

ISLAND OF SARK

**EXTRAORDINARY MEETING of the CHIEF PLEAS to be held on
THURSDAY 16th MAY 2013 at 7.00pm in the ASSEMBLY ROOM**

AGENDA

1. To APPROVE the MINUTES of the Easter Meeting held on the 10th April 2013.
2. MATTERS ARISING from the Minutes of the Easter Meeting.
3. QUESTIONS Not Related to the Business of the Day.
4. To CONSIDER a Report from the GENERAL PURPOSES and ADVISORY COMMITTEE entitled "Appointment of a Permanent Senior Administrator".
5. GENERAL PURPOSES and ADVISORY COMMITTEE: To ELECT two new Members to the Committee to fill the current vacancies.

7th May 2013

**Lt Col RJ Guille MBE
President of Chief Pleas**

NOTES:

This Meeting has been called in accordance with Rule of Procedure 1 (2) at the request of 14 Conseillers. The normal notice period has been waived in accordance with Rule of Procedure 1 (5).

Anyone wishing to see any of the Reports may do so in the Chief Pleas Committee Office, during office opening hours; copies may be obtained from the Committee Secretary. The Agenda, Reports and Supporting Papers may also be seen on the Sark Government Website at www.gov.sark.gg

GENERAL PURPOSES & ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Report with proposition to an Extraordinary Chief Pleas, 16th May 2013

APPOINTMENT OF A PERMANENT SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR

At the last meeting of Chief Pleas (10th April 2013 [Easter] Minute Ref: 12.75) the General Purposes & Advisory Committee (GP&A) lost the proposition to appoint a Senior Administrator. Subsequent to that result, the Committee was approached by a number of Conseillers who felt that the importance of the issue merited more investigation and understanding and they instigated further discussion between the GP&A Committee and other Conseillers.

These discussions resulted in the Committee being requested to return to Chief Pleas with a slightly revised report and job description as soon as possible. We therefore present this report and re-present the proposition for consideration.

The GP&A Committee believes that the proper workings of government and future government policy should be managed in a manner suitable for Sark and for the benefit of the Sark electorate. Keeping Sark special must co-exist with accepting the responsibilities in the 21st century that go with the considerable independence that we are privileged to enjoy as a Crown Dependency.

The principles and concepts of the report to Easter Chief Pleas (attached for reference as Appendix 1) remain, but the Committee has taken the opportunity to rationalise the job description (Appendix 2) and also to confirm that the salary offered will be by negotiation up to £35k with expenses limited to those required of a one off nature to secure a suitable person into the position.

The Committee believes that all Conseillers now have a much clearer understanding of the reasons for the proposal. This includes the desirability to join up all the fragmented strands of the current administration that have evolved piecemeal over the years. Also to ensure that future policy making is attributable to a purpose, properly researched, properly consulted, and implemented in a timely manner. This will only be achievable with the involvement and commitment of all Conseillers working together for the benefit of the electorate of Sark. It is as a result of that sort of involvement and commitment that this report is being brought to Chief Pleas.

This Committee strongly believes that the reorganisation of our administration should be progressed. Supporting this proposition should be seen as accepting that Sark's administrative support will be reorganised as described in the first line of the attached job description. It should be noted that several aspects of such a reorganisation will require decisions to be made by Chief Pleas as required by the Reform Law.

Proposition –

That Chief Pleas authorises the General Purposes and Advisory Committee to take all necessary steps to recruit a Senior Administrator on a full time basis, and agrees to the appointment of a suitable candidate once the recruitment process has been concluded.

**Conseillers Bache, Baker, Cook & Mallinson
The General Purposes & Advisory Committee**

GENERAL PURPOSES & ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Report with proposition to Easter Chief Pleas, 10th April 2013

APPOINTMENT OF A PERMANENT SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR

At its Christmas 2012 meeting (Ref: 12.18), Chief Pleas formally invited Belinda Crowe to undertake an independent review of the present administrative and executive support arrangements for the Government of Sark and to *“make recommendations for reform which would provide the government with the impartial accountable support necessary to develop and implement policy and deliver services in a manner appropriate to a modern democracy.”*

In writing her report which was published in May 2012 and delivered to every household in Sark, Mrs Crowe took account of:

- The size of Sark as a jurisdiction
- The newness of Sark’s democratic arrangements
- The limited resources available
- The highly valued spirit of voluntary contribution to the running of government.

Mrs Crowe consulted widely and outlined the challenges facing Sark’s government. She came to the conclusion that: *“No one who contributed to this Review, including the Conseillers themselves, felt that Conseillers collectively or the Government as presently structured, has either the capacity or capability to tackle Sark’s challenges without support.”* She proceeded to analyse the present structure of government where the administration of Sark is undertaken by 16 independent committees and where Conseillers act both as politicians and administrators.

She concluded that *“separating the political from the non-political would also free up time for Conseillers to focus on the strategic challenges which face Sark, and undertake the necessary time consuming role of greater and more formal public engagement and consultation on major issues important to Sark, and help spread the load between Committees.”*

A major recommendation of the Report was the establishment of the role of a Chief Secretary, a senior officer *“who would provide impartial policy and management advice to the Government of Sark, including the analysis of strategy and policy options for the Government in line with its decisions, overseeing the prompt implementation of those decisions and managing the delivery of public services in line with those decisions.”*

The key aspects of the role would be to

- Provide expert advice and support to government
- Advise government on its new committee structure
- Manage all of Sark’s public servants
- Establish strong and systematic relationships with the UK and Guernsey, and liaison with the Guernsey Law Officers, to ensure the government is properly advised on international and legal matters and ensuring politicians are properly briefed for meetings with politicians from other jurisdictions, and those jurisdictions are properly briefed on matters about Sark
- Be the principal point of contact at official level with officials from other jurisdictions and promote Sark’s interests
- Oversee and manage the delivery of Sark’s public services
- Ensure that a high level of transparency is achieved through the publication of accurate, impartial and timely information about government policies and activity so that the Island is properly informed and consulted where necessary.

She also recommended the appointment of a Temporary Chief Secretary to help start the process of reform.

During the Summer of 2012 after workshops had been held for Conseillers and a public meeting had taken place to discuss this possible appointment, at an Extraordinary Meeting of Chief Pleas on the 29th August 2012 (Ref: 4.60), permission was given for the General Purposes and Advisory Committee to take all necessary steps to recruit a Temporary Chief Secretary.

In its report to the meeting, GP&A emphasised “*that it is imperative that Sark equips itself in order to deal effectively with the challenges it faces. Without change, the present system of government is in danger of imploding due to the heavy workload it imposes on Conseillers, particularly Committee Chairmen. Conseillers are too preoccupied with dealing with administration to have time for the vital task of planning for the Island’s future. We have to have the means to set out a vision for the next 15 years or so and then have the ability to deliver that vision for the benefit of the people of Sark. It is an exciting challenge which we urge Conseillers to accept for the future good of the Island. The appointment of a Temporary Chief Secretary to help start the process of reform is an important first step.*”

With the assistance of civil servants from the other Crown Dependencies and the Ministry of Justice, Colin Kniveton, Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Economic Development in the Isle of Man was recruited to take on this role for a four month placement in Sark, starting on the 1st November 2012.

Colin Kniveton’s placement in Sark ended on the 28th February 2013 and Chief Pleas must now consider the next step. He has worked effectively with this and other Committees to provide advice on a wide range of subjects including the reform of Sark’s administration. As a Senior Civil Servant, Mr Kniveton acted as a Consultant to Chief Pleas and his work which takes the form of a number of reports will provide a basis for future thinking and reforms. He was also of the opinion that the most pressing issue for Chief Pleas to consider was the appointment of a full-time, permanent, senior administrator in order to ensure the outputs he had produced were progressed.

The emphasis for his successor must be the implementation of proposed reforms once they are approved by Chief Pleas so that Sark can benefit from a more streamlined and effective administration. It is essential that Chief Pleas continues to receive administrative support and a job description for a new permanent post is attached to this report which reflects the key aspects outlined in the Crowe Report which have been further developed by Colin Kniveton.

The Committee would expect that the appropriate salary for someone with the necessary skills would be in the region of £35,000 to £40,000 p.a. plus associated expenses.

Proposition –

That Chief Pleas authorises the General Purposes and Advisory Committee to take all necessary steps to recruit a Senior Administrator on a full time basis, and agrees to the appointment of a suitable candidate once the recruitment process has been concluded.

**Conseiller Charles Maitland
Chairman, General Purposes & Advisory Committee**

SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR - JOB DESCRIPTION

- Responsible, as Sark's senior administrator, for the management, organisation and efficiency of the government's administration.
- To support Committees, providing research for key policy decisions, with options as required, assessing costs if necessary, giving support and assistance to forward planning to establish a medium/long term strategy and assisting with continuity and cohesion between Committees.
- To ensure that Chief Pleas' decisions are implemented quickly and effectively.
- To liaise as necessary with the Law Officers, the government officials of Guernsey, the Ministry of Justice and other Crown Dependencies.
- To ensure that the President of Chief Pleas receives the clerical support to enable him to concentrate on preparing for meetings and their completion.
- To act as a point of contact for enquiries from politicians, outsiders and the media.
- To be conscious of public relations, ensuring that the website is kept up to date and, where required, arranging for government messages to be conveyed quickly to the public and coordinating contact with the Press as necessary.
- To ensure that the public and those affected by proposed policy are given the opportunity to have their opinions and interests taken into account.
- In consultation with the President, where appropriate, to oversee programmes for incoming official visitors.
- To implement and oversee an Annual Performance and Development Review for administration staff, arrange training and advise on pay structure.