deputy Montague: Thank you, sir; and can I thank the President for her Update Statement.

360 As you will know, 2027 is the Norman millennium, 1,000 years since the birth of our Duke William of Normandy, later William the Conqueror. We are doing lots to celebrate this in Guernsey; there will be lots going on across the water in Normandy. Can I ask the President of Economic Development what more can be done to ensure that we do not miss this opportunity for a boost to our tourism?

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

365

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Thank you.

370 Deputy Montague has highlighted one of the key events happening next year which offers a fantastic economic and tourism opportunity for us. I know that work is between, especially, Visit Guernsey and the Tourism Management Board. They are all already working very closely together on understanding how best to capitalise on this opportunity.

375 We are also very engaged with Brittany Ferries to understand again what the schedule could look like for next year, because ultimately anyone coming to Guernsey is likely to come via Brittany Ferries, via Brittany, via Saint-Malo and the other way around. I am confident that there are already actually very strong collaborative discussions taking place across the board, because that is the way we are seeing that the teams across the States are working and engaging with the wider community. But I would be pleased to hear of any other ideas about what we can do; perhaps we could schedule a joint Committee discussion about that.

The Bailiff: Deputy Blin.

380

Deputy Blin: Thank you, sir.

I would like to thank the President for an excellent update on all aspects, and particularly on the AI side as well, it really is positive. I would like to focus on one aspect on the connectivity. So we

385 now have the opportunity with Brittany Ferries, but it also leads to other aspects. It could lead to food, it could lead to other sort of freight, etc.

My question is really around the sanitary and phytosanitary measures, as in the SPS, to see – I know there has been long-term engagement through Constitutional Affairs and other aspects there. Is there any update to how close we are, because that would give us new opportunities and, of course, food security, having extension from France as well as the UK?

390

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Yes, Deputy Blin has pointed to the one post-Brexit issue that, again, is beyond our control. There are SPS controls in place. I know there are discussions, wider discussions, taking place as part of the EU-UK discussions. This is more under the mandate of the Committee for P&R, so I could not give an update with that regard. But I know work is underway, and we do hope that something will materialise, because it will make a difference.

395

Thank you.

400

The Bailiff: Deputy St Pier.

Deputy St Pier: Sir, one of the matters that could have been on today's agenda, had I managed to organise myself to submit a motion to debate an appendix report, is the Office of the Public Trustee's Annual Accounts for 2024. At that date just short of £6.1 million was owed to taxpayers from the work that the office is doing. Is the President in a position to update on what the current balance is at the end of 2025, the state of progress on that and the likelihood of the recovery of a significant sum of public money which has gone into that office in the last five years or so?

405

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

410

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: I thank Deputy St Pier, and we are disappointed we did not have a motion to debate the report as expected, as one of the expected motions. I do not have the figures for the balance at the end of 2025 at hand, but we can supply that to Members by way of an update. We remain in a similar confident position that we should be able to recoup the refunds, but also we have been working on a different funding model for the Office of the Public Trustee going forward.

415

It is the work that Deputy Niles actually led on in the last political term and has taken over this political term, so I think it would be useful perhaps to provide a wider update to Deputies about that work and the outstanding balances as well.

420

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Deputy Leadbeater has asked a nice tuna question, and I am interested in the fish swimming about too, as you see from another set of questions. I am asking will Economic Development, work with other States' Committees, STSB, P&R, Environment and Infrastructure, to look at our blue marine economy – I know Deputy Van Katwyk has an interest in that – and ensure that there is a degree of sustainable futures for both commercial fishing and leisure fishing, which may involve subsidies, support, incentives, retirement from the industry for some, but a form of promotion so that we do not lose the sector as it is the haricot bean in our bean jars.

425

But what will the Committee seek to do to alleviate the crisis, which may even need money for fuel in the short term because of the energy issues Deputy Ozanne raised?

430

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Thank you, sir.

435 I think as I mentioned in my response to Deputy Leadbeater's question, this is an area of concern
and that we need to look much deeper into. Interestingly, the blue economy is sitting with us, the
fishing industry is sitting with us, but dairy, for example, is sitting with the Committee *for* E&I. So
we actually would like to engage a bit more closely to understand the proprietary work and the
business case the Committee did in terms of the support of the dairy industry that was provided.
440 I think this is work that is very much underway and being led by Deputy Van Katwyk. There is not
much more I can say at this stage.

I would just like to add that the blue economy is obviously wider than just fishing. In particular,
the leisure yachting sector is of absolute prime interest and economic development opportunity for
us being as an Island community. Actually, the combined size capacity of our marinas is the largest
445 on any other ports, whether it is in the south of the UK or the north of France. We are absolutely at
the epicentre of the channel to provide an absolutely exceptional leisure yachting opportunity. This
is why the work of the Future Harbors, the Guernsey Development Agency, are absolutely critical,
so that we can unlock that opportunity.

450 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

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

Sir, the President will remember that in the Government Work Plan debate in January, there was
an item added to the Government Work Plan by way of amendment from Deputy Rylatt, which was
455 Artificial Intelligence Strategy, understanding the Island impact. Has the Committee *for* Economic
Development had any interaction with that workstream, and does the President see any overlap
with activities within the Committee *for* Economic Development's realm of activity?

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

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: I think Deputy Rylatt's amendment was specific around the
potential governance side of things. I think, as I mentioned at the time of my debate, I did feel there
was overlap, but we continue to be engaged proactively and collaboratively with the parts of the
States. It is the same officers who are doing work across different Committees, and they are very
465 engaged in making sure it is a joined-up approach in terms of what we are discussing. I am
comfortable that whatever we are doing is done in a joint and collaborative manner.

As I said, looking at the opportunities and the impact of AI is absolutely crucial for the mandate
of our Committee, especially in relation to the economy. I am very proud that we have been
proactive in really facilitating, raising awareness, the introduction of education providers for AI, but
470 also as a Committee, proactively looking at how we integrate AI into our Committee work. We are
looking, for example, at the opportunity of setting agentic agents for the Committee's work, and
that is really an area of excitement.

The Bailiff: I am minded to extend the questions to the President beyond the 20 minutes that
475 is permitted, but it will not extend beyond 20 past 10.
Deputy Cameron, second question.

Deputy Cameron: Thank you, sir.

Just to follow up on my British Airways question, can the President confirm whether any
480 modelling has been done on passenger displacement from Aurigny's London routes, and at what
point this would require additional taxpayer support for Aurigny?

Thank you.

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

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Aurigny has provided their modelling in terms of the potential range of impacts, and that modelling has been considered as part of the work that the Committee did.

490 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: Sir, through you, I will remind Deputy Cameron, we have recapitalised Aurigny to the tune of £120 million over the last 10 to 15 years, so I really do not worry about the financial sustainability of that company.

495 But would the President agree with me that the mindset of acting in the best interests of the producer and the continual interests of state-owned monopolies is in the long-term detriment to consumers, and actually the extension of connectivity with multiple providers is in the best interest of the Island economy?

500 **A Member:** Hear, hear.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

505 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** The central premise of the new Air Policy Framework is around meeting strategic connectivity objectives for the Guernsey community and the economy. They are not going to be centred around air policy for Aurigny. The Air Policy Framework update that came to the States in 2021 was very much in the context of the COVID situation and obviously the extremely challenging circumstances all airlines around the world faced and it was very much Aurigny were facing at the time.

510 But I can assure Deputy Sloan that the Air Policy is being developed having the best interest of the community, and that very much entails the importance of working with other operators, not just Aurigny, to provide connectivity into the Bailiwick.

The Bailiff: Deputy Vermeulen.

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

I thank the President for her update. We have lost two airlines which served Guernsey, which was Flybe and Blue Islands, recently, and I must congratulate the President on replacing one of those airlines with British Airways. Is there any sign that we might be getting other – are you getting approaches from other airlines that would love to help out Guernsey and love to service this Island?

520

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

525 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Yes, absolutely. We are in continuing dialogue with a number of airlines, including Loganair but other bigger airlines as well. There is nothing I can announce at this stage. But obviously, the air connectivity landscape has really undergone substantial changes, and it continues to be evolving. We are taking a step approach in terms of how we evolve our air connectivity market. Hopefully this will start coming through as we develop the air policy framework and engage with stakeholders on how we develop that.

530

The Bailiff: Deputy Falla.

Deputy Falla: Thank you, sir; and I thank the President for a very positive update and for much of the good work that Economic Development is doing.

535 Could I ask, please, for a status update on the review into the digital greenhouse?
Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

540 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** So when the Innovate Board was established just under a year ago, one of their key objectives was to undertake the review of the digital greenhouse. So they have delivered an interim review, and we will be working together with both the Interim Governance Board and the wider Innovate Guernsey Board to complete the review and understand what the next phase for the for the digital greenhouse is.

545

The Bailiff: Deputy Burford.

Deputy Burford: Thank you, sir.

550 Would the President agree with me, on the back of the question asked by Deputy Sloan, that with the exception of a limited number of lifeline routes that any airline is free and indeed welcome to come and set up any route they wish to serve Guernsey, and perhaps the only reason that that has not happened to any great extent is that it is not profitable for them to do so.

Thank you.

555

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

560 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Yes, it is true that we operate what is called a quasi-open skies policy, which a lot of the routes are currently served by Aurigny, so there is an issue in terms of there may potentially be interested parties who do want to come to operate certain routes, but they are currently being operated by Aurigny, and Aurigny's financial position over time has also been, especially around COVID, supported.

I think what we need to do is to look holistically at what we want to achieve with air connectivity going forward and who the best airlines and partners are to serve that connectivity and take an open-minded approach on how to do that.

565

The Bailiff: Deputy Helyar.

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

570 Thank you for a very positive update and for answering lots of questions about Aurigny, which has been interesting to watch.

The President mentioned future ports, and I would just ask, because it is a very complicated process, would she agree with me that it is absolutely essential that the first thing we do is complete the work as to whether St Sampson's Harbour will remain navigable during the proposed inert waste programme that is due to take place, or planned to take place, around the Vale Castle, because it is a no-go situation if that does not work in terms of imports of very important economic goods?

575

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

580 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** I sit as a Member of the Committee *for* Economic Development on the Political Oversight Group for the Guernsey Development Agency, so this is a joint oversight group rather than necessarily within the mandate of the Committee *for* Economic Development. But, yes, we have got critical stop-go decisions such as navigation in St Sampson's, which, if unresolved, will have changed the course of the Guernsey Development Agency plan.

585 Yes, those are the kind of key milestones and decisions we will need to make sure are answerable before anything else can be progressed.

The Bailiff: Last question, Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Thank you very much for the indulgence.

590 I heard recently that veterinary fees, for example, in the UK have risen sharply partly because of
a perception of increased monopoly of providers. Where are we in Guernsey, not just for that sector
but generally with competition regulation? How quickly will the new Committee, or will they,
continue the investigation as to the best model for regulation and competition and GCRA for
Guernsey moving forward?

595

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: It is a piece of work that we have inherited from the previous
Committee. It has been now going for a number of months, a year, 18 months-plus. We are very
keen to complete this piece of work this year. It is quite complicated, there are quite different
approaches in terms of the views around both the competition and regulation elements. But I think
600 we have got a really strong Committee to take this forward and complete this piece of work. We
want it off our Committee Work Plan so that we can also concentrate on other areas that stimulate
economic growth as well.

**General Update Statement –
Statement by the President of the Development & Planning Authority**

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.

605 So the next Rule 10(4) Statement is made on behalf of the Development & Planning Authority. I
will invite the President, Deputy Inder, to deliver that statement, please.

Deputy Inder: Thank you, sir.

610 Hopefully the second positive statement of the day. Members, thank you for the opportunity to
update the Assembly on the work of the DPA and on the progress we are making to unlock more
housing for Islanders.

615 When I was elected President of the DPA I made something very clear, I wanted to change the
way the DPA operates and how it is perceived. Because the DPA is not simply a technical committee,
it is one of the most influential decision-making bodies in our Government and if this Assembly is
serious about addressing Guernsey's housing challenge, then planning has to be part of that
solution. That has been the focus from day one of my tenure.

620 One of the first things I recognised was that the Authority needed to be more outward-facing.
Planning cannot operate in isolation. Over the past five months, we have actively engaged with the
Committee for Housing, Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure, Health and STSB,
also conservation groups, the property sector and green energy providers. This message has been
simple, we are here to help unlock development. Planning should not be seen as a barrier to
progress, it should be an enabler of progress.

625 There is an old saying in economics, confidence is everything. Encouragingly, confidence in
Guernsey's housing market appears to be returning. Planning applications for homes are coming in
thick and fast. Investors are committing for the long term. The latest monitoring report shows some
of the strongest results we have seen for many years. Projecting further than the published data,
there are strong indications the private sector could be delivering another 70 homes in St Sampson's
and over 100 additional homes in St Peter Port this term.

630 A living town is a vibrant town. More homes mean more economic activity and a healthier Island
overall. This is very welcome progress. But I also want to inject a note of realism. The DPA controls
planning policy and land supply. We do not build homes or houses. If the schemes now moving
through planning are delivered, Guernsey's challenge will become delivery at scale. That is primarily
a matter for the Housing Committee and Economic Development.

635 The good news is we are working closely with both these Committees and speaking regularly,
because delivering homes for Islanders requires the whole system to work together. Within our own
remit, we are now completing the focused review of the Island Development Plan and I want to

acknowledge the work of the previous Authority, which did a significant amount of the groundwork on this.

640 Now, ahead of that States' debate, we will be briefing Members directly to ensure everyone fully understands the proposals and the choices before us, probably including me. This is an important moment for the Island's Planning Framework and Members should feel properly equipped to make those decisions. We are also finalising legislation to streamline the process for amending development plans. Members will remember that the current system can be slow and cumbersome. Once new legislation is approved, necessary changes to development plans will be able to happen
645 more quickly and more efficiently. That will make the planning system more responsive, something both Islanders and developers have been asking for. Members will also be aware of the decision taken in December regarding the Mallard site in the forest. This was an outline planning approval under policy S5 for a significant housing development. The reason was simple. It offered the opportunity to deliver a significant number of homes quickly, including affordable homes in a way
650 that was not currently achievable elsewhere.

Subject to the detailed plans being approved, construction should begin shortly. That project alone could deliver around 85 homes by the end of this political term, at a time when Islanders are crying out for housing, which is, I think you will agree, a significant contribution. Every home delivered matters, because every home is a family that can stay in our Island.

655 We are also looking at initiatives that are less visible, but potentially just as important. The first relates to multi-generational living. Planning policy already allows for this in many cases, but awareness of the opportunities are limited. Yet multi-generational housing can bring real benefits socially, economically, and for family life. So we will be shortly holding public drop-in sessions to help Islanders understand the options available.

660 The second initiative concerns ancillary units, often called dower units. We are proposing a more flexible approach so that these units can be rented out, while still preventing them from being sold separately. Together, these measures could unlock a meaningful number of additional homes without building on new land. That is exactly the practical thinking that we need.

665 We are also exploring improvements to the planning process itself. One idea currently under consideration is the introduction of planning performance agreements. These agreements set out the timetable, consultation requirements and key milestones for major applications right at the start of the process. That gives everyone clarity, it reduces delays, and it helps good developments move forward faster.

670 Let me turn briefly to the environment. Guernsey's green spaces and biodiversity must be protected wherever possible, but we also must recognise a dose of reality. Occasionally, development on green land will be necessary, as it was at the Mallard site. Where that happens, environmental mitigation must be meaningful. At the Mallard, strict conditions were imposed, requiring native hedge and tree planting, ecological features, such as bird and bat boxes, designed with input from local conservation experts. That is the approach I expect to see going forward.

675 We are also reviewing the process for introducing tree protection orders, with the aim of making them faster and more effective. It simply takes too long. It is quicker to saw a tree down than it is to protect it, and that is unacceptable. What I will not tolerate, however, is developers clearing sites before submitting planning applications. That behaviour is unacceptable and it will not be rewarded. Where it occurs, we will use our powers to require remediation because the planning system must
680 work fairly for Islanders, for communities, and for responsible developers. The well-off will not get a free pass.

I would like to return to renewable energy. The good news is that most developers are increasingly environmentally conscious. In particular, there is a growing interest in solar PV. Installing solar panels during construction costs only a fraction of the overall development cost and
685 is far cheaper than retrofitting later. If you will excuse me, I need to cough.

It also helps the Island meet its renewable targets under the Electricity Strategy approved by the former Assembly. We are therefore working with the Committees *for* Economic Development and Environment & Infrastructure on changes to policy to encourage that approach.

690 A word about listed buildings. We are moving towards a more enlightened policy on the replacement of windows in protected buildings. High-quality, double-glazed windows will often be allowed. This strikes a sensible balance between protecting heritage and allowing people to live in warm, energy-efficient homes. Detailed guidance will be published shortly. It is neither fair nor reasonable to require owners to live in draughty homes where sensible compromises can be made.

695 Before closing, sir, Members, I want to mention an issue that frustrates many Islanders; derelict sites. The Authority has now issued its first Land Amenity Improvement Notice on the St Margaret's Lodge Hotel, a site which has become an eyesore and a magnet for anti-social behaviour. We will be looking at further locations, including sites in town, such as Upper Mill Street, where these powers can be used to encourage improvements and bring back vacant buildings into use.

700 In closing, I want to thank my fellow Committee members for their support in driving these changes, Deputies Van Katwyk, Hansmann-Rouxel, Laine and Williams. It is a strong team and it is a pleasure to work with you all. Since I became President, Development Planning Authority has been active, engaged and focused on delivery, and that work will continue. Sir, I would be pleased to take any questions.

705 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Those questions must be within the mandate of the Development & Planning Authority.

Deputy Rochester.

710 **Deputy Rochester:** I thank Deputy Inder for his excellent update and his clear commitment to environmental protections. One question that occurred to me, I do not know if it was something that you were considering, is where planning permission is granted on the basis of those protections or mitigants being put in place, what checks and balances are there after the development has been completed to ensure they have in fact been delivered?

715

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

720 **Deputy Inder:** I think it is an interesting and useful question actually, inasmuch as that the Committee, as a rule – this is generally about conditions. I think in recent conversations that we have had in our most recent meeting – we are shy of two or three members of staff – in short, if we can stop, or rather if we can have a better technical system that will free up time for more officers to ensure that those conditions applied to the houses, applied to homes and developments, actually ensure that they are put in place.

725 I think it is relatively clear to us that conditions are great, but we have to ensure that they are complied with. So I think there is a little bit of work to be done. But on the solar panels, at least those are relatively obvious. What we are less sure about is the hedging and the plants and the other things that you cannot necessarily see from the road. I hope that answers the question.

730 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Falla.

Deputy Falla: Thank you, sir.

735 I thank the President for his update and for what feels like a refreshing can-do approach to planning. In relation to the Land Amenity Improvement Notices, (LAIN) is there anything that can be done to incentivise the removal of redundant glasshouses and potentially replace some of them with solar farms?

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: Yes, I can answer that.

740 The easy answer is LAINs do not apply to commercial properties, and then I can sit down. I am sorry, do not apply to vinery sites and then I can sit down. That is the question answered. But I will not do that.

We cannot use LAINs on vinery sites or home residences, but we can on commercial properties. Previously where I disagreed with Deputy Falla, I do not see every vinery site as a target for housing. 745 Also, currently, if Government does get involved with that related to powers, we are going to break people because it is very expensive to clear glass at the moment. Also in a strange sort of way, as ugly as some of those sites might be, they are an area for bird life, bats, bees and biodiversity, as unpretty as they might be, but I hope that in part answers his question.

750 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater.

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

I did have another question, but this is on the back of Deputy Falla's, because I believe that currently under the IDP, redundant glasshouse sites can be used for renewable energy but Deputy 755 Falla's question was what is the Authority doing to incentivise that? I just wanted to know if there is any clarification on that.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

760 **Deputy Inder:** Yes, that is true.

The clearance of redundant greenhouse, as far as I remember, is they can be used for outside storage or hauler in part, and I think they can be used for effectively solar farms. In terms of incentives, we are an open Committee and will assist anyone. If incentives mean money, that is a matter for possibly Economic Development, P&R, and those who wrap themselves around the 765 Electricity Strategy. It is a matter for E&I, I suppose, it is not a matter for the DPA. So no incentives from my pocket.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

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

Deputy Inder referenced the healthy number of planning applications; that is great. I think the number of planning applications has long been quite healthy, it is actually converting them into development, and particularly homes, that has been the stumbling block. So I wondered whether the DPA has given any consideration of incentives to actually complete development? Specifically 775 one area where obviously there is an expiry date for planning applications – I think it is about three years if no development has started – but my understanding is that if any meaningful start to that development has taken place in the planning application – planning permission, sorry, is effectively live *ad infinitum* even if it stalls for decades.

I just wondered whether Deputy Inder might be able to comment on whether his Authority has 780 or would consider any incentives to actually get those developments, especially housing, working with Committee *for* Housing, to completion.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

785 **Deputy Inder:** Sorry, I have heard this term used by developers, they call it breaking ground, and I think that is a relatively cynical way to pretend that they are actually ever going to do anything. I am not overly pleased with that, but to answer your question, that question has not come to the Committee. However, it is likely there will be some commentary within the inspector's report on that matter, because when I attended those hearings, the issue did come up. But to answer the 790 question directly, I do not like the cynicism of clearing a site, sticking a couple of drains in and

pretending that the site – effectively, it means is what the landowner does is basically just raises the value of their land and sits on it forever.

795 What we can do about that I am not entirely sure, but I can assure the President of Policy & Resources, I will take that back to the Committee to give that some consideration. That is a genuine offer of assistance.

The Bailiff: Deputy Vermeulen.

Deputy Vermeulen: Thank you, sir; and I thank the President for his update.

800 To encourage – not incentivise but to encourage – perhaps more local dwellings to be applied for and built, would he consider reviewing the application fees for such planning applications that might be putting some people off, particularly the dower units you alluded to?

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

805

Deputy Inder: No, I do not think so. If we are talking particularly about dower units – I think that the great story is there – it is an awful lot cheaper to build on your own property than it might be on an individual – because you already own your own plot. If it is a family relationship, you already have services to the property anyway, so I do not any great value of knocking 15% or 20% off what is a relatively good idea, because there is an entire benefit under GP13 to extend your house, which has already got the services in there. It already has water to and water away and you have bought the plot, so the short answer, Deputy Vermeulen, is it has not been given any consideration by the Committee. I do not currently see any advantage but if you would like to write to me separately and give me an argument for it, I will put it in front of the Committee. That is all I can say.

815

The Bailiff: Deputy Cameron.

Deputy Cameron: Thank you, sir.

820

The President of the DPA has recently announced they will be removing planning barriers for heat pumps, seemingly without linking this to minimum insulation standards. Is the President effectively promoting a solution that only works properly in well-insulated homes, while many of our older properties will see limited benefit and higher running costs?

Thank you.

825

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: Deputy Cameron, thank you. I just missed the very first part of your – I understood the rest of the question. It is the very first part of your question so if you could repeat that, please?

830

The Bailiff: Can you repeat the first bit, please, then, Deputy Cameron?

Deputy Cameron: Certainly, yes.

835

The president of the DPA has recently announced they will be removing planning barriers for heat pumps, seemingly without linking this to minimum insulation standards. Is the President effectively promoting a solution that only works properly in well-insulated homes, while many of our older properties will see limited benefit and higher running costs?

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

840

Deputy Inder: I think they are called Energy Performance Certificates, and I think that is part of the Government Work Plan, something that Environment & Infrastructure is working on. We have

845 tried to promote, where possible, cheaper ways of heating houses. We are promoting renewable energy. But I have not done an entire connection between what we are trying to do in terms of technology and the installation on the other side.

To answer Deputy Cameron's question, there has been no – we are not trying to give anyone a particular advantage, we are trying to deploy the new technology that is available.

850 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Thank you, sir.

855 The President outlined and mentioned planning performance agreements to speed things up. In Jersey they have had the same phenomenon of increased permissions but decreased build. Will the planning performance agreements ensure not only a degree of negotiation with potential developers but the need for more resources for DPA? So my question is: does the President think he has enough staff resources and capability to ensure there is speedy applications delivered, permissions delivered and performance agreements implemented?

860 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

865 **Deputy Inder:** What we are hoping is that when we deploy substantial pieces of IT you would like to think that there are some efficiencies being made. If performance planning agreements see the light of day, and I think they will, at the moment there has been no expression of concern from officers. That is the only way I can answer the question.

The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater.

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

870 The President mentioned in his update that he was a couple of bodies down in the office and I was just wondering the effect on productivity. Can the President confirm the DPA's current average determination time for planning applications and how that compares to its stated targets of eight weeks for minor applications and 13 weeks for major ones, and if those targets are not consistently being met, what steps will be taken to improve performance?

875 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

880 **Deputy Inder:** I have tested this, not on a weekly basis, but it is one of the things I tested earlier on in my tenure, and I asked exactly about the 8s and the 13s. By all accounts, I think it looks like the DPA is moving planning applications through to those 8 and 13-week scales. Members, trust me, if there are any problems, I would be the first person to know about it because people will be emailing me left, right and centre. I have had no emails on the matter at all, so I am relatively comfortable with it.

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

890 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Following on the issue of publishing determination of planning performances on time and on schedule, the Planning Department used to publish that data but that has no longer been published. The last political Committee really tried to push for more openness and transparency around that. Would the President commit to taking this issue again to the DPA and seek to ensure that this information is published on an annual basis so that the community can see openly and transparently the performance and efficiency of the Planning Department?

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

895 **Deputy Inder:** As President, what I have worked out relatively quickly, in fact I worked it out the first day of being the President of SACC, is that the only anything the President can actually control is the agenda. The rest of it is down to the votes of the Committee.

The offer again to Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, if she could package – I am not going to go looking for it, if she could package up her concerns and email me, I will email it to Committee and we will have a discussion about it. My general view of everything is transparency is a good thing. So the short answer is a likely yes. I would have to put it through my officers and particularly the Committee.

The Bailiff: Deputy Niles.

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

I would like to thank the President for another progressive, positive update this morning. I would like to just push him a little bit on his reflections or point around draughty houses. I have to declare an interest, I live in an old draughty house with single pane windows. I would just like to understand if he would be now putting less emphasis on aesthetics and more emphasis on the performance of a house in the future, given our energy crisis.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

915 **Deputy Inder:** Exactly the same aesthetics with different technology. It is entirely possible for Deputy Niles in the future, relatively shortly – he can probably book a planning application today if he wished – to do all your sash windows on your tiny little property at the top of Cambridge Park. There should only be about three and it should not cost him too much. *(Laughter)* Through the planning process, for all intents and purposes, those can be changed to like-for-like wooden windows, sash windows and encasements with double or triple glazing as long as they look the same. So the aesthetics remain the same and the technical knowledge is just a bit different.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

925 **Deputy Gollop:** It is partly a follow-up to Deputy Niles's question because the President has raised the issue of scheduled buildings. I would ask, really, will the DPA put the resources into employing specialist consultants, learned societies to review the list of scheduled buildings, not just to schedule more, but maybe de-schedule. For the sake of argument, Castell Hospital being scheduled is preventing viable development. Will that be a commitment for this Committee to put the resources into upgrading and restructuring the scheduled buildings list?

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

935 **Deputy Inder:** That is ongoing. What the Committee has agreed – Members will remember one of the irritants that I had was scheduling buildings at the point of purchase, the point of planning application, which I think, and the Committee now agrees, is entirely unfair. So there has been a focus on listed buildings and, as a consequence, I have full confidence in the conservation officers and those who work around it. They just need some political direction. There is nothing wrong with that, we are politicians. The clue is in the name. That direction has been given.

940 But part of that process is – a lot of this is about the DPA has almost been a distressed brand. I generally think there is an element that the public do not really understand it. Listing might not be a bad thing. Listed building could be a good thing. But to answer Deputy Gollop's question directly, there is a process of delisting. We have another piece of work that we need to do from a comms point of view to explain to people do not be scared of listing, do not be scared of grading. Some of the stuff we listed 30 years ago might be rotting in the floor somewhere because no one's

looked after it. As long as that is explained, we are happy to work with you as building owners to get you to the point.

950 We are not there to make anything more expensive, but we will protect the buildings at the same time. So we are just changing things a little bit.

The Bailiff: The 90 seconds is up, Deputy, for reply.
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

955 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Sir, the narrow focused IDP review and the allocation of some of the proposed sites for affordable housing development are seen as absolutely key for the Committee *for* Housing to be able to deliver housing in the short to medium term, this political term. I would expect that you would have received the inspector report by now. Does the President foresee at this stage any major changes to the proposals that are likely to come to the States?

960

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

965 **Deputy Inder:** I think that is, to be honest with you, Deputy – through you, sir, to the Deputy – that is a matter for the Committee. What the Committee has received is a draft, and that draft is purely for checking for factual accuracy. What I will not say is what the Committee is likely to determine because we simply have not had that conversation.

In any event, if we do something that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller does not like, when it comes to the States, she can put an amendment and change it all around. So there are multiple processes to either support this or break this process, to be perfectly frank with you.

970

Questions for Oral Answer

COMMITTEE FOR EMPLOYMENT & SOCIAL SECURITY

Loss of benefits – increased hours

The Bailiff: As no one else is rising, we will move into Question time proper. There are two sets of questions from two Members. The first set of questions come from Deputy Sloan, and in this instance to the President of the Committee *for* Employment & Social Security.

975 Deputy Sloan, your question.

Deputy Sloan: Thank you, sir.

980 During last December's meeting, the President of the Employment & Social Security Committee acknowledged concerns that people are being advised not to increase their hours, including overtime, because doing so could result in the loss of benefits. She said the Committee was aware of the issue and could revisit it.

985 Could the President report if the Committee *for* Employment & Social Security has commenced any work since that exchange to review or address the disincentives to work created by the current benefits system?

The Bailiff: I call on the President, Deputy Bury, to reply, please.

Deputy Bury: Thank you, sir.

990 No, the Committee has not prioritised looking at this, but has discussed it in light of the question. While I recognise the concerns raised by Deputy Sloan, the Committee does not agree that the benefits system discourages people from working. Anyone receiving income support who is under pension age must either work full-time, which is at least 35 hours per week at minimum wage or more, or meet their work requirements, which may be undertaking training or other activities that help them get or keep full-time work, or work a reduced number of hours due to sickness, disability or a caring responsibility.

995 If a person does not meet these requirements, their income support can be reduced or stopped. People who receive income support and are working also benefit from a £40 weekly earnings disregard. In other words, a working claimant is £40 per week better off than someone who is not working. Allowing people to keep a larger percentage of extra earnings beyond the £40 may encourage people to work more than 35 hours per week, but it would increase the benefits bill.

1000 As I said last December, this issue is not only about hours worked. Benefits should and do encourage work, but wages must do so as well. Many income support recipients already work full-time in low-paid roles and show a strong work ethic. It is not reasonable to expect people to continually take on more hours simply because their wages are not sufficient to ensure an acceptable standard of living.

1005

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: Yes, please, sir. Thank you very much.

1010 I must admit I noticed that the Committee obviously did not take the opportunity to discuss this in Committee since I questioned last December. But I am a bit perplexed with the answer, and I am concerned that the President does not quite understand the system. Of course, I am only a humble economist, I appreciate, but I look at that system and it creates a marginal taxation of 100%.

1015 Could the President please explain her comment when she says, allowing people to keep a larger percentage of extra earnings beyond the £40 may encourage people to work more than 35 hours – shock horror – per week, but it would increase the benefits bill. I do not understand the answer.

The Bailiff: Deputy Bury.

1020 **Deputy Bury:** Thank you, sir.

It is quite simple. If we raise the level at which we stop paying the benefit, we will pay more. That will increase the benefits bill overall. There is also an added extra that if we allow people to earn more and qualify for benefits, it will potentially bring more people into scope who do not currently qualify.

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

Deputy Sloan: Sir, may I suggest that the answer betrays a lack of discussion at the Committee. My point is the marginal rate of retention of benefits is 100%. If the withdrawal was at a lower level, let us say 50%, then a person could keep higher earnings and the benefits would be reduced, so the bill would be reduced. I suggest the Committee look at the disincentives in the system, because to any economist it is clear there is one in the system.

1035 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Bury.

Deputy Bury: I am not quite sure what the question was, but since in the speech it was mentioned there has been a lack of discussion, I can reassure Deputy Sloan, and I would actually like to invite him in because a 60-second and 90-second exchange does not give opportunity to explain complex policy areas.

1040 But the earnings disregard, which is an incentive to work, has been in place since 1974. Since the system changed, there have been lengthy discussions at previous Committees and the SWBIC Group in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2018, of which I would happily run him through, whether or not it is good use of our time to revisit those same discussions when there is no perfect solution, I am not sure it is a good use of our time but I would happily invite Deputy Sloan in to come and have a discussion about this in more detail.

1045 **The Bailiff:** Supplementary, Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: I was on Social Security Committee, ESS, for many years working with, among others, Deputy Bury, and I tended to be of the view that a higher earnings disregard would be better for the reasons Deputy Sloan has implied. My question though is, is it not the case that an earnings disregard should be increased by RPI because for many years it stayed at £30, I believe it is now £40, thus losing its value.

1055 While the Committee might not have an appetite for a full review, looking at the disregard in the context of the uprating report might be useful. Would the Committee consider that?

The Bailiff: Deputy Bury.

1060 **Deputy Bury:** Thank you, sir.

I must admit, while doing my swotting up on this, I was quite shocked to see that we were still at £40 when actually it was £30, 20 years ago. I do think that, in particular, is something that we could look at. But as I have said, the more we raise the earnings disregard, the more that increases the bill, despite Deputy Sloan disagreeing. It increases our bill.

1065 **Deputy Sloan:** Point of correction.

The Bailiff: You cannot have a point of correction during Question time.

1070 **Deputy Bury:** Contrary to popular belief, at ESS we are concerned with the overall expenditure and so if we were to be bringing proposals that would increase our benefits bill I think we would potentially have an uphill battle.

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Blin.

1075 **Deputy Blin:** Thank you, sir.

I do not know if this will help for either Deputy Sloan or Deputy Bury, but for the time back when Deputy Gollop was on Social Security, and prior to my work as a Deputy, through my recruitment and structure there I did some work for Social Security for the Jobcentre and one of the areas there was looking at encouraging people to go to work, which is something that other Deputies have had many discussions on over the years.

1080 Getting to the point very quickly, sometimes the actual amount of money they earn stops them taking a promotion to get more money because it will also impact on their housing and everything. If this could be interwoven into this I would appreciate it because I think good points were made by Deputy Gollop and Deputy Sloan and responded to by Deputy Bury.

1085 **The Bailiff:** Once again I am not sure there is a question, but, Deputy Bury.

Deputy Bury: Thanks.

1090 No, I think it would be remiss to acknowledge that there are not areas where things do not work perfectly and there are elements where there are traps, but it is not accurate to say that the benefit system entirely disincentivises work. Income Support Law demands work in order to be in receipt of the benefit, but there are areas where it is recognised, and this earnings disregard knot is one of them but, through all the previous discussions that have gone on, there is no one perfect solution. If there had been, it would have been done by now. So we currently live with the imperfect solution that we have.

1095 We could change to another imperfect solution, but it would have other negatives and would be a costly policy change, there would be system changes, so it is whether that is worthwhile us doing to move from one imperfect solution to another.

COMMITTEE FOR HOME AFFAIRS

General election – Electronic record of voters

1100 **The Bailiff:** Well, that concludes supplementary questions on that answer. The next Question is to the President of the Committee *for* Home Affairs, again from Deputy Sloan.
Your question please, Deputy Sloan.

1105 **Deputy Sloan:** Sir, may I ask the President of Home whether there exists a complete electronic record of those who voted in last year's general election?

The Bailiff: I call on the President, Deputy Leadbeater, to reply, please.

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir; and I thank the Deputy for the Question.

1110 There is no full electronic record of who voted in the 2025 General Election. This is owing to a continued reliance on a paper-based system, polling stations and a manual reconciliation process.

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Sloan.

1115 **Deputy Sloan:** Sir, yes, I have one short supplementary.

Does the President agree with me, in light of the fact – you might be intrigued to know, that in a quick interrogation of ChatGPT, he gives seven very good principles why holding such a record would be a good idea. Does he agree with me that it would be a useful thing to have in the States' possession?

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The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater.

Deputy Leadbeater: All I can say is the information that we do have. Of course, I do agree that the more data that we have the better, because we have an absence of data to be able to fully automate the roll that the Committee is under direction to do. But there is a record of who was issued a postal vote in the general election. There were 10,367 issued but only 8,023 returned and 7,900 accepted.

1125

It would not have been possible at the time of the general election to record who returned postal votes, and this cannot be done retrospectively without risking the anonymity of the vote. This could have been done by manually recording, noting the unique number on the external envelope and manually cross-checking with information held on the electoral database, but this would have been a resource intensive process and was not undertaken and cannot be done retrospectively.

1130

The Bailiff: Second supplementary, Deputy Sloan.

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Deputy Sloan: I will ask the same question in a slightly different way.

It is 2026, technology is pretty darn good and this sort of thing is generally accepted as a reasonable standard of the functions of Government or a litmus test of the functions of Government. Does he not think having an electronic record of the people that voted in the general election is a jolly good idea?

1140

The Bailiff: Deputy Leadbeater.

Deputy Leadbeater: I agreed with that in answering the last question.

1145

Electronic rolls were successfully trialled during the general election and the intention is that they will be in use in the by-election. This will mean that there should be an electronic record of those who voted in person at the by-election. The Committee is under resolution to explore opportunities to automate the electoral roll, but it was established ahead of the 2025 General Election that there is not a complete and reliable government-held data source that could automatically populate an electoral roll.

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Opportunities to discharge this resolution are actively being explored and it is absolutely an ambition of the Committee to have an electronic electoral roll.

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Jersey Bailiwick draft rules

1155 **The Bailiff:** No one else is rising to ask a supplementary question, so we will move on to the second of the two sets of Questions. Deputy Gollop, you have got two Questions to pose to the President of the Committee *for the* Environment and Infrastructure. So your first question, please.

Deputy Gollop: Thank you very much, sir.

1160 The States of Jersey Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny chaired by Deputy Hilary Jeune reviewed Jersey Bailiwick draft rules to restrict trawling, netting and dredging with 21.7% of the sea Marine Protection Area being phased in protection of fragile maerl algae and other ecological systems and creatures. Is the Guernsey Environment & Infrastructure Committee monitoring these developments and also seeking enhanced protection by 2030 with a Guernsey Marine Protection Area creation?

1165

The Bailiff: The President, Deputy Gabriel, to reply, please.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

1170 I thank Deputy Gollop for his question and the answer is as follows. The Committee has closely followed the development of Jersey's Marine Spatial Plan, commonly known as an MSP, since its inception and welcomes the open and collaborative dialogue that Jersey's politicians and their officers have maintained with us here in Guernsey.

1175 Jersey's recent expansion of MPAs, Marine Protected Areas, building on previously designated Ramsar sites, was one of several priority actions identified under its MSP. These designations not only provide important protection for key marine habitats but also demonstrate Jersey's compliance with international conventions, including those that apply to Guernsey, such as the Ramsar Convention and the recent extension to us of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Being party to these conventions showcases our significant environmental assets on the global stage, strengthens our green finance offer and supports access to free trade agreements.

1180 As previously announced, my Committee is leading the development of a Marine Spatial Plan for Guernsey, which will consider opportunities for additional environmental protections as part of a holistic review of our blue economy and how we and our people wish to use our waters.

The Bailiff: Supplementary question, Deputy Gollop.

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Deputy Gollop: My first supplementary.

1190 I thank Deputy Gabriel and his Committee for their positive answers, but my question is: I understand there are two significant Ramsar sites for Guernsey, one around Lihou Island, the other around Herm, Jethou and the Humps. Could the Herm Marine Protected Area not be extended westwards to Bréhon Tower and Belle Grève Bay to ensure that area is given the protection that I think has been sought for many years?

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

1195 **Deputy Gabriel:** I thank Deputy Gollop for the supplementary, but he is probably jumping the gun because we do not know what these areas offer without doing a survey. The Marine Spatial Plan could designate those areas as Ramsar sites but it also could designate other popular activities which are associated with economic benefit or even protections that would negate anything happening in those waters. So if I were him, I would wait for the Marine Spatial Plan to be delivered.

1200

The Bailiff: Second supplementary, Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Will the blue economy idea embrace considering the kind of issues Deputy Leadbeater and others have raised about tuna? That is to say, ensuring fish diversity for the benefit of Guernsey's leisure community and our offer on biological diversity beyond green finance?

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: Many stakeholders will be consulted in creating the Marine Spatial Plan, including commercial fishermen, including catch and release fishermen, so there is opportunity for all. That is what I said in my original Answer. We will consider opportunities for additional environmental protections as part of the review and how we wish to use our waters and how our people wish to use our waters. It is not all about environmental protection, it is about accessing the waters appropriately for providing economic benefit and leisure benefit and protections for marine species as well. So we have to take into consideration every stakeholder.

Development of Sustainable Fisheries Policy

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

Deputy Gollop: Thank you very much, sir.
States of Jersey Member Deputy Jeune, as part of the agreed Marine Spatial Plan programme, wishes to see increased biodiversity and potential increases in fish and shellfish stock but is aware of the balance with local fishing fleets. Is the Environment & Infrastructure Committee pledging to work together with Economic Development to develop sustainable fisheries policies, perhaps with incentives and subsidies, to both support our marine environment and the current levels of commercial and leisure blue economy fishing activities?

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel to answer that question, please.

Deputy Gabriel: Building on my earlier responses, key benefits of developing an MSP is the ability to gather and balance the views of all stakeholders on how our community wishes to use our marine environment. As I have just said, our aim is to ensure everyone has the opportunity to contribute, helping to minimise conflicts and identify ways to enhance the shared benefits from our waters. These discussions will involve the local fishing industry as well as fishers from neighbouring jurisdictions licensed to operate in our waters. The MSP will consider health, economic, environmental and social factors, meaning it will span the interests of several Committees. I am aware that Deputy Van Katwyk, as the blue economy lead for Economic Development, has recently met with local fishing representatives, and I look forward to further discussions with them and the wider community over the coming year.

The Bailiff: Supplementary question, Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Yes. Deputy Van Katwyk gave a great interview when he said we would be losing the haricot beans out of our bean jar with the loss of fishing. Is it not really the case that the industry is potentially on its last legs and needs urgently interdepartmental dialogue, not just with Economic Development but with Environment & Infrastructure, possibly STSB, and definitely Policy & Resources, in order to consider a lifeline package combined with sustainable future for the industry, perhaps in a different way?

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

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Deputy Gabriel: Of course, nobody wants to see an industry die. Everyone wants to see thriving activity, economic activity, and I think perhaps the question strays more into the boundaries or the mandate of Economic Development, especially around subsidies. The Marine Spatial Plan, which is the core and thrust of the questioning, will provide the facilities and protections for our environment but also opportunities for fishermen and maybe even a diversity of that industry. I am here to help and support and listen, and I will work with Economic Development and any other Committee to encourage any of that diversity while maintaining protections for our natural environment.

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The Bailiff: Second supplementary, Deputy Gollop.

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Deputy Gollop: We are aware that the increased prevalence of octopuses – octopi? – in Guernsey waters are having a significant ecological impact on the industry. What can Environment & Infrastructure do to minimise the disruption these changes occur and ensure that local fish and shellfish continue to thrive?

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The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

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Deputy Gabriel: That leads probably quite nicely into our pathway to net zero because octopus are likely here because of likely climate change and an increased temperature in our waters. We all have a part to play in achieving less than 1.5 increase or even limit that to maybe 1.7. Our pathway to net zero will hopefully do that and will be our contribution. I cannot when I go for a swim chase the octopus away. They are here for a reason. *(Laughter)*

STATES' TRADING SUPERVISORY BOARD

Guernsey Post Ltd – Political Shareholder Responsibility

1275

The Bailiff: The final set of questions is to the President of the States' Trading Supervisory Board. Your first question to the President, please, Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Thank you, sir.

I am grateful to Deputy Helyar and his Committee for responding very much on time.

1280

It is appreciated that entities like Guernsey Post Ltd have autonomous and commercially run policies that do not support political control or interference. Does the political shareholder responsibility include the public interest or issues which affect the local economy?

The Bailiff: I call on the President, Deputy Helyar, to reply, please.

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Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir; and thank you to Deputy Gollop for his question.

Yes, the shareholder role includes having wider regard to the public interest and local economic impacts while respecting the company's operational and commercial autonomy.

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The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Gollop.

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Deputy Gollop: Yes. The answer clearly indicates that there is a balance between the public interest and local economic impacts and delegated operational commercial autonomy. Where does the balance lie in making that political judgement? Does it vary according to the reaction to a decision that is made for sound commercial or other reasons?

The Bailiff: Deputy Helyar.

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

1300 I cannot really answer that question because this is not a black and white issue. The balance will lie in a different place according to the issue being discussed and the prevalent circumstances surrounding it, and also to the people coming to it to make the decision, who will bring their own views, their own ideological views, and so on.

**Guernsey Post Ltd –
Mail Plane**

1305 **The Bailiff:** Your second question to the President then, please, Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Thanks very much, sir.

1310 If other bodies had views about whether a service such as the mail plane had significant economic or social value to our community, have they a perspective that can be considered by the STSB?

The Bailiff: Deputy Helyar to reply, please.

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

1315 Yes. Guernsey Post is a very open and approachable organisation and I am sure it would welcome any relevant input to help inform or modify its decision making.

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Gollop.

1320 **Deputy Gollop:** You welcome response from relevant stakeholders, but how far would, for example, opinions from business organisations or even States' Committees or collections of States' Members be considered in that perspective?

The Bailiff: Deputy Helyar.

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Deputy Helyar: Sir, thank you.

1330 I am not sure that is a question I can answer because it is not an issue which lies with the STSB. It is a matter for the Board of the Post Office to consider how much weight it puts on representations made to it. If it is a matter of public policy, then other Committees which make those policies I am sure would prevail on the Committee to express its views as shareholder.

The Bailiff: Supplementary, Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: Sir, if I may, I think I might be able to help Deputy Gollop here.

1335 If we go back to when I was a civil servant and in the days when you were a civil servant, sir, in those days if Guernsey Post had done such a thing and got rid of the mail plane, there would have been a call to the Chief Executive and a word would be had in their shell like, and there would have been a bit of informal consultation to make sure that actually this was the right thing to do. May I ask the President of STSB if in the round he is aware of what sort of process would be analogous today?
1340

The Bailiff: I am not sure that that arises out of the answer to the question that Deputy Helyar gave, but if you want to comment, Deputy Helyar, you can.

1345 **Deputy Helyar:** These are questions, as I said in earlier answers, in a vast grey area and really they have to be related to the particular circumstances which prevail. I do know that Guernsey Post is planning an opportunity for Members to be able to attend and ask questions at the end of April and early May, and perhaps it would be better to ask them the particular circumstances in relation to the mail plane at that meeting.

1350 **The Bailiff:** Second supplementary, Deputy Gollop.

1355 **Deputy Gollop:** I thank Deputy Helyar for his acknowledgement that there are grey areas and for the offer of Guernsey Post, but I notice in the short but carefully phrased Answer the expression 'relevant input' is made. Now, relevant input might include businesses or commercial organisations or States' bodies, but it could also include consumer organisations. Is there not a lack of organised consumer representation in Guernsey compared even to Jersey, which has a Consumer Council? So how do consumers put across their views to either the STSB or the organisation under overall management by STSB, autonomous management?

1360 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Helyar.

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

1365 As I said in the answer, Guernsey Post is an open and approachable organisation and I am sure it would welcome any relevant input. That is the organisation which makes these decisions, not the STSB.

The Bailiff: Very good. Well, that concludes Question time.

Billet d'État VII

LEGISLATION LAID BEFORE THE STATES

**The Public Highways ('Al Fresco' Licences) (Fees) Regulations, 2025;
The Land Planning and Development (Visitor Accommodation) (Exemptions)
Regulations, 2026;**

The Boarding Permit Fees Order, 2026;

The Immigration (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Rules, 2026;

The Parochial Elections (St Martin's) Regulations, 2026;

**The Animal Welfare (Guernsey) Ordinance, 2012 (Licensing of Boarding Establishments and
Dog Walkers) (Commencement) Order, 2026;**

**The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Boarding Establishments and Dog Walkers) (Guernsey)
Regulations, 2026**

1370 **The Bailiff:** Shall we lay some legislation, please, Greffier?

1375 **The States' Greffier:** Yes. The following legislation is laid before the States: The Public Highways ('Al Fresco' Licences) (Fees) Regulations 2025; The Land Planning and Development (Visitor Accommodation) (Exemptions) Regulations 2026; The Boarding Permit Fees Order 2026; The

Immigration (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Rules 2026; The Parochial Elections (St Martin's) Regulations 2026; The Animal Welfare (Guernsey) Ordinance 2012 (Licensing of Boarding Establishments and Dog Walkers) (Commencement) Order 2026; The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Boarding Establishments and Dog Walkers) (Guernsey) Regulations 2026.

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The Bailiff: Thank you very much.

**The Animal Welfare (Guernsey) Ordinance 2012 (Licensing of Boarding Establishments and Dog Walkers) (Commencement) Order 2026;
The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Boarding Establishments and Dog Walkers) (Guernsey) Regulations 2026 –
Motion to annul lost**

Motion to annul

To resolve, pursuant to section 79 (1) of the Animal Welfare (Guernsey) Ordinance, 2012, and all other powers enabling in that behalf, that The Animal Welfare (Guernsey) Ordinance, 2012 (Licensing of Boarding Establishments and Dog Walkers) (Commencement) Order, 2026 and The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Boarding Establishments and Dog Walkers) (Guernsey) Regulations, 2026 be annulled.

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The Bailiff: There has been a motion to annul those last two measures, but under Rule 19, which I am sure you are all familiar with, I have to invite the President of the Committee that made those statutory instruments to open the debate before the motion to annul is then laid.

Deputy Gabriel.

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Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

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This legislation, Members, is not just about a piece of paper. It is about something most people in Guernsey feel strongly about, the simple expectation that if you pay someone to care for your animal your animal will be safe, well looked after and treated properly. I want to say at the outset that I understand the instinct behind this motion. Nobody in this Assembly wants to create rules for the sake of rules. Nobody wants to make it harder for local people to make a living and nobody wants Government to grow in ways it does not need to. These are legitimate concerns, but this is not what these regulations do or what they are. These regulations bring into force licensing for two specific commercial activities: boarding establishments and professional dog walkers, something that operators in the industry have been calling for a fair and level playing field.

1400

Sir, Members, did you hear that? Exactly. That was the voice of a pet dog telling you that their professional dog walker is meeting certain clear standards, that there are no welfare concerns. I could not hear it. This legislation is designed to do straightforward things: protect animal welfare, give reassurance to the public, and support responsible local businesses by setting a fair, consistent baseline. Importantly, they are already in effect. Phase one commenced on 31st January this year. So this motion is not asking us to pause something theoretical. It is asking us to rip up a scheme that is already operating, that businesses are already engaging with and animal owners are already relying on.

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It has been said that this work ensuring animals are cared for the way their owners expect is not the Guernsey of old. I, and likely a fair few Members of this Assembly, do remember the Guernsey of old, a Guernsey where you could chuck hazardous waste into an old quarry and pretend it was out of sight and out of mind, where some people perhaps a little older than me thought it was a bit of a sport to race PC Trotter on his motorbike to see whether you would get booked for speeding or not, and some folk seemed to think 10 pints before driving your friends home was just one of those things. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

1415 I am not saying that to have a go at anyone, sir. I am saying it because it makes a simple point. Some things have to change for the better and sometimes a few sensible rules are needed. That is not a nanny state. That is being responsible Government. It is worth saying this plainly. Modern Guernsey is not the Guernsey of 40 or more years ago. People live differently, people work differently, and there are services today that just did not exist in the same way back then.

1420 We have already seen this type of licensing enacted successfully for establishments that serve the public food, coupled with a very influential one to five star rating giving us all confidence in the scheme and the providers meeting certain standards. This legislation does the same, but for those that provide a service to our pets. Before the finance industry boomed, Guernsey was not an affluent place for many, a place I do not want to see us drift back to through inaction on the big issues. Most people could not afford to pay someone to walk their dog and there certainly would not be someone professionally walking six dogs at a time on L'Ancrese Common. That is not a criticism; it is just reality.

1430 Today, commercial dog walking and commercial boarding are normal parts of Island life, and when money changes hands for the care of animals it is entirely reasonable that the public expects basic standards, basic competence and basic accountability. That brings me to the biggest practical point today. Annulment creates uncertainty and unfairness: uncertainty for animal owners who want confidence that the person taking responsibility for their pet meets clear standards, and unfairness for the responsible businesses who have already engaged constructively with the new framework.

1435 We already have evidence that many are doing that. The States' Veterinary Office estimate that there are around 50 dog-walking businesses and some have already applied and are deemed licensed. For dog boarding establishments, 75% have applied and businesses have until the end of April to submit their applications. That is not the picture of a sector refusing to engage. That in my mind is the picture of a sector that, while a few have concerns, is getting on with it.

1440 I know some will argue why do we need this at all, we are a small Island, we do not have the same problems as bigger places, but that misunderstands what licensing is for. Licensing is not a punishment. Animal welfare licensing sets a standard which seeks to prevent harms. Relying on existing laws means waiting until something goes wrong and then trying to prove it after the fact. Licensing flips that. It sets clear, enforceable standards up front, making problems less likely in the first place so we do not wait for harm to happen before we act.

1445 Commercial dog walking involves many aspects of care, control, supervision and sometimes transport of animals, often in groups. There are foreseeable animal welfare and public safety risks: heat exposure, dog-to-dog conflict, escapes and insufficient control. The need for clear, enforceable standards was underscored by the coroner's inquest into the death of Natasha Johnston, who was walking eight dogs in Caterham when she lost control of the group. The coroner confirmed the absence of rules governing dog walking numbers and indicated this as a regulatory gap. There is a risk created when there are no clear rules and standards. We have a duty to ensure there are no preventable instances.

The same is true for boarding. When an animal is kept temporarily away from its owner, the risks are obvious: stress, illness, disease control, nutrition, accommodation standards, and access to veterinary care. Licensing creates structured safeguards around those basics.

1455 Yes, Guernsey is small, but small is not a reason to have no standards, a reason to ensure people can have confidence, because in a small place when something goes wrong trust is damaged so quickly. I have said it before. Some will say this is a nanny state government. I disagree. I would add these rules are not a sudden whim or something done in secret. There is clear and visible history and trajectory. The States approved enabling provisions in 2008. The Animal Welfare Ordinance was made in 2012 establishing the framework, including licensing powers. Policy changes were endorsed by the States in July 2024 and the legislation was moved through due process since. There was public engagement. In 2025, 69 animal businesses were contacted directly and an open survey received 266 responses, including 49 from people who self-declared as working within animal businesses. Now, it can be argued about consultation response rates, of course, but it is simply not accurate to describe this as stealth.

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Let me deal directly with the fear that this expands the Civil Service and cost. The States' Veterinary Office is a small team with three officers delivering within budget with no plans to expand. So the picture being painted that this is some creeping empire-building exercise does not match the facts.

1470 Let us talk about cost because people are feeling squeezed and that matters. The published
licensing information sets the fees out clearly. For dog walkers, the table shows £155 licensing fee
without a vehicle inspection or £195 with a vehicle inspection per year for a primary professional
dog walker. At £195 per year that is pennies per day across a whole year. They include examples
1475 that we have taken into consideration when setting these fees of UK local authority fees. They range
widely, from around £75 up to £400, depending on the model used and the jurisdiction.

Members, we can debate whether every number is perfect and that is fair, but we should be
honest. This is not designed as a revenue raiser. It is a costed system to support a basic licensing
and inspection function. If Members are worried about proportionality, there is an important
reassurance already given publicly. The Committee will keep listening, monitor how the scheme
1480 operates, and make sensible, evidence-based improvements where justified.

At a personal level, I have already offered myself to a group of professional dog walkers that
emailed us all to further that engagement. That is what good government looks like, not
stubbornness, not panic, but steady improvement based on what happens in practice. Which brings
me to the wider point about what this Assembly should be doing with its time.

1485 We all know that the Island has big issues: housing, cost of living, health, education and long-
term resilience, including water security. There is no shortage of work that matters to people's daily
lives and that is precisely why our system of government entrusts Committees with executive
responsibility within their mandates, supported by those professional officers and due process so
we, the States, can focus its time on the biggest issues while policy that has been approved is
1490 implemented properly. Taking away a Committee's authority to act in this way would result in a
drain on debating time and would see some of the wheels of government actually come grinding
to a halt.

We are often criticised for being too slow to make and implement decisions, and yet here we
are, having made a decision completely in accordance with the will and direction of the Assembly,
1495 and we, a Committee, find ourselves being challenged at one minute to midnight. While I accept
that challenge is an inevitable aspect of politics and I welcome all scrutiny, all that these regulations
do is to reflect a Committee's executive function being exercised properly and in good faith.

The Assembly's focus should remain on addressing the challenges currently facing Islanders:
improving wellbeing, supporting essential services, and responding to new and emerging issues
1500 rather than revisiting measures that are already approved and in force.

Sir, through you, I will say this as plainly as I can to Members. This annulment motion would not
make Guernsey freer. It would not make Government smaller in any meaningful way. It would not
help responsible businesses. What it would do is remove protections, create uncertainty and send
a message that when a decision has been made and implementation has begun we are willing to
1505 unpick it almost immediately, regardless of the disruption that causes to the public and to those
who have acted in good faith. I do not think that this is the statesmanlike thing to do, sir, and I do
not think it is what Islanders expect.

Members, I urge you to reject this motion, to keep the protections in place, to allow the phased
system to bed in, and to hold the Committee to its commitment to listen, to monitor and to refine
1510 where evidence shows refinement is needed without throwing the whole thing into chaos.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: I am now going to invite the proposer of the motion to annul, Deputy Sloan, to
address the Assembly.

1515 **Deputy Sloan:** Sir, meet Loopy. Loopy is my five-year-old Boston Terrier. I love her to bits. If
anyone did her any harm they would regret it. They would have a lot to answer for. Sir, do not have

1520 it said that I am not concerned about animals. I love them. But this debate is not about animal welfare. It is not about Loopy. This debate is about a point of principle. In fact, it is about two points of principle.

I rise here today because I disagree with what is being done, but more importantly I strongly object to the way in which it is being done. Because what we are seeing here is not a policy choice, it is a pattern of behaviour, a pattern that should concern every Member of this Assembly. This was not simply a question of animal welfare policy, it is a question of proportionality and it is a question of process. Ultimately, it is a question of whether this Assembly still decides or merely observes.

1525 Let me begin with the policy itself. We are introducing a licensing regime that reaches into the activities of dog walkers, small operators and small local businesses. These are not large commercial enterprises. These are individuals operating in a community of around 60,000 people where reputation matters, accountability is immediate and where poor practice does not remain hidden for long. Yet the response is this, licensing, inspection, compliance requirements, administrative oversight, cost, burden. Sir, this is disproportionate. This is not targeted regulation responding to a clearly evidenced problem. It is not a measured intervention. It is administrative expansion, the extension of regulatory machinery into areas where the case has not been convincingly made. Welcome to the debate this morning, Deputy Gabriel. What sits behind that is a mindset, sir, that if something can be regulated it should be regulated and that control is preferable to judgement and that intervention is preferable to restraint.

1530 We should be honest about what we are seeing here. This is how regulatory creep happens, not through a single dramatic decision but through a series of incremental steps, each presented as reasonable in isolation. The danger is not in any single step, it is the cumulative effect, the quiet normalisation of control, one reasonable decision at a time. This, sir, is how you end up with a long arm of the bureaucrat reaching further and further into ordinary life. But even if one were to accept the policy, and I do not, the far more serious issue here is process. Because this is not an overreach of policy, it is an overreach of authority. We do not have to speculate about that. We can look at what has been said.

1545 On 15th September 2025, stakeholders were told that licensing has been written into the Animal Welfare Ordinance since its creation. On 16th October 2025, the process is already written into the 2012 Welfare Ordinance, and on 19th December 2025, this process is already written into the 2012 Welfare Ordinance. Sir, that is not a one-off error. This is a consistent presentation of a position over a period of months. For months this was presented as if it was existing law to stakeholders, but on 7th January 2026 the position changed after I highlighted this misrepresentation. The current Ordinance does not cover dog walkers, it was said. The Committee has decided to license dog walkers by regulation, it was admitted. Sir, those are not the same thing. One says this already exists; the other says we are creating it. It was implied that this was already in the Law and it was not.

1555 Sir, this is how the state expands without being properly tested. First it is assumed, then it is asserted, and then only afterwards is it justified. It matters because throughout this process this has not even been presented as a proposal to be considered. It has been presented as something inevitable. We are told it is long overdue. We are told that other jurisdictions are already doing it. We are told it is necessary for alignment. In fact, these are the very words used by the animal welfare officer in January when I queried why this regime was being introduced. Let me quote:

1560 In short, this is a long-standing obligation and it is intrinsically linked to demonstrating our compliance with and parity to international animal welfare standards, which are key to maintaining the trade and movement of animals and SPS goods – sanitary and phytosanitary for those who do not know –internationally.

1565 Sir, if you will excuse the language, what absolute balderdash. In other words, sir, not a choice for this Assembly, a foregone conclusion. Once you frame something that way, you bypass debate because if something is already required, already embedded, already decided, what is exactly left for this Assembly to determine? That is the point. Because once something is presented as inevitable, scrutiny becomes a formality, not a safeguard.

1570 Which brings me to the most concerning statement. Earlier this year, the President of the
Committee stated in an email to a member of the public that policy was approved by the States
following consultation. See the chronology. Sir, that is simply not correct. The Assembly did not
approve this licensing regime. There is a pattern. At every stage it is presented as already decided
when it was not. This is not an overreach of policy, it is an overreach of authority. More than that, it
reflects a particular mindset, a mindset that says we know best. Consultation is a formality and once
direction is set it will be implemented regardless of whether this Assembly has approved it properly.
It is not administrative overreach, sir, it is the instinct of the authoritarian left, where control is
1575 expanded first and justification follows afterwards.

Among all that is happening, the regime is moving ahead. On 22nd December, businesses were
told applications will be open. If you miss the application window, you will have to cease operating.
Sir, these are the chilling words of an enforcement culture. On 22nd January this year, you will have
until 30th April to apply. The regime is defined, it is communicated, it is operational in practice,
1580 before this Assembly has a meaningful opportunity to consider it.

Let us be absolutely clear about the procedural position. These regulations were not laid in time
for them to be properly annulled before coming into force. This is not a technicality. That is the
safeguard. Because the annulment process exists to ensure that this Assembly retains control over
delegated legislation. Here the safeguard has been bypassed in practice because once regulations
1585 are in force, once a regime is operational, once businesses have been told they must comply or
cease operating, the scope for meaningful challenge is significantly reduced. Indeed, that was the
argument against annulment. Deputy Gabriel shamelessly made this in the press last week and
today. I quote last week:

1590 These provisions are now in effect. Annulment would create uncertainty.

Sir, Joseph Heller would be proud. What we have, in effect, is regulation first, scrutiny later, or
perhaps, more accurately, regulation first and scrutiny rendered largely irrelevant, deliberately.
When I asked the President in January Question time, on the 28th of the month, whether the
Committee had given consideration to making the regulations in time for the States to be able to
1595 annul them before they came into operation, his answer was yes, is the short answer. When
I repeated the question, he simply replied, 'Yes'. If that answer is taken at face value, this was not an
oversight. It was a choice, a choice to proceed in a way that removed meaningful scrutiny from this
Assembly.

1600 Sir, I struggle to see how this is anything other than abuse of process, not accidental, not
incidental, but structural in the way that this has been designed and delivered. Members might think
it is a small issue, but it is not because this is how it starts, something small, something apparently
reasonable, something easy to justify, and then a precedent is established. If that becomes normal,
then this Assembly is no longer deciding, it is reacting.

1605 Sir, the consequences are already being felt. Members received representations from over 40
dog walkers last week. They did not describe consultation. They did not describe engagement. They
described being, in their words, unheard and patronised. They made a point that should concern us
all. This consultation is not recognised by those consulted, and if it is not recognised by those
consulted it is not a consultation. It is communication. It is notification. It is not consent. Sir, that
1610 matters because consultation is how we test whether intervention is necessary and proportionate.
Here the test has not been met.

There is also an economic consequence. The regime changes who can operate. What was
accessible, flexible, low barrier becomes conditional, regulated, and in some circumstances
uneconomic. The result is predictable: fewer providers, higher costs, less flexibility. Because when
you regulate first and justify later, the economic consequences are not considered, they are
1615 discovered. It is the marginal operators who exit first, the part-time providers, the lower cost
providers, the ones who make services accessible. So I ask Members: was that the intention; to
reduce participation, to raise barriers, to formalise a small community activity into something

resembling a regulated industry? Because that is where this leads. Once that shift happens, it is very difficult to reverse.

1620 Sir, that is why proportionality matters because regulation is not neutral. It shapes behaviour. It creates incentives and over time it reshapes the character of our economy. In a small Island economy, that matters even more. These are not large businesses. These are individuals, small operators providing local, practical services. We should be encouraging that, not making it harder, because once you move from a system of trust to a system of permission, you fundamentally change
1625 the relationship between the individual and the States. That shift should only occur when it is clearly necessary.

Sir, I return to the simplest question, the question that should have been asked at the very beginning: where is the need? Where is the evidence? Where are the reports of harm locally that justify this level of intervention? Because I have not seen them. What I have seen instead is a
1630 regulatory solution in search of a problem. That is always a dangerous place to end up because at this point we are no longer regulating for need, we are regulating for control. That is not the Guernsey way.

We are a small community. We govern through judgement, restraint and proportion. We should not reach for control where trust is sufficient. We should not substitute process for accountability
1635 and we must not allow this Assembly to become bypassed by administrative momentum. Because once that line is crossed, it is very difficult to step back.

Sir, I repeat the point I originally made. This is not about animal welfare. This is the creeping normalisation of disproportionate government, big government, big government knows best, the long arm of the bureaucrat, the dead weight loss of regulation and administrative overkill. If we do
1640 not draw a line here, sir, we will not draw it anywhere, and that is why I oppose these regulations and I ask Members to vote in favour of annulment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Helyar, do you formally second the motion to annul?

1645 **Deputy Helyar:** Yes, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much. We now go into general debate.
Deputy Leadbeater.

1650 **Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, sir.

The last time I stood up in this Assembly and spoke about dogs was when Deputy de Sausmarez was President of Environment & Infrastructure and I asked a question about whether they would consider having dog-free times in Saumarez Park, or somewhere like that, so people that were terrified of dogs could exercise. I have someone with complex needs who is absolutely terrified of
1655 dogs and cannot go anywhere, cannot take him anywhere. Lockdown was an absolute nightmare.

Anyway, I had been in the States nine years at that point and I had never received so much abuse as I did from the people in the community about me. 'How dare you try and restrict us places to take our dogs. How dare you. We want more places, not fewer places. What you need to do is teach your son not to be scared of dogs. Why do we not get the police to take dogs into schools?' Some
1660 of the stuff I got was absolutely incredible, but one person that contacted me was a local dog walker. It was a breath of fresh air talking to her. I went and met her because she agreed with me. She agreed. She knows that when she is out walking dogs there are people that she comes across that are terrified of dogs, but she is aware to it and she is alive to it and she understands. So she ensures that she keeps dogs away from people. If I am walking down the road with my son and somebody
1665 is coming towards us, they can tell that he is scared of dogs, believe me.

I have had a few meetings with her about this because it is an issue that has not gone away and it is an issue that I will be returning to this Assembly with at some point this term if I cannot sort something out with Environment & Infrastructure out of this setting. This is what she said:

I do not support annulment. I say this as a paid dog walker since 2008. Why? In recent years, I have seen a significant increase in both the number of dogs on the Island ...

1670

Yes, there were about 2,000 came in during the COVID period.

... and the number of people offering professional dog-walking services. Dog walkers provide a valuable service to both owners and their dogs, but with that growth comes a need for clearer structure and consistency within the documentation that will govern the industry.

I am in agreement that there are areas within the current live document that would benefit from further clarification and I support continued refinement in those areas. I do feel I have been adequately consulted throughout the licensing process and I do not consider the proposed fees to be disproportionate or likely to have a negative impact on smaller businesses. When viewed in the context of day-to-day operations, the cost is minimal and reasonable. Even at very low volumes, the licence represents about 1% of a typical walk fee.

The issue is not affordability, but structure and standards. I do not feel that a tiered fee system or annulment would improve the situation. In fact, both approaches risk increasing informal or grey market activity, reducing accountability and potentially raising animal welfare concerns and public complaints.

I do understand and respect the concerns raised by those seeking annulment, including many of my fellow dog walkers that do an amazing job, particularly around clarity and implementation. However, I do not believe that these concerns outweigh the benefits of having a framework in place. In my view, this legislation provides a reasonable starting point which can be improved through ongoing review and constructive engagement with those working in the industry rather than being removed entirely.

I would support the continuation of the legislation alongside a commitment to ongoing review and improvement, ensuring that those actively working within the industry are meaningfully consulted before further changes are made.

I trust that is the SVO's intention. I believe licensing not only enables clear operational standards, defined ratios, welfare rules and enforceable compliance, but it also provides reassurance to the public that professional dog walkers are competent, accountable and able to safely manage dogs in public spaces. This in turn builds confidence both in day-to-day interactions and when entrusting pets in professional care. Georgie.

1675

This is somebody that I hold in high regard in the industry. I know other people in the industry as well. I know somebody from Concierge, another business, and they are happy with the situation. The only representations I have seen is the email that has come to us. That is it. We have this from somebody who has been in the industry since 2008 and somebody that heard the concerns that I raised in the States last term and proactively contacted me to try and help mitigate the concerns that I was raising in the Assembly. So I take what she says seriously. Exactly the same as she does, I understand the concerns of other dog walkers, but just to throw the baby out with the bathwater is just nonsense. It is a live document. If E&I can commit to ongoing consultation and refinement with the industry and with other stakeholders involved, then there is no reason whatsoever we should be kicking this out at this point.

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So, I encourage Members to take the advice of Georgie, who has been doing this since 2008, dispense with this annulment and allow E&I, the States' Veterinary Officer and the industry to work together to refine these proposals.

Thank you.

1690

Deputy Inder: 26(1), sir.

The Bailiff: Can I invite those Members who wish to speak in general debate to stand in their places? Is it still your wish that I put the motion?

1695

Deputy Inder: Yes, it is, sir.

The Bailiff: Okay. So the motion proposed by Deputy Inder is to guillotine the debate save for the responses that were to take place.

Those in favour; those against.

1700

Members voted Contre.

The Bailiff: I think I can declare that lost.

Who wants to speak in general debate?
Deputy Gollop.

1705

Deputy Gollop: As Deputy St Pier pointed out last month or the month before, I am in that bit of dilemma of head versus heart because my heart, my instinct, is to go with Deputy Sloan and Deputy Helyar because I think there is a danger of us being overburdened with expensive regulation and legislation.

1710

But Deputy Gabriel and others make me think. I do think the issue Deputy Leadbeater has highlighted is relevant. There does not appear to have been as much consultation with the industry, the sector, as there could have been. We hear from the industry a lack of concern and assertions that the industry back these regulations, but a significant proportion of them did not. The collective of 40 walkers to meet and discuss their concerns only partially met. There was an attempt to get more meetings that were not done. They have not had time to do a full review. I do consider that perhaps the fee that they are being charged is excessive compared to other areas. They wanted to be consulted and they were met with delayed or non-existent responses in their view.

1715

We have to look at not risks just in Guernsey but examples elsewhere. We cannot, as an Assembly, in any area absolutely declare that a problem we see in other places might not happen here. There could be dog walkers who are a bit young or inexperienced or maybe there could be an issue with too many dog walkers or, rather, too many dogs and puppies with dog walkers and the number that can sensibly be constrained.

1720

I think we would all really like to see that dog walkers are responsible people and not necessarily people who have had recent criminal convictions, especially of a serious kind that affects victims, whether violent or sexual or whatever. We ideally would wish to know that they are empathetic of animals, have no background of mistreatment of animals, and know what they are doing. There are clearly differences of opinion within the industry, with at least two dog walkers being in favour, but I think the lesson from today is that the process of bringing things here should improve. There should be more efforts to reach out and consult with interested parties and stakeholders.

1725

I suppose at the back of my mind, and I think this is an issue that both the proposer and the seconder have raised in the last year or two on other issues, is you do have this phenomenon – and I will not win any friends by saying this – of what I call officer power. I do not know the circumstances in dog walking, but in the nearly 30 years I have been here we have moved from a States which consisted of many parochial representatives, a large Assembly and with titans of business to one that is more mixed, perhaps more representative in gender and other ways. I think that the role of the professional consultant, the adviser, the statutory official, the person who has devoted maybe many years, often with qualifications in specialisms, has gained in influence and strength.

1730

It is always a challenge with somebody like me, and I do not want to overplay my cards too much, to challenge that advice. Deputy Leadbeater would challenge that advice in certain contexts, many of us would, but if somebody is an informed professional and makes an informed view based on good practice elsewhere, how can I resist it? Deputy Inder is the first to say, 'You should not be running an airline, John' or, 'How can you necessarily decide on the colour of a marketing brochure?' How operational should Deputies get?

1735

Deputy Sloan talks about the authoritarian left. I would distance myself from that, but I do think in the nature of modern government you not only need scrutiny at an earlier stage of legislation and policy, but you also need to understand more the subtle role between political representation and stakeholders from the public and professional opinion within a board or committee or authority.

1740

I think if politicians have been advised by professional and other people – I am making assumptions here – that legislation in this area is a good thing to protect the public, I understand that. I also think Deputy Sloan is probably right, and other Members, when they suggest that there would be a reduction in competition. That would include the marginal profitability of some of these businesses so that they could afford the regulation. It would weaken choice. It would weaken the consumer ability and would interfere with the market.

1750

1755 At the same time, I suppose the States collectively would see it as a good thing that the less-efficient providers, the less-regulated providers, those who have not necessarily got the full range of ideas, who are not following best practice, should go. To be honest, that is the route we have followed in other areas, from food providers to a degree to, for example, financial operators.

1760 So, I will listen to the rest of the debate and the arguments, but I suspect the best route is not to annul it, even though that would be tempting, but for the Committee to go back and work at speed with the professionals who are currently doing the job and potential dog walkers to identify a moderate light-touch approach to the legislation and maybe reduce some of the burdens and the costs and encourage the industry to thrive.

1765 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne.

Deputy Ozanne: Thank you, sir.

1770 I will be voting against this amendment and looking forward to endorsing the legislation. I was very grateful to Deputy Gabriel for his email last Friday, which I draw States' Members' attention to if they have not had a chance to read, that gives comments from the States' Veterinary Officer in response to a lot of the concerns raised by the one email we got from dog walkers who were supporting the amendment. There was, of course, another email we got, and I spoke to the gentleman who wrote that in detail, supporting the legislation and actually asking us not to support this annulment.

1775 Those all focus on dog walking, and actually the legislation also looks at boarding. I would suggest that is where areas of animal welfare and concern are perhaps most focused. I would be worried if we were to not have regulation there.

1780 Deputy Sloan's concerns, as it appeared to me, seemed to be more about process and about the role of the state rather than this particular legislation, and I feel that he is – excuse the pun – using this as a bit of a straw dog (*Laughter*) in order to make certain points, which are his pattern of behaviour and making. I am very grateful to Deputy Sloan for his commitment to scrutiny, his commitment to calling out whether we should be looking at doing things differently, but for me when it is to do with – I suppose the big phrase would be – health and safety, to do with safeguarding, looking at issues that protect vulnerable groups, I do not believe that they should be the straw dogs, that they should be the casualties of a zealous belief in wanting to change the way we work.

1785 Currently, our Committee structures are tasked with taking forward various remits. E&I are tasked with taking forward matters to do with animal welfare. They have an expert who they turn to and they are working in the best interests of the community. I think we need to empower them to do that, specifically in areas which are to do with safeguarding. So, for me, of all the pieces of legislation to be challenging about overreach, this is not the one. I think we can listen to Deputy Sloan's concerns, take them on board, but we do not necessarily need to go as far as endorsing his annulment. Because for me that would turn over a really important piece of work which seeks to safeguard both the animals and, indeed, the public on areas that our own States' Veterinary Officer says is really critical.

1795 So, please, I would urge you not to support this amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Niles.

1800 **Deputy Niles:** Thank you, sir.

1805 I rise because I will support this motion to annul and I think that it is important sometimes to reflect on legislation that is coming before us because too many people in this community feel that often legislation is being done to them rather than with them. Now, I have spoken to friends who are dog walkers and independently we have heard from over 40 people who work in this sector. They feel largely unconsulted and unfairly burdened by new legislation that reaches directly into their livelihoods. That should concern every Member of this Assembly.

This is exactly the kind of creeping Government overreach that frustrates all Islanders and undermines confidence in perhaps all of our decision-making. We should not be in the business of imposing expensive new regulatory regimes unless there is a clear, proportionate evidence case for doing so.

1810

I can see that we are probably going to now try to produce evidence that says that dog numbers have increased over time and it is proportionate for those reasons, but I would beg you to think again. Because I do not think that this case has been made properly. Instead, what is being introduced is more cost, more bureaucracy and more state interference in the part of our economy made up of hardworking people trying to earn a living and provide a service to our community.

1815

So, we should be honest about what this is. It is simply more regulation, more expense and more administrative burden for ourselves and for those people in the community working in this area, and there is no convincing demonstration of meaningful public benefits. If the States wishes to regulate further, then it must do the work properly. It must consult properly. It must justify the intervention properly. It must show that the benefit to public outweighs the cost to those that carry the burden.

1820

In this case, we simply have not done that. The Assembly should send a clear message that not every problem requires a licence, not every activity requires States' supervision and not every sector should be subjected to unnecessary Government control simply because we can. (**Severall Members:** Hear, hear.) For those reasons I will support this annulment.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Helyar.

Deputy Helyar: Thank you, sir.

1830

I had written, as Members will be familiar, a wide-ranging rant which I have toned down significantly and it will not be anywhere near as long. You will be really pleased to hear that. So nobody is going to get any indigestion, I hope, as a result of it.

I just wanted to make a few points. This Island, we need to remind ourselves every time we sit down and make a decision in here, we are running a huge current account deficit. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Our infrastructure in many areas is creaking or broken and the cost of repair is going up. We are already asking taxpayers to fund a public service that has expanded well beyond what our finances can sustain. Very soon we will be asking them to bear more under a GST regime. Yet here we are approving a new licensing regime, new compliance frameworks, new enforcement mechanisms, aimed at an industry which on all of the evidence before us is functioning perfectly well without them and clearly does not want it.

1835

We were told in the President's speech that the Veterinary Officer's Department has sufficient resource to undertake this new work. The Government threshold for imposing regulatory burdens on private commercial operators, sole traders, small businesses, should never be, 'We have enough staff to do some more work'. It should be, 'Is there a problem of sufficient scale and seriousness that the intervention is proportionate to the harm?' Sir, that test has self-evidently not been met. It is not, to my mind, even close in this case.

1845

What we are being asked to approve is the institutionalisation of a pattern of self-sustaining Government behaviour we all should be actively and proactively dismantling. In my view, we should be, all of us, looking for examples like this and intervening and stopping officers in their tracks before these ideas even take wing. Ideally, as has recently been intimated by our Chief Executive, we should be ensuring that our teams stick to doing the knitting, not finding new opportunities to expand Government beyond its already unaffordable cost base. The use of assumed delegated authority, the extent of this type of regulatory creep and service expansion really, in my personal view, has to stop. Anybody credibly wishing to oppose tax rises and tax rises into the future must therefore surely support this annulment.

1850

1855

I urge Deputies to annul these regulations. Government mission creep has to stop. We are a small jurisdiction and can only afford to expand Government in cases of real and urgent need, and this is not such a case.

1860 **The Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

1865 I am slightly perplexed by Deputy Helyar's comments just now that this is going to increase any burden on taxpayers. I would just like the President of the Committee *for the Environment & Infrastructure* when he replies to the debate to confirm my understanding that this is effectively self-funding. So, I do not think we need to concern ourselves with that.

1870 I am also a little bit confused as to some of the comments that have been set out by Deputy Sloan and, to a lesser extent, by Deputy Helyar concerned about the process and the lack of consultation. Because the consultation was really well engaged with. It was a consultation that took place in February and March last year. It was open to everyone. Many members of the public responded. There were 266 respondents in all, 120 of whom were members of the public, and there was very strong support for the proposals. So this is what I am slightly perplexed by.

1875 There was, for example, just a couple of specific things: 93% of respondents – and that included 49 business owners as well, incidentally, to that particular consultation; I think there was a further round after that – to that survey believe that there should be a limit on the number of dogs that a professional dog walker can walk at once. We can only put such a limit in place if we have a licensing system.

1880 There was also very strong support generally for the approach to licensing such businesses, and the reasons that respondents gave to that; the number one reason was to protect animal welfare, which indeed is the main objective underlying all of this. Other motivations, other reasons, were to ensure that minimum standards were being met and to encourage ethical business practices. Some of the free form comments included the appreciation from members of the public, presumably pet-owning members of the public, that this stops rogue traders and provides an easy method of sanctioning. We do not have those controls, or certainly those controls are not as readily available, without such a licensing system.

1890 This is really about consumer choice as much as anything else. We know that there is a very strong demand in this Island for good standards of animal welfare. I can say that from personal experience, having been on the Committee *for the Environment & Infrastructure* for over nine years, and for having been its President for over four and a half. I know from first-hand experience how strongly the Guernsey public believes in high standards of animal welfare. My goodness me, I had so much contact from the public on that issue. Even though we have made progress, I was constantly getting a hard time for not progressing it faster.

1895 So, really this is a response to that very thing. It has been agreed by this Assembly. The Committee *for the Environment & Infrastructure* have done as they have been directed to do; they have carried that out. Really, I do think we need to bear in mind that underpinning all of this is a very strong desire within this community that I have certainly witnessed first-hand for good standards of animal welfare. Ultimately, it does lead to greater consumer choice and greater consumer protections.

1900 Deputy Niles suggested that we might produce some evidence. That evidence has been produced. It was a feature of the consultation information. The estimated number of dogs in this Island is in the range of 6,000 to 10,000 dogs. We have an extraordinary number of dogs and that is why we have seen this boom in professional services. I think Deputy Leadbeater's comments were really pertinent around that. We do, therefore, have a lot of businesses that just did not exist 15 years ago, and it is important that as consumers, as pet lovers, we can have confidence that those services are meeting minimum standards.

1910 I was intrigued by the comment of accountability. I think it was Deputy Sloan who said they are instantly accountable. Well, by the very nature of these businesses, these activities take place when the owners are not there. As Deputy Gabriel pointed out, the animals cannot necessarily speak for themselves. So I do think this is a way that we can ensure – I think it is a proportionate level of accountability. We know that there is a good degree of support from within the industry themselves,

who are concerned, as Deputy Leadbeater said, about other people for whom there are no checks and balances really carrying out their business in a way that does not necessarily conform with the public's expectations in that respect.

1915 Just a couple of other comments very quickly. Deputy Sloan's concerns over the process I do not think are warranted myself. I certainly do not think this is an overreach of authority. I think the Committee has followed all the directions that this Assembly has given them and responded well to the public's concerns. Deputy Sloan also described a comment that had been made I think by the States' Veterinary Officer that this kind of legislation has a relationship with our trade agreements. Deputy Sloan described that as balderdash, but I can confirm from an external relations
1920 perspective, which is obviously in the mandate of P&R, it is absolutely not balderdash at all.

To explain, trade agreements typically have an environmental chapter and those environmental chapters are there precisely to ensure that the jurisdiction is meeting certain minimum standards. So I think actually if this Assembly supports the motion to annul, I do think it sends a very public and worrying message that we are not committed to such standards. I am not saying it would
1925 necessarily be a deal breaker, but it does make these things more difficult.

I do not think Members necessarily, if they are not directly involved with this work, appreciate how much scrutiny goes into some of our policies that underpin our trade agreements. It might sound to Deputy Sloan like it does not make sense, but I can assure him, as someone who has been on the frontline of that process, it is a material consideration and it is one that I would urge the
1930 Assembly to bear in mind.

So, in closing, I think this is a proportionate way of ensuring that the public's concerns over animal welfare are responded to. It is not going to place any additional burden on taxpayers as far as I understand it, and I think supporting the motion to annul would send out quite a negative message in a way that would have ramifications beyond this direct matter in hand.

1935 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: Sir, I must say I support pretty much everything that both
1940 Deputies Sloan and Helyar have said. This matter in particular has made me quite frustrated over the last few months or years because I think it is those specific issues that I think do actually demonstrate the core of the issues of how we think Government intervention in people's lives and businesses should be justified.

So, Deputy Gollop said that actually if professionals are sharing good practices from elsewhere that, 'I would be tempted to trust them', because we deal with the professional veterinary service and that has been their recommendations.
1945

I have tried to do a benchmark analysis on other comparable jurisdictions that we tend to compare ourselves against, so Crown Dependencies, England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar. So, Jersey: no specific statutory dog walker licence identified. Isle of Man: no specific
1950 dog walker licensing regime identified. England: no national dog walker licence. Wales: no current dog walker licensing regime. Northern Ireland: no specific dog walker licensing regime identified. Gibraltar: no specific dog walker licensing regime identified. Scotland: not yet, but probably closest to introducing one. So when there is talk that somehow a lack of a dog walker licensing regime is going to be a major impediment to our trade agreements, I really think we need to take umbrage
1955 at those kind of comments that are being shared in the Assembly (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) because that is really complete nonsense.

A Member: Out of order.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller: So I have not been able to identify any other jurisdiction who think
1960 that it is proportionate and necessary to be introducing dog walker licensing. I have tried hard to identify what one problem this is trying to solve. My understanding is the main problem that has

1965 been identified is that potentially some dog walkers are taking too many dogs for walking, right? So that is the only one right now, and Deputy de Sausmarez mentioned that that was identified as one of the issues.

1970 So a potential way to deal with this – and those practices do exist elsewhere – is to potentially introduce a code of practice as a starting point. That will become the acceptable guidance. That does not require regulation, registration, businesses to pay fees and all those kind of things. Jersey has a code of practice for dog-walking professionals, the Isle of Man has a dog walking code, etc., so why are we trying to bring licensing regimes when we could potentially be taking more proportionate steps and introducing voluntary guidance?

I appreciate it will be voluntary, but it will set expectation, so customers of dog-walking businesses – I give way to Deputy Ozanne.

1975 **Deputy Ozanne:** I am very grateful to the Deputy for giving way. I just wanted to comment on the Deputy's point about there not being a national dog walking licence in the UK or indeed other – and the reason for that is that it is often dealt with at a council level. I think this is a good example of where we, as a Chamber, are having to work as a sort of national and council level authority, so we are making decisions that are both about national Government but also what would normally be done in a county council.

1980 Of course London and Hampstead Heath have dog walking licensing because there is a very high number of dogs in a small environment, which is exactly the point that Deputy de Sausmarez had flagged to us; that we have nearly 10,000 dogs. I just want to put it in context, that there are dog walking licences; they are just dealt with at a lower level.

1985 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** I appreciate Deputy Ozanne's intervention.

1990 However, I have also referenced comparable jurisdictions such as the Isle of Man, Jersey and Gibraltar, which have not picked up any kind of licensing regime. As I said, there are potentially much more proportionate and voluntary to start with methods, such as issuing a code of practice. That could be issued by the States' Attorney service. I believe that could be the Guernsey way to start approaching this solution.

1995 Deputy Sloan mentioned about what we are trying to do is instead of having the trust between the individual and the business, and the business being required – whether through their website, through their customer queries, through their ratings – to demonstrate, 'Listen, this is my code of practice. This is what I do. This is the customer feedback I get'. What we are saying is that, no, we cannot trust those businesses to run their businesses and showcase the standards that they are following; we think Government can do it better. I really fundamentally think there is a more proportionate Guernsey way to be doing it.

2000 I understand that the Ordinance is also going to be looking to licence commercial dog boarding facilities, but that is a separate issue. Perhaps I think there is more rationale for looking into that, but I would really urge the Committee – I will support the motion to annul. If that is the case, it is to look singlehandedly at regulating those specific businesses, but not dog licensing. I think that is really completely unnecessary overreach that really we should, as an Assembly, push back against.

2005 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Blin.

Deputy Blin: Thank you, sir.

2010 The more I listen to this, I am hearing a kind of Doggygate starting. *(Laughter)* No one is talking about the actual situation. We are talking about the principles of how we operate, of regulation over regulation.

I will start off by saying I 100% endorse the instincts set up behind this motion for both Deputies because this is what it is all about. We are asking ourselves again and again what is required, and if we do not start somewhere, we will never start. Then the other side comes in. I asked myself, 'Well, hold on a second. This is about the actual dogs'. It is the thousands of dogs on the Island and the

2015 impacts, and as Deputy Kazantseva-Miller said, also on the boarding kennels. There are other aspects there.

But the point is this: it is that I was trying to look for – but if I do not agree with overregulation, I should at least hear and look at the situation and say, ‘Do I see something changing, something happening here?’ Now, I have been following my inbox and the social media and all the parts there, and above all everyone seems to be sort of agreeing with this, the dog walkers etc., so it just feels like there is not a push against it.

Then you have the dilemma of clearly it is there, but it is not there because there is a big fight. Usually when something does not work, we have to take it to a legal aspect and then finally make a Law. So I am in this really imbalanced point where I cannot quite work out what it is. Then I have to go back to my other principles of the cost and bureaucracy: is it necessary? Then my feeling is if the cost – like the officers are available and the workers are able to do that, is that the right reason to do it?

Literally I am not sure if this is about the dog walking or not. All I can say – and I was hearing probably Deputy Kazantseva-Miller’s view on almost the guidelines or the code of practice. I feel in this particular case that I need to support the annulment and hope that this comes back in another form to look at the boarding kennel side, except that all us in this Chamber have been hearing about is, it is all about do we want to overregulate or not.

I think on that basis, unless I can hear otherwise differently from a summing-up, I will be supporting the motion. Not very happy about it, but I think in this case it is the right thing. I would like to see what can be done post this.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy St Pier.

2040 **Deputy St Pier:** Sir, I am going to quote from a very recent speech I gave last month on the requête on body-piercing. Trust me, it is relevant, sir.

The Bailiff: I will take your word for it.

2045 **Deputy St Pier:** Bear with me:

What is the problem we are solving with this requête and Law change? The current Law prohibits body-piercing on individuals between the ages of 16 and 18, regardless of the nature of the piercing or parental consent. Remember, this cohort of our community are enabled by Law to give sexual consent, vote, join the Armed Forces and get married with parental consent, but they cannot apparently opt for a nasal stud or a piercing in their upper ear. It is absurd and it is overreach of Government in the lives of individuals. I hope that those who claim to be libertarians and supporters of small rather than big government will support this requête and as an opportunity to demonstrate their credentials in this regard.

Simply, sir, all I would note, of the speakers that have spoken so far, both Deputies Sloan and Niles have argued and voted against lifting Government’s interference in the lives of 16 and 17-year-olds to have a body piercing. So the inconsistency which I referenced only last month, I did not expect to see it quite so early, but here we are, and it is an experience which newer Members of the States will become very familiar with during this term of Government.

2055 **The Bailiff:** Okay, nobody is rising to speak in general debate, which means that I turn back to the President of the Committee concerned to respond to the debate.
Deputy Gabriel, please.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir; thank you, Members.

2060 I am grateful for the tone and substance of this debate because it has truly reached much further than dog licensing. I have heard concerns about bureaucracy, cost pressures on local businesses

and about keeping Government proportionate. Yes, these are real concerns, so I will try to address them as we go along.

2065 First, let me approach the costs, and perhaps a misconception. The fees set by Committee and approved by Committee are on a cost-recovery basis. As I mentioned earlier on in my opening speech, there are only three staff at the States' Vets Office and they have no plans to expand. The licences cover the cost of issuing those licences and the administration associated with that.

A business stated in the local media that fees, and I quote, 'could run to over £1,000'. Clearly this is completely speculative, and as the article also highlights, the fees have not been set in the other areas yet. These are also set by the Committee, so they can be tempered accordingly.

2070 I did want to highlight that there are, however, other options where a business has operations that fall under two areas, say under the environmental pollution legislation, for example. The Environment Pollution Office only charges for the main activity, but the licence includes conditions that cover all activities. For example, Guernsey Electricity has an air pollution licence due to their emissions, but it also includes conditions relating to waste activities. They are a by-product of their business, so they have more than one licence, but they are only licensed for the main activity.

2075 Equally, we could introduce a sliding scale, where a licensee pays the set amount for the main business and a reduced fee for supplementary activities. This is public domain information, so I am confident sharing it. As such, we could avoid those dual charges and dual licensing and over-regulation, which some Members have concerns about.

2080 The question we must decide today is not whether regulation is ever inconvenient. It is whether, having brought these protections into force and having businesses already engaging with them, we should now annul the scheme and replace clarity with a vacuum, some uncertainty for animal owners and operators and the administration associated with the refund of fees already paid.

2085 The Committee recognises the important contribution made by these local businesses and has consistently sought to listen to and work with those affected. I can assure Members that this approach will continue. My Committee remains open to hearing concerns, monitoring how the scheme operates in practice and making sensible evidence-based improvements where they are justified. Engagement is an ongoing part of responsible governance, not something that ends at commencement.

2090 For example, ongoing consultation has already changed an aspect of the scheme. We have removed the need for identification arm bands. (*Laughter*) Some Members have already mentioned the need and evidence. For me, it is enough that a coroner's inquest in the UK said that:

There is no licensing or governance in place. I do not want to rely on existing Laws with stronger enforcement on there being a victim, either an animal or a member of the public, harmed. Relying on existing Laws means waiting until something goes wrong and then trying to prove it after the fact. These problems are less likely to exist in the first place with clear standards and licensing.

2095 Deputy Kazantseva-Miller made a point about voluntary registration instead of mandatory licensing. That would still require oversight and that would still come at a cost to the States of Guernsey, but without any fee to offset that. She mentioned the industry could be self-regulated. We know there are clearly divided views among dog walkers. Some support licensing because it protects standards and filters out irresponsible owners, but if the industry cannot agree itself, it cannot effectively regulate itself. Self-regulation only works when everyone buys in and there is a way to enforce it. In this case, even the industry is divided. That does not raise standards, it just creates gaps.

2100 Codes and guidance are not enforceable, so if there was an issue, there is not the level of accountability and enforceability. Let us take microchipping as an example. It is not a legal requirement, so there is nothing to enforce it, it is just in a code of practice. It is also not the responsibility of the dog walker to ensure that a dog is microchipped; it is on their owner. Members, if you want that to be enforceable, then guess what, we need more legislation, which I am sure some of you do not want.

2110 One of the main key questions for me is do we want to license or not? Some Members want to license boarding but not professional dog walkers. What is the difference here? We either want to set clear animal welfare standards or not, not just when it suits. When a dog is in a van or in someone's premises, what is the difference about animal welfare and how can we ensure there are clear standards? We cannot if this gets annulled.

2115 Deputy Sloan has concerns about parliamentary process and is using, in my opinion, these Statutory Instruments as an example. If he is concerned about process and timings, then I draw Members' attention to SI No. 7 that has just been laid today, made on 28th January for an activity that happened on 11th March. Same principle applies.

2120 Deputy Niles asked us, 'Is there any public benefit to licensing?' We know the public want clear standards around animal welfare and this is what this will deliver. He also queried the number of dogs on the Island. Deputy de Sausmarez, in her estimates and her data, suggests there are 6,000 to 10,000, but on 24th January 2024, the GSPCA issued a media release estimating there are between 11,000 and 12,000 dogs on the Island.

2125 So, Members, the choice before us for me is straightforward. We can keep a proportionate system that is already operating, that has been taken up by the sector, which is delivered by a small team on a cost-recovery basis – it is not a tax – and that the Committee has committed to monitor and improve, based on evidence, or we can annul it now, voting to remove protections and creating confusion for owners and for those businesses who have acted in good faith.

2130 There are many ways, Members, to move forward, refine, adjust, improve, but only one way to stand still or even go backwards, to unpick what we have already put in place and to start the argument all over again. Members, I urge you to reject the annulling motion.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Members of the States, it has just gone 12.30 p.m. and I am going to test with you whether you want to finish the debate on this motion to annul by hearing from Deputy Sloan, as
2135 the proposer of the motion, and then voting on it. Those in favour; those against.

Members voted Pour.

The Bailiff: I will declare that carried, so I will call Deputy Sloan to reply to the debate, please.

2140 **Deputy Sloan:** Thank you, sir.

I thought we were going slightly mad at some points during that debate and I do sometimes wonder if there is dialogue of the death in this room, but there is a supreme irony from Deputy Gabriel saying that we have more things to do. I suspect that we do not have much to do after lunch today. So excuse me for bringing up a point of principle, Deputy Ozanne, and thank you
2145 very much for confirming that you are monitoring my behaviour. I rest assured many of us are monitoring yours (*Laughter*) but the point of principle –

The Bailiff: Deputy Sloan, that is not really necessary.

2150 **Deputy Sloan:** Sir, Deputy Ozanne said she was pointing to my pattern of behaviour. In fact, sir, she was wrong, because like I said, it is a point of principle. Deputy Ozanne, I appreciate again in terms of your study in law, but in terms of the regulations, these are Statutory Instruments, they can be laid. I agree with you that the compartmentalisation of dog walking and the catteries and the kennels ought to have been – can easily be – split. In fact, the regulations can be laid just like that
2155 by the Committee, can they not, Deputy Gabriel? Because you did so at the end of January.

The argument I had about processes is you did not wait for the annulment period to come into place before you put the regime into operation. Like I said, it would be celebrating from beyond the grave that you are using that as an argument, as, 'We must not do it because we did not give the opportunity to exercise our democratic control of this legislation before now. Sorry, it is too

2160 late.' It is like, 'But you were the people that put it in place before the proper process was completed'.
You cannot use that as an argument for not stopping this, otherwise everything – you will continue
this authoritarian and there would be no stopping the Government.

Deputy Gollop: I appreciate the very well-meaning comments there and I appreciate that you
vote with your head here. Like I say, in terms of the regulations, a point of principles, the Committee
2165 can bring them back and do the kennels separately. The debate has been about dog walking, about
the extension of the state.

To Deputy Helyar's point: yes, this Government is creaking at the seams. I asked a question this
morning if we had an electronic record of what people had voted, and it is like I got chuntered at
by people, 'Oh, why are you asking that? Why are you exposing our failures?' Because the point is
2170 that we need to do the basics better, not be continually expanding and expanding the sphere of
Government.

There is not much more to say really here, is there? It is a point of principle. There is necessity
demonstrated for this. In fact, Deputy Gabriel's argument is, 'Are we are going to wait for something
to go wrong before we act?' Well, you are demonstrating that there has not been evidence of the
2175 requirement for the state to intervene. The argument that 93% of us believe in animal welfare, it is
not an argument for – are you going to correct me or you want to intervene? If you would correct
me.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy de Sausmarez.

2180 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** It was not that 93% believe in animal welfare. There were some specific
stats and the 93% was a belief that dog walkers should be limited as to the number of dogs that
they can walk at any one time, and that can only be achieved or easily enforced through a licensing
regime.

2185 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: Okay. We will go back to *Hansard*. I am sure that you said that 93% believed in
high animal welfare and you were saying that the Island believe in high animal welfare as the context
maybe for that comment, but that is a different point. I believe in high standards of animal welfare.
2190 I am a dog owner, a pet owner too. This is not about that.

But an even more ludicrous argument was picked up by Deputy Kazantseva-Miller. It is the
argument that it is linked to the World Trade Organization (WTO), it is linked to trade agreements.
I mean, how many countries are members of the WTO? How many countries have licensing regimes?
2195 That is an absolutely spurious argument. That quote I gave was in direct defence of a dog walking
licensing regime, not into generic terms. That was specifically referring to dog walking licensing,
but you cannot use that as an argument in favour of dog licensing, 'We will have it come up as an
issue in our trade negotiations.' That, sir, I do not believe at all. I think that is a nonsense.

Sir, this is about consistency and points of principle, so it was interesting for Deputy St Pier to
raise that. The points of principle last time were something different; there is a different principle
there. It was not about the role of the state, it was about the fact that the medical people in the
room had turned around and said, 'Well, we have this amendment. We have medical concerns here.
We have consulted with expert opinion, all the expert opinion that exists on the Island. We have
gone further than that. We have consulted with the academic research and we have concerns.'

2200 On that basis, I voted for the amendment. On the basis of that, without those medical safeguards,
I would not vote for that legislation, so as a point of principle I do not believe I require any lessons
in points of consistency. That, sir, was my argument then.

2205 Today the argument is about the actual role of the state and the unnecessary intervention. It is
about dog walkers. I am ever so sorry, I did not encourage 40 dog owners to email all States'
Deputies the week before last. I did not do that, they just did that off their own bat. They had
2210 contacted me after I asked Deputy Gabriel in January. I am a bit bored of people consulting my one

email from somebody, 'Outraged of Torteval' or whatever on their email and it will trump an email from 40 representatives of the industry. I am sorry, that is not how it works. You cannot sit down, read out somebody else's opinions. You bring your own to the debate.

2215 Sir, it is my opinion this is unnecessary. It is an unnecessary extension, for all the reasons we set out. In terms of process, I have demonstrated factually that this is an abuse of process. The legislation exists to be annulled, not after it has been enacted, but before it is enacted. If the Committee cannot manage the chronology of the implementation, then they should not have those powers, quite frankly, in my opinion.

2220 It is about dog walking. It is not about catteries and kennels. They should be disentangled and the regulation power is quick and it can be done. In fact, what can be done is a notification regime, a notification regime that requires licensing. That is it; it is all you need. I have been a regulator. I understand first-hand how it changes behaviours, how companies react to being regulated.

2225 Then when I talked about dead weight loss and the administrative overkill, I understand it; I really do. Dare I say, many people in the room do not quite understand how it happens. They see the regulations on the piece of paper, job done. It is not that. It is the invisible; it is the shadow cast; it is the invisible actions that you cannot see. The long and short of it is there is no necessity to do this, there is no proven case. There is not.

2230 If we require there to be too many dogs, have a notification regime; the Veterinary Office here has to be notified. The requirement is that there are no more than four to five dogs can be walked at any one point and you must have commercial licensing. Any reputable business will ensure they meet those standards because they will go out of business otherwise. That is how the market works. The market in general does not need regulating every second of the day.

2235 My frustration is that, yes, philosophically I am sick to the back teeth of the world in 2026 that has lost the plot and forgotten that, because we are in all sorts of bother because of that. This is an extreme example of the general case. If I get frustrated and annoyed, it is because I did not get in, standing to be elected, just to go along with whatever. It is because I have strong views and opinions about the way the world should be, and this is one of them.

2240 So please, do the sensible thing, do not make us a laughing stock, annul the regulations so we can move on and just do catteries and kennels separately.

Thank you very much, sir.

2245 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, it is now time to vote on the motion to annul proposed by Deputy Sloan, seconded by Deputy Helyar, which if supported will see the two Statutory Instruments, No. 5 of 2026 and No. 6 of 2026, annulled. I will invite the Greffier to open the voting, please.

There was a recorded vote.

2250 *Carried – Pour 14, Contre 19, Ne vote pas 3, Did not vote 1, Absent 2*

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

Parkinson, Charles
Rochester, Sally
Rylatt, Tom
St Pier, Gavin
Strachan, Jennifer

2255 **The Bailiff:** So in respect of the motion to annul, there voted in favour 14 Members, there voted against 19 Members, 3 Members abstained, 3 Members were not present at the vote. Therefore, I will declare it lost.

We will now adjourn until 2.30 p.m.

*The Assembly adjourned at 12.45 p.m.
and resumed its sitting at 2.30 p.m.*

LEGISLATION FOR APPROVAL

COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. The Banking Deposit Compensation Scheme (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026 – Proposition Carried

Article 1.

Whether they are of the opinion to approve the draft Ordinance entitled "The Banking Deposit Compensation Scheme (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026" and to direct that the same shall have effect as an Ordinance of the States.

2260 **The Bailiff:** Article 1. The Committee for Economic Development, Banking Deposit Compensation Scheme (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026. I will invite the President, if she wishes, to open the debate.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

2265 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Sir, it would be Deputy Niles who is opening the debate.

The Bailiff: Okay. Deputy Niles then.

2270 **Deputy Niles:** Sir, I am pleased to introduce the Banking Deposit Compensation Scheme (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026. This Ordinance gives effect to the States' Resolution of 18th July 2024 and implements amendments to the 2008 Ordinance that was set out in the Policy Letter dated 14th May 2024. Its purpose is straightforward, to strengthen Guernsey's Deposit Compensation Scheme, improve its alignment with international core principles and support confidence in our banking sector and wider economy.

2275 In preparing these amendments, the Finance Sector Development Team has worked closely with the Board of the Deposit Compensation Scheme, the legislative drafter of the Law Officers, the Guernsey Financial Services Commission and the Association of Guernsey Banks. The Ordinance before the Assembly today reflects that engagement.

2280 There is one provision I should like to draw Members' attention to. Section 1(18) repeals section 12(7A) of the 2008 Ordinance. That provision requires compensation to be reduced in certain circumstances where loans or credit facilities are secured against deposits held with the same bank. During the drafting process it became clear that this provision creates a number of practical and policy concerns. First, the definition of 'relevant security' is wide and could potentially capture

2285 mortgage-related arrangements in a way that was never intended. The Committee believes the Law should be clear that mortgage borrowing should not reduce compensation payable to depositors.

Second, removing this provision will help maximise the protection available to depositors, which is consistent with the scheme’s objectives of depositor protection and financial stability.

2290 Third, the board has advised that it does not routinely hold the information needed to apply this provision. Requiring that data would increase cost and administrative burden to both the scheme and participating banks.

Fourth, retaining it would make compensation payments slower and more complex. One of the aims of these amendments is to support faster pay-out in the event of a bank default, including by reducing the need for applications in improving the data held in a standardised form. This provision cuts across that objective.

2295 Finally, the Committee understands that equivalent schemes in Jersey and the United Kingdom do not require compensation to be reduced in this way, therefore repealing section 12(7A) also brings Guernsey into closer alignment with both of those jurisdictions. For these reasons, the Committee considers repeal to be appropriate. The policy is supported by the Guernsey Financial Services Commission and the Association of Guernsey Banks. They have both indicated they do not
2300 object.

Sir, I commend the Ordinance to the Assembly.

2305 **The Bailiff:** As no one is rising to debate the draft Ordinance, there is a single Proposition, whether you are minded to approve the draft Ordinance, and I would invite the Greffier to open the voting on that Proposition.

There was a recorded vote.

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

2310

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

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

The Bailiff: So in respect of the draft Ordinance, there voted in favour 37 Members; no one voted against – oh, I have no idea what the result was now. *(Laughter)* No one voted against. No one abstained?

2315

A Member: Two abstentions, sir.

The Bailiff: Was there? No, 2 absent. So it was 37, 2 were absent and therefore – thank you. I will declare the Proposition carried.

REQUÊTE

2320

2. Requête - Cannabis: establishment of cross-Committee working group to examine regulatory options - Motion to withdraw carried

Article 2.

To resolve that the proposition in respect of the Requête entitled 'Cannabis: establishment of a cross Committee working group to examine regulatory options' dated 19th January be withdrawn.

The Bailiff: Article 2, Requête – Cannabis: establishment of cross-Committee working group to examine regulatory options.

2325

Deputy Leadbeater, you have a motion to withdraw. Do you want to move that motion, please?

Deputy Leadbeater: Yes, please, sir. Thank you, sir.

2330

Ten years ago today I was campaigning in my first election in the district of St Peter Port North. One of the key election issues on my manifesto 10 years ago was drug policy reform and it has featured on each of my manifestos since then because it has been very important to me. During that campaign, I met with lots of different people that were struggling with drugs, mainly opioids – Subutex, Suboxone, Fentanyl – people losing their lives, people's lives were getting ruined.

2335

It seemed to me that the Government's main focus at that time was solely on cannabis and was ignoring all the wider issues that we have with the misuse of prescription drugs and the diversion of prescription medication, so this has been important to me. So to stand here today after I have drafted this requête with six fellow requérants and a lot of other support from in the Assembly and outside the Assembly, to have to stand here today, sir, and bring this motion to withdraw is absolutely devastating, and I do not do it lightly.

2340

I have no choice because I think Deputy Sloan, when he was talking before on the motion to annul, was talking about patterns of behaviour and it is a pattern of behaviour that has brought us here today. That pattern of behaviour comes from within this Assembly and it is the attacks on the Committee for Home Affairs, the attacks on me personally, coming from Deputy Curgenvén. These have culminated in me having to withdraw this requête, and I will tell you why. Because I found out from the *Guernsey Evening Press* that I had a Code of Conduct coming my way; from the *Guernsey Evening Press*, not from the Commissioner for Standards or via the Greffe or whatever; from the *Guernsey Evening Press*.

2345

2350 That was leaked. That document was leaked to the media. In my opinion, there is only one person that could have leaked that document, but that is what has prevented us from debating this requête, because that just brought all of this nonsense and all these allegations into the public domain, and they have since pedalled and pedalled. By Deputy Curgenvén online, I see them every day, all these accusations against me, questioning my credibility and my motives for bringing this requête, okay?

So the leaking of that document – probably by Deputy Curgenvén because he leaks everything else to the press – has caused this –

2355 **Deputy Curgenvén:** Sir, is this a personal attack or are we talking about the requête?

The Bailiff: What I need you to say, Deputy Curgenvén, is whether it is a point of correction or a point of order.

2360 **Deputy Curgenvén:** Sir, I would defer to you on that one, being a newbie.

The Bailiff: No, it is not up to me.

Deputy Curgenvén: Point of order, sir.

2365

The Bailiff: You want a point of –

Deputy Curgenvén: Is this to do with the requête or an airing of grievances?
Thank you, sir.

2370

The Bailiff: Okay. Just a minute, Deputy Leadbeater.

The expression of opinion, which is what Deputy Leadbeater was doing, cannot be corrected. Is it relevant to the debate? I was going to wait until Deputy Leadbeater had finished his speech and had been seconded by Deputy Cameron, which will happen shortly, but the end of rule 24(12) says that:

2375

Debate on the motion shall be limited strictly thereto and no other issues relating to the Article or Proposition [in this case Proposition] shall be debated until the motion to withdraw has been voted on.

So to that extent I agree that there is no cause for Deputy Leadbeater to say anything about Deputy Curgenvén except to the extent that he is expressing an opinion. Therefore, please can we try and keep debate on the motion to withdraw strictly limited to the motion?

2380

Deputy Inder: Point of order, sir.

At the end of that, his direction to Deputy Curgenvén, he then went to say, 'Because he leaks everything else.' That is not opinion, that is a direct accusation and I think it would be fair to ask Deputy Leadbeater to withdraw that remark unless he has evidence.

2385

A Member: Hear, hear.

The Bailiff: If you wish to do so, Deputy Leadbeater, then I would invite you withdraw the remark about Deputy Curgenvén.

2390

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

I withdraw the remark that he leaks everything, but I would say, in my opinion, the leak has probably come from Deputy Curgenvén. I will give you a prime example. He sent me an email recently. I responded to that and –

2395

Deputy Curgenvén: Sir, again a point of order.
Is this really – is this to do with the requête, sir?

2400 **The Bailiff:** So Deputy Curgenvén, what you needed to do in those circumstances is to stand up and say, 'Point of order' if that is what you wanted to raise. You did not do that, but it is important that if you have a point of correction or a point of order that you simply stand there and wait for whoever is presiding to invite you to address that particular point.

It is not relevant to whether the motion to debate should be carried or not to deal with these matters of a personal nature, Deputy Leadbeater, so to that extent I will uphold the point of order.
2405 Can we please concentrate on why it is that the motion to withdraw is being laid?

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

I was just trying to respond to Deputy Inder's call for evidence, but anyway, I will leave it at that and I will accept your judgement, sir.
2410

So yes, here we are. Ten years I have wanted this debate. Ten years lots of other people have wanted this debate and now they cannot have it. Whoever has leaked that document to the *Guernsey Evening Press* needs to hang their head in shame. So we find ourselves here.

When I spoke about cannabis in this Assembly many years ago, I stood up and I said – first of all, I had to confirm that I was involved with a cannabis company back then, because I was back then. I have not been for many years, but anyway, we find ourselves here, so I do not have to speak about my involvement with the cannabis industry because I have no involvement in the cannabis industry and nor do my parents or my sister.
2415

But anyway, I still find myself in this position, fielding these accusations, which mean I cannot bring this debate to the States and have a proper informed debate because completely a coach and horses has been driven through the requête by these allegations against me and by the leaking of that document to the *Guernsey Evening Press* and to the *Bailiwick Express*. Then it was, oddly, put in the personal letterboxes of the reporters. The whole situation surrounding this has been utterly bizarre.
2420

I did not want to be standing here asking Members to withdraw this debate today. I wanted to be here articulating exactly why people should be supporting this debate and I wanted to listen to everybody's opinions. Deputy Oswald has a different opinion to me, but he wanted this debate because he wanted a proper informed debate. I wanted to hear his arguments. Deputy Laine has told me where he sits on this matter and he wanted to be able to have his say so everybody can understand.
2425
2430

There are lots of new people in this Assembly. I have no idea where they sit on this issue, I really do not, and I am devastated that now I may not ever know. This may not ever come back and it is devastating to find ourselves in this position, devastating.

I will not carry on anymore, sir. I would just ask Members to support the motion.

2435

Deputy Ozanne: Point of order.

The Bailiff: Point of order, Deputy Ozanne.

2440 **Deputy Ozanne:** Thank you, sir.

I do not know what point of order this comes under, but I am bit confused as to what happens if we vote against Deputy Leadbeater's motion to withdraw. Does that mean that the debate carries on, please, sir?

2445 **The Bailiff:** If there were to be a vote against the motion to withdraw, then there would be a debate on the requête. There is a sequence of inviting different people on behalf of their Committees to speak first, then you go into general debate and then you go in reverse at the other end.

Deputy Leadbeater, do you have anything further you want to say?

2450

Deputy Leadbeater: I think I have said enough.
Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Cameron, do you formally second the motion to withdraw?

2455

Deputy Cameron: I do, sir. Thanks.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.

So now we go into general debate on the motion to withdraw, but I will remind Members that it shall be strictly limited to the motion.

2460

Deputy Sloan.

Deputy Sloan: All I would say, sir, is that I am happy to support the motion to withdraw, since that is what the lead requérant requested.

2465

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: I do not entirely agree with Deputy Leadbeater. I understand Deputy Leadbeater has been under certain pressure, and I have sympathy for that position, but I would suggest at some point he reads Aesop's fable, the Farmer and the Snake. There was a farmer that found a snake half-frozen and he took pity on it, then he took it into his house, he warmed it up by the fire. The snake warmed up and it bit him, and he said, 'I have looked after you. What did you do that for?' He said, 'I am a snake. It is in my nature', That is Facebook for you, sir.

2470

If you are born on Facebook, then you die on Facebook. That is exactly what happens with social media. Deputy Leadbeater, even though I have sympathy for him, I remember him doing very well out of Facebook. He has also made the argument that he is –

2475

Deputy St Pier: Sir, a point of order.

2480

The Bailiff: Point of order, Deputy St Pier.

Deputy St Pier: Interesting though it is, this is not relevant to the motion.

The Bailiff: I was sort of waiting to see where it was going. *(Laughter)*

2485

Deputy Inder: Look, I –

The Bailiff: Just a minute, Deputy Inder. In relation to the motion to withdraw, you have to bring it back to the relevance of the motion to withdraw, please.

2490

Deputy Inder: Yes. There is no backpedalling from me or front-pedalling for that matter. I do not think this should be withdrawn and that is what I am getting through you, sir, to Deputy St Pier. I know Deputy St Pier is on this requête and, whatever happens, it is going to get through anyway, or if he stood up and told everyone to withdraw it, that would happen as well.

2495

But Deputy Leadbeater – and I really was not going to stand up until Deputy Leadbeater started speaking – he has kind of played the victim. He has gone, 'I have been doing this for 10 years and it is important and I want to hear the full –' Well, then just get on with it. We have had the Letters of Comment. The evidence is already laid up and I am absolutely certain, as we have a very good Presiding Officer, if everything that you fear may or may not come out in debate by whoever he

2500 happens to be pointing his finger at today, I am absolutely certain, with our Presiding Officer, that will be managed.

If Deputy Leadbeater has a Code of Conduct, what has that got to do with the requête? Absolutely nothing at all, not a single thing. It is entirely what we will be debating is the prayer of the requête. That is all we are doing or should be doing over the next couple of days, accepting everyone expects to go home by three o'clock. For me, I think he should just stand by his desires. He has told you, those of you in here who want to support Deputy Leadbeater's direction, that this will never happen again, 'Oh, it is never going to happen again, this is your last chance' and he is withdrawing it. That is what he said.

2510 **Deputy Leadbeater:** Point of correction, sir.

The Bailiff: Point of correction, Deputy Leadbeater.

2515 **Deputy Leadbeater:** I never said this would not come back. I said this may not come back in this term, this may not come back in this term. I did not say it will never come back, so I would like Deputy Inder to be accurate for once.

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

2520 **Deputy Inder:** So he has made the threat that, 'This is it', playing victim again, 'This will never happen' or, 'This may not come back'. Why not? Why not? Over email he said something completely different. He said he was going to withdraw it for the reasons he set out in his speech and bring it back later, so what has changed from the email three days ago to today, when he is asking to withdraw it?

2525 My view is quite simple, and it is the same thing I said to the last requérant to join: basically, 'Man up, get on with the job, do what you have got to do, have the debate and the decision will be the decision.'

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

2530 **Deputy Gollop:** I do not want to be a little snake on Facebook or anywhere else, but I have been in a slightly difficult position on this because, as the Vice-President of Home Affairs, because Deputy Leadbeater is a requérant, I am technically not in charge of the Committee, but making views on this issue. We have a majority view on this, which is different from the requérant's, and I have my own views. If I had a personal view, it would be to go on with the debate today, but after listening to what Deputy Leadbeater said, maybe we would not have as fully presented and fair a debate as we should have.

2540 Like Deputy Leadbeater, I know this debate has been many years in the working. We have had some amazing and interesting letters from the Committees, which make a lot of valid points that we need to digest – we only received them recently – and I would argue there is maybe a second reason to not debate the requête today, that some of the grey areas and interesting points the Committees have made really need to be independently researched by us, maybe the requérants, in order to have an accurate debate that we could benefit from.

2545 So I think in all the circumstances, despite it being in a way a waste of time, we should defer, but where I do agree with Deputy Inder is I do not see that this is a reason to plug the whole requête. I think the requête can and should be brought back in the summer or as soon as possible. If Codes of Conduct that are made against Members are a blocker, then we will have to consider how that process works really, because I would not want to see Members in the future being dissuaded from bringing things just because they have a code in the offing, because those codes could be kept on being made even if they have no foundation, so that is a side-line.

2550 But I think we are where we are and, reluctantly, I think we will vote to defer, but not to cancel.

The Bailiff: Deputy Burford.

2555 **Deputy Burford:** Thank you, sir.

I rise for a similar point to that of Deputy Gollop. Really I wanted to put it slightly more explicitly to the lead requérant for when he sums up, which is simply this: that the reason advanced by Deputy Leadbeater for wishing to withdraw this requête is the Code of Conduct that is outstanding, but I would like to ask him to what extent would he wish to take the opportunity of a delay to bring
2560 back a revised version in any way, in particular in respect of the various letters of comment that have been summarised in the one from P&R, because I think that would help my decision-making, to know what the total drive is for this move.

Thank you.

2565 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Rochester.

Deputy Rochester: Could Deputy Leadbeater just explain to me when he sums up why the Code of Conduct prevents this requête from being debated? Because I do not know if there is information that is not in the public domain. That is all I have had access to, but it is not clear to me why that
2570 prevents this requête from going ahead.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Vermeulen.

Deputy Vermeulen: Sir, it is a most unusual set of circumstances we find ourselves under. I was ready to debate this requête and knock it out of the park, knock it out for six. I sit on Home and part of that is keeping the Island safe and secure, a place to do business and raise a family and all the rest of it, so I prepared my argument and my speech for this. It is not clear why Deputy Leadbeater is pulling it, although I think it is the Code of Conduct that is causing him some
2580 grief.

I can support him in his wish to pull this, but I would also ask him to remember that Deputy Curgenvin, like everybody else in this Assembly, is an Island representative and has been voted in, so we have to respect each other. I think I will leave it at that, sir.

2585 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Ozanne.

Deputy Ozanne: Thank you, sir.

Sir, the reason why I had asked a point of order earlier was that I was concerned that if we voted against – sorry, voted for this motion to withdraw that that would put a time limit on when this
2590 could come back. I think this is a very important debate. I am against the legalisation of cannabis, but I recognise what this requête is trying to do in general, so I would have liked to have had the debate, but I would like to have it in a manner where we could have the best of the Chamber. I am not quite sure what everybody had for lunch, but it does feel that the tone of the Chamber is slightly different to what it was before lunch.

I do feel that in order to have perhaps the debate that certainly Deputy Leadbeater hopes after all this time in an informed way that brings out the best of all of us, I would like to be delaying, but I do not want to do anything that would stop this bringing back, hence my confusion over the impact of this motion. If the President is able to give us an indication of when he might be thinking
2595 to bring it back, that will help me clearly with my thinking.

2600 Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Camp.

Deputy Camp: Thank you.

2605 I am going to support the motion to withdraw because I think that is only right when the lead requérant has recommended that to this Assembly, for whatever reason. But I would have supported it in any event, because I feel that it is only right and proper that when this debate does come back to this Assembly, we do it in the absence of potential – what I see to be – conflict of interest questions that have been raised around this matter.

2610 I think it probably will do the best service to us all, including Deputy Leadbeater, to have an outcome in that respect. So I am going to support the motion to withdraw today.

The Bailiff: I invite the proposer of the motion, Deputy Leadbeater, to reply to that debate, please.

2615

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

2620 Deputy Inder talked of Facebook. I never mentioned Facebook when I stood up there because all this has been played over the *Guernsey Evening Press* front page, middle page, whatever, but it has been all over social media. I picked up my phone the other morning. I woke up, I looked at my phone and it said, 'You're an embarrassment, Leadbeater, die' (**A Member:** Oh) from somebody I never knew, never met them, but they are a member of a certain Facebook group. Anyway, so Facebook has played its part.

2625 The reasons why: a few people have articulated, 'Why? Why can we not debate it in the face of these potential Code of Conduct allegations?' It is because of the leak, because the Code of Conduct is supposed to be confidential and it is supposed to go on in the background and allow States' business to continue.

2630 That has not happened in this situation. Because it was leaked to the media and such a big issue has been made out of it, my credibility as the lead requérant has been into question. All over the place, everywhere I go, it has been called into question, so I cannot stand up here and lead this requête facing these allegations that have been leaked widely to the media and is discussed widely on social media as well. So that is the reason. That is the game-changer for me.

2635 It was not the fact that there was a Code of Conduct that I was informed about via the media, it is the fact that it was leaked. The contents of that Code of Conduct were leaked, all the allegations contained within that Code of Conduct were leaked, not by me, because I had not even received a copy of it. I had no idea.

Deputy Gollop: the issues raised by Committees, the working group. I envisaged the working group to be examining all of this sort of stuff, from my point of view, but this has been a fairly good exercise really, because I am picking up a few different bits and pieces from Members for when we can hopefully bring this back.

2640 Deputy Burford: yes, of course. I will take this opportunity to pay attention to the Letters of Comment and the advice and concerns contained within those and completely bear that in mind before this piece of work comes back to the Assembly.

Deputy Rochester: I think I have just answered your question.

2645 Deputy Vermeulen: I know Deputy Vermeulen and myself are on the completely opposite side of the argument here. He does not want to see this work go on. He said that he is going to support the motion to withdraw, and so I thank him for that.

Deputy Ozanne: the best of the Chamber she speaks of, and I apologise, because I probably have not given that today, but I could have been considerably more angry, and I tried to rein myself in. I am probably not doing a very good job, but inside I am burning.

2650 Deputy Camp: yes, we feel the same on this, and I thank her for the support with this motion to withdraw.

I thank everybody for their input, sir, and I would encourage them to support this motion to withdraw the requête.

Thank you.

2655

The Bailiff: Members of the States, it is now time to vote on the motion to withdraw the Propositions contained in the requête proposed by Deputy Leadbeater, seconded by Deputy Cameron, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting, please.

2660 *There was a recorded vote.*

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

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

2665 **The Bailiff:** So in respect of the motion to withdraw, there voted in 35 Members, 1 Member voted against, 1 Member abstained, 2 Members are absent at the vote, and therefore I will declare the motion to withdraw carried.

2670 What that effectively means is that if there were to be a requête submitted, it will have to be resubmitted and the Policy & Resources Committee will have to decide which Committees it wants to consult at that point, so it will not be the requête that is currently before you. That will have to be dealt with completely differently going forwards. It might be the same requérants, who knows, but anyway, I just thought I would explain the consequences of the motion to withdraw that.

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**3. Schedule for future States' business –
Proposition as amended carried**

Article 3.

Whether, after consideration of the attached Schedule for Future States' Business, which sets out items for consideration at the Ordinary States Meeting on 22nd April, 2026, they are of the opinion to approve the Schedule.

The Bailiff: Article 3, Policy & Resources Committee, the Schedule for future States' business. So we will turn straight away to the amendment to the schedule and that is coming from you, Deputy de Sausmarez. Yes, please move the amendment.

[Amendment 1.](#)

To insert at the end of the proposition the following: "subject to inserting after "P.2026/17 – The Lending, Credit and Finance (Equity Release Mortgages) (Guernsey) Ordinance, 2026" in paragraph (g) the following: "P.2026/19 – Policy & Resources Committee – Major Projects Portfolio"."

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

I do not think there is any need to read the amendment. I will just explain its effect, which is to add in the Major Projects Portfolio Policy Letter, which was published yesterday into the agenda for the next States' meeting. The reason this is being done by amendment is ordinarily we would have included it in the normal schedule, but it was published later than the normal submission deadline, so there is slightly less time than Members might ordinarily have to have a look at the Policy Letter, but as this is likely to be – if Members support the amendment – the only substantive item of business on the agenda, hopefully Members still feel as though they have had plenty of time to consider the Policy Letter.

All Members have had an opportunity, at least one, for a briefing and question and answers and those Members that attended the briefing yesterday will also be aware that we are planning to hold another question and answer on more of the details of this Policy Letter. So I hope that by the next meeting Members will be in a position to have a well-informed view and therefore a well-informed debate on the matter, and there is still sufficient time to give it proper consideration.

So really it is a matter for the Assembly, but I would also note that it is a very light agenda and therefore we were keen to make the most efficient use of time and bring this issue forward. It has been broadly consulted on as well ahead of being published, so we feel as though it is an appropriate proposal, but at the end of the day it is a matter for the Assembly to decide.

Thank you.

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

Deputy St Pier: I do, sir.

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.

Now, under Rule 3(18), the only person who is entitled to speak, if she wishes to, is Deputy Bury, as the President of the Committee. It is adding it after the matter, but because that is there, if Deputy Bury does not want to say anything, that is fine.

So we will go to the vote on Amendment 1 to the Schedule for future States' business proposed by Deputy de Sausmarez, seconded by Deputy St Pier, and I will ask the Greffier to open the voting, please.

2710

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 36, Contre 1, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 2

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

2715

The Bailiff: So in respect of Amendment 1 proposed by Deputy de Sausmarez and seconded by Deputy St Pier, there voted in favour 36 Members, 1 Member voted against, no Member abstained, the same 2 Members are absent at the vote, and therefore I will declare that carried.

Deputy de Sausmarez, is there anything you want to say about the schedule, as now amended?

2720

Deputy de Sausmarez: No, thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: All right. In that case, we will go straight to the vote on the schedule as amended to add in the Major Projects Portfolio and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting.

2725

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 36, Contre 1, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 2

Pour	Contre	Ne vote pas	Did not vote	Absent
Blin, Chris	Sloan, Andy	None	None	Hill, Edward
Burford, Yvonne				Snowdon, Alexander
Bury, Tina				

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

2730

The Bailiff: So in respect of the schedule as amended, there voted in favour 36 Members, 1 Member voted against, no Member abstained, the same 2 Members are absent, and therefore I will declare the schedule as amended carried.

2735 That concludes the business for today's meeting, so we will invite the Greffier to close the meeting, please.

The Assembly adjourned at 3.09 p.m.