



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

MIDSUMMER MEETING

OF CHIEF PLEAS

OF THE

ISLAND OF SARK

HANSARD

Assembly Room, Sark, Wednesday, 5th July 2017

*All published Official Reports can be found on the
official Island of Sark Chief Pleas website www.gov.sark.gg*

Volume 3, No. 9

Present:

Seigneur

Maj. C M Beaumont Esq.

Deputy Speaker of Chief Pleas

P Armorgie Esq.

Greffier

Mr T J Hamon

Treasurer

Mrs W Kiernan FCA

Constable

Mr G R Williams

Vingtenier

Mr P Burgess

Conseillers:

Diane Baker
Edric Baker
Peter Byrne
Charles Maitland
Nicolas Moloney
Elizabeth Norwich
Dr Roger Norwich
Helen Plummer
William Raymond
Stephen Taylor
Alan Blythe

Robert Cottle
Antony Dunks
Hazel Fry
Reginald Guille MBE
Peter La Trobe-Bateman
Sebastien Moerman
Christopher Nightingale
Cormac Scott
Anthony Ventress
Paul Williams
Sandra Williams
Pauline Mallinson

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Midsummer Meeting of Chief Pleas

Chief Pleas met at 10.00 a.m.

[THE DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

PRAYER

The Greffier

ROLL CALL

The Greffier

The Greffier: There are 23 Conseillers, the Seigneur and the Deputy Speaker of Chief Pleas present.

Statement by the Seigneur

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Greffier.
5 I would like to call on the Seigneur to make a statement.

The Seigneur: A number of short things really. Firstly, I would like to pay tribute to the Sark team that took part in the Island Games. Nick Dewe and Stefan Roberts came back with a bronze in the clay pigeon – fantastic. Kevin Adams and Jane Norwich both improved their performances
10 from the last time they competed and came a very creditable 14th place in their competition – well done to you all.

I would also like to pay tribute to the organisers of the Sark Folk Festival. It was, I understand, the best Folk Festival that there has been so far. It is perhaps slightly regrettable that they wish to take a break next year, but we will see what we can do to fill that. But thank you to the
15 organisers of that and I understand that everyone had a fantastic time.

I also received a letter from a Mr Werner Adams who was on Island a couple of weeks ago. His wife unfortunately fell and broke her ankle whilst out walking and he wrote to me to say how wonderful the emergency services were, and the doctor. That is a fantastic tribute to those who volunteer to be part of the emergency services and I am extremely grateful to them and the
20 way they conduct themselves. It is relatively rare that people have accidents and it is even more rare for people to compliment the emergency services on what they receive, so I am very grateful for that.

Finally, and very briefly, by this time next year I hope to have been able to reinstate the Sark Militia. I will leave it at that for now (*Laughter*) but there will be more on that later – not today,
25 but later.

The Deputy Speaker: Intriguing.
Thank you, Seigneur.

Apologies for absence

30 **The Deputy Speaker:** Today we have received apologies from Mr Arthur Rolfe, Speaker of Chief Pleas, and we have also received apologies from Mr Kevin Adams, the Prévôt and also the Deputy Prévôt as well, so they are not in attendance today as you will have noticed.

Resignation of Conseiller Pauline Mallinson

35 **The Deputy Speaker:** A couple of other housekeeping issues: for the record, Conseiller Pauline Mallinson has resigned from the Education Committee in order to be able to work on the terms of reference for the Education Review.

The Queen's Commonwealth Baton

40 **The Deputy Speaker:** Secondly, the Queen's Commonwealth Baton will be in the Bailiwick this coming September. The intention is to visit Alderney, Sark and Herm with the Baton on Tuesday, 12th September. The Guernsey Sports Commission will be in touch with the school and the Island officials in the near future to discuss the possible plans for the day; but that is very exciting.

Before we move on to the Business of the Day, I would like to invite statements from three Conseillers, starting, if I may, with Conseiller Jane Norwich.

**The Island Games –
Statement by Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich**

45 **Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich:** Following on from the Seigneur's comments, firstly, I would like to note my own interest in the matter of the Island Games. The 17th Island Games was held last week in Gotland, off the east coast of Sweden, closer to Latvia than we are to the Isle of Wight. Twenty three island teams were represented, with Sark being the smallest competing island. Rhodes sent a manager to maintain their place but with the financial crisis in Greece there were no competitors this year.

50 Sark was represented by four competitors in two sports. Nick Dewe and Stefan Roberts represented Sark in the Automatic Ball Trap and came home with the team bronze medal, adding to their tally over the years. The gold went to Gibraltar, who are hosting the next Games in 2019. Gibraltar took over the hosting at short notice when Menorca pulled out due to Spain's financial situation.

55 In archery, Kevin Adams took part in three disciplines with Recurve Archery, as did I. We both achieved personal best rankings in the World Archery 1440 event and we are now both 14th in our respective disciplines, something I never thought I would achieve when I started five years ago. I also achieved a personal best score despite the awful weather conditions – force seven plus rain is difficult. Kevin missed out on a quarter-final place in the individual 70 m head-to-head by 1 mm. That is quite an achievement as we cannot shoot 70 m on Sark and only get practice in actual competition.

60 None of these achievements would be reached without considerable time and effort in training and practice in all weathers throughout the year. You cannot just turn up on the day. The competition is really serious, with some competitors representing their country at national

level. All competitors representing Sark pay for their own travel, accommodation and food costs.
65 Chief Pleas funds the annual membership to keep Sark in the Island Games Association and any
entry fees and our tracksuits.

After the last Games in Jersey, Richard Dewe finally called time on representing Sark as the
Island Games Association representative and team manager during the actual Games.
70 Undertaking this time-consuming, responsible role for Sark for so many years has kept Sark in a
well-respected position, so thank you to Richard. The team has been greatly assisted this year in
the organising of travel etc. undertaken by the Games Secretary, Kathleen Dewe. The team
would like to thank her for her help and freely given time.

This year the team has tried to cope with all the responsibilities of representation at
meetings and receptions at the Games but these responsibilities, at which Sark should be fully
75 represented, often clash with competition. For the first time this year economic workshops took
place to discuss items of mutual interest and look at how individual islands promote their
economic drives.

The team took part in several media interviews including Falklands TV, Isle of Man, the usual
local media of the Channel Islands and a Scottish BBC interview that was actually quoted in the
80 Scottish Parliament last week on future funding of the Games. So small Sark goes a long way.
Other islands are really interested in Sark and are already very well informed about life here.

The team has been proud to represent their Island; we thoroughly enjoyed the Games on the
beautiful and historic island of Gotland. It really is a great opportunity to raise Sark's profile and
the good things of Sark.

85 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Norwich, and congratulations once again to the
entire team.

Next may I ask Conseiller Sandra Williams to say a few words.

**Sark Folk Festival Committee and Isle of Sark Shipping –
Statement by Conseiller Sandra Williams**

Conseiller Sandra Williams: Thank you.

I would just like, on behalf of Sark and the people of Sark, to publicly thank the Sark Folk
90 Festival Committee and all involved with making the 2017 Festival a huge success. The
professionalism by all involved was very evident over the whole weekend. Can we please wish
them a happy, restful year off in 2018 and look forward to welcoming them back rejuvenated,
well rested and raring to go in 2019.

Can I also publicly thank all involved at the Isle of Sark Shipping for the very smooth sailings
95 over the weekend. The crew, the office staff and all involved are a credit to our company. They
carried over 2,100 passengers to Sark between Thursday and Sunday, along with tons and tons
of luggage. I have heard nothing but praise, and along with our dedicated harbourmasters it was
all made to look very easy. I would like to say well done.

100 **Several Conseillers:** Hear, hear.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Williams.

**Regulation of Health Professions (Medical Practitioners) (Sark) Regulations, 2017 –
Statement by Conseiller Diane Baker**

The Deputy Speaker: Lastly may I call on Conseiller Diane Baker to make a short statement.

105

Conseiller Diane Baker: At the Christmas meeting of Chief Pleas, Item 6 was to consider a report from the Medical Committee entitled the 'Regulation of the Health Professions' and to approve the Ordinance. Our Report said:

Accompanying the Ordinance is the draft Regulation of Health Professions ... Regulations, 2017. This is not for Chief Pleas to approve but will go to The Guernsey Health & Social Care Committee for it to approve and sign after inserting the relevant application fees and annual charges. Once this is done the Sark Medical and Emergency Services will have a copy to present to the next meeting of Chief Pleas. Once laid before Chief Pleas a copy will be kept in the same manner as Ordinances are kept.

110

This was an information sheet which showed what was needed when approval was being sought to be entered on the Register of Health Professions along with the information to be made public and the application fees and annual charges.

These Regulations have now been approved by the Committee for Health and Social Care on Wednesday 24th May 2017 and signed by Deputy Tooley, Vice-President, who chaired this meeting.

115

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Baker.

**Welcome to Vicki Ogier –
Crown Advocate**

The Deputy Speaker: Finally, my apologies, I would like to just welcome Crown Advocate Vicki Ogier to the meeting today, sitting in the public gallery.

Welcome to Vicki Ogier.

**Procedural –
Electronic devices**

120

The Deputy Speaker: Before we move on with the Agenda, I would just remind everyone in accordance with the Rules of Procedure – all present – that mobile phones, cameras, recording devices and other electronic equipment is switched off now, please, less those allowed to Chief Pleas Members in accordance with Rule 16.

Thank you.

Business of the Day

1. Extraordinary Meeting, 17th May 2017 – Matters arising

Matters arising from the Extraordinary Meeting of Chief Pleas held on Wednesday, 17th May 2017.

The Deputy Speaker: Moving on to Agenda Item 1, matters arising from the Extraordinary Meeting of Chief Pleas held on Wednesday, 17th May 2017.

125 There is one very minor inaccuracy to point out to you. On page 6 of *Hansard*, line 25, it mentions 'The President' but that should correctly read 'The Speaker'. The error has been corrected.

Are there any other matters arising from those minutes? Thank you.

Yes, Conseiller Guille.

130

Conseiller Guille MBE: It is not arising from those minutes, sir, because I sent my apologies for that meeting. But as an aside I would like to apologise to Conseiller La Trobe-Bateman for stating at the Easter Meeting that he was the youngest Member of this Assembly. As he pointed out to me afterwards that honour goes to Conseiller Moloney. I could not make that correction obviously at the last meeting, as I was not present. But I would urge, while I am on my feet, other young residents to take up the challenge of Government and not leave it to us, the older generation. The future is theirs, not ours.

135

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Guille, for a point well made.

2. Extraordinary (Special) Meeting, 31st May 2017 – Matters arising to be taken at the next meeting of Chief Pleas

140 **The Deputy Speaker:** Moving on to Agenda Item 2, matters arising from the Extraordinary (Special) Meeting of Chief Pleas held on Wednesday, 31st May 2017.

The *Hansard* for this meeting has arrived now and will be distributed to you all very shortly and any matters arising from those minutes will be taken at the next meeting of Chief Pleas.

3. Questions not related to the Business of the Day – Control of Electricity Prices (Sark) Law 2016 and The Renewable Energy (Sark) Law 2010 – Questions by Conseiller Moerman

Questions not related to the Business of the Day.

145 **The Deputy Speaker:** Moving on to Agenda Item 3, Questions not related to the Business of the Day. I have one question received from Conseiller Sebastien Moerman.

Conseiller Moerman, can I ask you to give your question please?

Conseiller Moerman: Thank you, sir.

150 At the Extraordinary Meeting held on 10th November 2016, the Deputy Chairman of the Policy & Performance Committee brought a report to Chief Pleas entitled the 'Control of Electricity Prices (Sark) Law, 2016' and recommended to the House that a Projet de Loi of the same name be adopted. This Projet de Loi was unanimously carried on that date. A period of more than eight months has now passed since the adoption of the Projet and it has not received Royal Assent.

155 Can the Chairman of the Policy & Performance Committee give an update in this respect?
Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Conseiller Maitland.

160 **Conseiller Maitland:** I should like to ask Conseiller Hazel Fry to deal with this question please.

The Deputy Speaker: Conseiller Fry.

Conseiller Fry: Thank you, sir.

165 Conseiller Moerman has an interest in this matter which I believe he has not declared; however, I shall certainly answer his question.

As you are all aware, the Control of Electricity Prices (Sark Law) 2016 is now the responsibility of the Policy & Performance Committee so I am answering the first question as a Member of this Committee, not of the Electricity PDT.

170 You are absolutely correct, Conseiller Moerman, in stating that this Projet was unanimously carried at the Extraordinary Meeting of Chief Pleas on 10th November 2016. It was immediately sent to the UK government as to the standard procedure. Once this happens it is entirely out of our hands which can be frustrating, as it appears as if nothing is happening.

175 Not surprisingly, the law was petitioned as is the right of any interested party to do so. This was despite what we and our Law Officers considered, that it was a law that is fair to all parties. Petitions set out arguments that our Law Officers responded to; this is to ensure we demonstrate to the UK government that our laws are fit for purpose, and this is what has happened with our Electricity Law. This has delayed it moving forward to the Privy Council for Royal Assent.

180 As we are all aware, the British government is going through a time of extreme turbulence. Between Brexit and the recent snap General Election and ministerial changes in Westminster, this has caused further delay. However, we are expecting to hear from the Ministry of Justice shortly as to when it will be on the Privy Council Agenda. I will of course let all Conseillers know as soon as I have this information.

185 I hope that answers your first question, Conseiller Moerman. I know that he has got a further couple of questions and these I am going to ask Conseiller Pauline Mallinson to answer. As you may know, Pauline Mallinson took over the role of renewable energy non-Chief Pleas member following Roger Olsen's retirement, before she herself became a Conseiller.

190 This is to be her maiden speech at Chief Pleas, and I have to say that poor Conseiller Mallinson is suffering from a cold and a very bad throat but is still game to answer Conseiller Moerman's questions.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Fry.

195 Conseiller Moerman, can we have the second part of your question please?

Conseiller Moerman: First of all I would like to point out to Conseiller Fry that I have no interest to declare. I have applied for a solar panel and my application has been accepted.

200 Now, if I can turn to my other question. At the Easter Meeting held on 6th October 2010, I believe it was Conseiller Edric Baker who had brought a report to Chief Pleas entitled,

'Renewable Energy (Sark) Law, 2010' and recommended to the House that a Projet de Loi of the same name be adopted. This Projet de Loi was carried on that date.

205 With the continuous increase of the cost of electricity many residents are considering solar panel installations but are restricted by this Energy Law that was not aimed at this. For example, there is a very low threshold of maximum energy to be produced, not adequate, or the law prevents the sale of such energy – it is not, for example, possible to sell back electricity produced that way to Sark Electricity or even to give it back. Meanwhile it is legal to burn and sell oil.

210 At the Easter Meeting of Chief Pleas, Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich spoke about securing Sark's Future and we are going to talk about that today again. I believe securing Sark's future also involves securing affordable energy and sustainable energy.

215 I would like to ask a couple of questions: can Conseiller Mallinson bring some light to the House as to when the current energy legislation will be reviewed and adjusted to modern requirements so that the residents of Sark have the option and the freedom to choose sustainable energy solutions?

When will the Committee present a report to the House outlining a complete policy relating to sustainable energy? And why have valuable sustainable projects like, for example, the project led recently by Mr Anthony Beaumont, received negative feedback from the Sustainable Reasonably Priced Electricity (including Broadband) PDT?

220 Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Moerman.
Conseiller Mallinson, thank you.

225 **Conseiller Mallinson:** Thank you.

We have been asked to clarify the current legislative position with regard to renewable energy solutions. All such installations need permission from the Development Control Committee but there is currently no other legislation that covers them.

230 There is a provision in the Renewable Energy (Sark) Law, 2010, to introduce licensing for renewable energy systems based on land as well as at sea. An installation would be exempt from the need for a licence if it heats water for the sole use of the premises in which it is installed that does not generate electricity; or generates electricity for the sole use of premises in which it is installed and has a rated maximum output of no more than 20 kW; or generates heat for the sole use of premises in which it is installed and has a rated maximum heat output of no more than 20 kW. Such licensing would therefore cover large installations or those where the owner plans to sell electricity to other people. However, the introduction of this licensing is contained within the draft Renewable Energy (Sark) Ordinance, 2016 which, as it deals mainly with tidal generation of energy, has not been regarded as a priority for Law Officers' time and has not been brought into effect. That licensing would enable Chief Pleas to take account of a number of considerations including the likely social and economic impact in Sark of the operation, deployment, use or decommissioning of the renewable energy system.

240 There is currently nothing in law to stop an individual selling electricity that they generate to Sark Electricity Limited. We understand that the policy of SEL is that they will only connect such systems to the grid on the basis that the owner sells all their generated electricity to SEL at a price reflecting variable costs, and buy back all the electricity they use at the full normal rate. This is because, as Mr Gordon Brown rightly pointed out in the documented meeting that he held with Conseiller Karen Adams in October 2016, there is a social equity concern about such schemes. If those that can afford it put in their own panels to generate their own electricity, only using SEL as back-up, the fixed costs of SEL are spread over fewer units and this means that the price to other people would have to go up even further, otherwise these systems currently have to be completely self-sufficient or off-grid with battery storage and back-up generation.

250

255 In response to the second question, the Policy Development Group asked the Policy Development Team in March 2017 to define a policy for Chief Pleas to agree that sets out what a sustainable energy supply would be and what options there are to deliver this. It is the aim of the team to produce an initial draft policy for debate by Chief Pleas by the end of this year. If this changes we will inform Chief Pleas.

260 And on the third question, we are not sure why Conseiller Moerman has the idea that the team has given negative feedback to renewable energy projects as we do not believe that we have given any such negative feedback. We have been approached by several parties proposing renewable energy solutions for Sark and we are meeting with all such people to inform the team's development of policy.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Mallinson, on your maiden speech and with a handicap; very well done.
265 Conseiller Moerman.

Conseiller Moerman: Sorry to add again.

270 **Conseiller Mallinson:** That is all right.

Conseiller Moerman: So are you actually telling us that you have not given negative feedback, and the PDT has not said that it will wait to consider any sustainable project to hear about the Royal Assent and the putting in place of the regulation of electricity? Is this correct?

275 **Conseiller Mallinson:** It is correct that we believe we are not in a position to move forward with any sustainable energy schemes for the Island while we are not in a position to connect them to the infrastructure in a sensible way. Therefore we have said that until the current situation is resolved as regards the Royal Assent for the regulation of electricity we do not believe it is appropriate actually to move forward, as a Government, with any schemes.

280 It is also the case that at the moment the Government does not generate or supply electricity. Sark Electricity Limited has that responsibility on the Island, so it is not actually for the Government to install sustainable schemes.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Mallinson.
285 Conseiller Moerman.

Conseiller Moerman: Sorry to add again, but therefore let's do absolutely nothing on the sustainable electricity side until that regulation of electricity comes in, there is no need to look at research or do absolutely anything.

290 Thank you.

Conseiller Mallinson: I think our interpretation and Conseiller Moerman's is perhaps slightly different. I do not think we are doing nothing. We are, as I said earlier, listening to a number of different people who have alternative schemes for the Island that they believe would provide sustainable solutions for the Island, and we are working on a policy statement for the end of the year.
295

So there is work going on at the moment but in terms of actually installing schemes no, we are not in a position to do that.

300 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Mallinson.
Anything to add, Conseiller Moerman? (**Conseiller Moerman:** No.) No? Thank you.

**4. Future Shape of Chief Pleas Results of Public Consultation –
Policy & Performance Committee Report considered –
Proposition carried**

To Consider a Report with Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Future Shape of Chief Pleas Results of Public Consultation'.

Proposition:

That Chief Pleas takes note and gives consideration to the contents of this report and that it contributes to the debate on the Future Shape of Chief Pleas.

The Deputy Speaker: If we are happy with that we will move on to the next Agenda Item which is Agenda Item 4: to consider a Report with a Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Future Shape of Chief Pleas Results of Public Consultation'.

I would like to ask Conseiller Charles Maitland to introduce the Report.

Conseiller Maitland: Sir, Conseiller Jane Norwich will be doing the next three reports.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Maitland.
Conseiller Jane Norwich.

Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich: Item 4, this Report contains the results of public consultation on standing for Chief Pleas. It was undertaken to assist Chief Pleas in understanding what numbers and what appetite there is for people of Sark to serve in Chief Pleas.

I would like to just address a couple of points that were actually raised in the consultation that might help the public relating to question 5. The administrator, and I am assuming the respondent meant the Senior Administrator, did not make the changes to the Committee structure, that was done by Conseillers voting in Chief Pleas in this House.

And about mandated Committees, they are all of equal standing – there are operational Committees and there are policy Committees. Speaking as a Member of P&P – that is Policy & Performance – we usually start our meetings at 4.30 p.m. That is still within my working day but I move my day job to work around to fit it all in. I just find the normal length of meeting of two and a half hours hard work, and that is without all the necessary preparation.

What I can say is that this is a consultation that is very relevant to the future of Chief Pleas. Sark itself has been very clear in saying it wants change. It wants the right to change. It wants Chief Pleas to do something about the way it works. It clearly expects professional standards in the future. The Proposition is asking Chief Pleas to listen and read those responses within the Report and take note of those contents.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Norwich.
Are there any questions or comments?
Conseiller Baker.

Conseiller Edric Baker: Thank you, sir.

A tremendous amount of work has gone into this Report and there is no doubt of that, and I thank Conseiller Norwich for all the long hours that she has worked on this.

However, the consultation exercise from my point of view is a disaster. Eighty-eight residents responded; 35 residents wanted a complete change to Government to be encouraged to stand for election. I do not believe we should have a change based on 'maybes'.

When you think of the people's responses there are other petitions, online petitions, that paint a different picture. An unnamed petition spoke of 87 people wanting to 'Save Sark from

the Chief Pleas'; whereas another petition, 'Save Sark from the Barclay Brothers' attracted 13,800 signatures. I will leave that with you to think about.

345 Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Baker.
Conseiller Guille.

350 **Conseiller Guille MBE:** I would like to also commend the Good Governance PDT on the amount of work that they have done in setting up the questionnaire and the collation of the results in what was quite a short amount of time.

I think many of us would not be surprised by the results or the relatively small number of residents not involved with Government that responded. However, some Conseillers and others
355 who are not eligible to stand due to their appointments responded, and that would bring the percentage of non-involved residents down quite considerably from the overall 20% quoted in the conclusion section of the Report.

It is interesting to note how often the Sark Newsletter came in for negative comment and the damaging effect it is having on the lives of Islanders; but then that is, in my opinion, its purpose.

360 There was also some support, just over a third of respondents, for reducing the number of Conseillers in Chief Pleas and it seemed to range from 10 to 16 – and that would seem to me the reason why the PDT might have plumped for a Chief Pleas consisting of 14 Conseillers, which we will be discussing in a later Agenda Item.

As we are only being asked to take note of the Report I shall be voting for the Proposition.

365 Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Guille.
Are there any other questions?
Conseiller Diane Baker.

370 **Conseiller Diane Baker:** I have read all the reports presented by Policy & Performance with a sadness that comes from acceptance.

We have tried so hard to keep Sark different but still trying our best to be correct. I believe we could have worked together much better had everyone wanted to. Sadly, some simply want
375 to cause difficulties where there should not be. Change has come to Sark and we do need to further those changes.

Reading the Report concerning the public consultation is in itself sad – only 88 respondents, with comments ranging from, 'Not prepared to become a target for the Barclay Newsletter', to, 'You get no thanks from the general public'. I can live without the thanks if Sark becomes a
380 better place for my children and grandchildren to live.

It is now obvious we need to make changes we have tried hard to manage without. We do have to reduce the numbers in Chief Pleas. We do need Committee support but it will come at a price. I believe the Policy & Performance Committee are trying hard to keep some of the costs
385 down and the number of committee support officers, although increased, seems to offer a reasonable system for committee work.

I have to say that had I not been involved in Chief Pleas for many years I also would not stand for election. It is quite intimidating but because I have learnt so much over the years it is not quite so daunting; or maybe I simply want to see us work as a Government.

390 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Diane Baker, points well made.
Are there any other comments from the floor?
Yes, Conseiller Cottle.

Conseiller Cottle: Thank you.

395 The responses from the 20% of the population who were concerned enough to respond
include a range of very valid reasons why they feel unable or unwilling to stand, including lack of
time available, other commitments or the belief that they could not contribute within the
current set-up. That could be because the person feels that being a Conseiller is not for them,
they do not believe that they have the skills or there is not the support to learn how to become
400 effective in that role. There is criticism that goes with the job and not everyone can put up with
that, whether it is justified or not, and it can be difficult from the outside to see what is being
achieved at times.

In the consultation the most frequent answer to the question, 'What would encourage you to
stand in future elections?' was, 'Change in mechanism of government, change structure, change
405 current method of work, reduce numbers of Conseillers', given in some form or other by 35 of
the 88 respondents.

Change is difficult; it does not always give certainty, and sometimes no improvement, but if
something is not working properly or sustainably then you cannot just carry on as you are unless
you wish to just accept the inevitable. With a number of current Conseillers not wishing to
410 continue beyond 2018 and only seven persons actively considering standing, with a further
seven persons possibly thinking of doing so, it is hard to see how anywhere near the current
24 Conseillers for 2019 could be achieved, let alone have enough candidates for a contested
election to fill all 28 seats as currently required.

We can only have a government that the people of Sark are willing to support and that
415 includes enough of us standing for election and participating. It has become clear that our small
population will not provide enough candidates for our current set-up for the reasons given. The
evidence is in the replies to the consultation, so we have to accept that and consider an
alternative way of working. There are proposals for that in the following reports which we have
to debate and consider before we decide how to vote today.

420 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Cottle.
Conseiller Sandra Williams, thank you.

Conseiller Sandra Williams: I would just like to make one point and I would also like to
425 congratulate Conseiller Norwich on all the work she has put into this Report, even though she
knows that I am going to be picking holes in it!

I am struggling in my own head to understand why 35 people, out of 88 people who
responded, want to see a change in mechanism of government, change of the structure, change
of the current method of work and reduced numbers of Conseillers ... Thirty five people out of
430 the residents of Sark – which must be 400? (*Interjection*) 450? – we are looking to change our
structure of government? I cannot understand it.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Williams.
Before we go back to the vote on the Proposition does anyone have anything else they would
435 like to add to this debate?
Conseiller Maitland, thank you.

Conseiller Maitland: This is just an information report; we have not got the vote which will
be –

440 **A Member:** There is a Proposition.

Conseiller Maitland: Is there a Proposition?

445 **Several Members:** There is a Proposition.

Conseiller Maitland: Oh right, that we take note?

The Deputy Speaker: Yes, thank you, Conseiller Maitland.

450 Conseiller Norwich, anything else that you would like to add before we go to the vote?

Very good, in that case if we could please go to the vote. The Proposition is that Chief Pleas takes note and gives consideration to the contents of this Report and that it contributes to the debate on the Future Shape of Chief Pleas. Those in favour; those against. **Carried.**

Thank you for that.

**5. Future Shape of Chief Pleas – Tasks and Skills Analysis –
Policy & Performance Committee Report considered –
Proposition carried**

To consider a Report with Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Future Shape of Chief Pleas – Tasks and Skills Analysis'.

Proposition:

That Chief Pleas takes note and gives consideration to the current work undertaken by the mandated Committees; to look at the standards, skills and capabilities required by those Committees of Chief Pleas, to operate in an effective, efficient and proportionate way, for the foreseeable future.

455 **The Deputy Speaker:** Moving on to Agenda Item 5, to consider a Report with a Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Future Shape of Chief Pleas – Tasks and Skills Analysis'.

Once again, I would like to turn to Conseiller Jane Norwich to introduce this Report.

460 **Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich:** Thank you.

This Report on the Tasks and Skills Analysis again just has a Proposition for your information and taking note.

The Report looks at the work undertaken by Conseillers working as politicians and as volunteer public servants. It looks briefly at the other public servants of Sark too. It has been
465 looking at what we are doing now. The future way we work is up to Chief Pleas. It does not include the work done by the Policy Development teams which, as some of us know, can be considerable.

I would just like to ask Conseillers to consider should we carry on in this current way of working? Is there another way?

470

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you Conseiller Norwich.

Any comments or questions on this Report?

Conseiller Guille.

475 **Conseiller Guille MBE:** This is another detailed report from the Good Governance PDT and shows just how much time is spent by Conseillers not just in their parliamentary work but the Civil Service-type roles that they undertake, often without remuneration.

However, some Conseillers are remunerated in the work that they undertake and, were that remuneration to be taken away, i.e. you cannot be a Conseiller and a paid employee of the
480 Government, then the likely pool of Conseillers would be reduced significantly because many Conseillers must work to provide a living for themselves and their families. As an aside,

Members of Chief Pleas know my own views on a particular role, but I lost the argument with that one.

485 One of the problem areas is that if you reduce the number of Conseillers in Chief Pleas from the current 28 to, say, 14 then to carry out the same functions, Chief Pleas must utilise some from the rest of the population to do those tasks. Will you be able to find those volunteers? Are you going to have to employ the redundant Conseillers and pay them to do the tasks that they did as part of their public service to the Island?

490 The collated figure for volunteer hours comes to almost 6,000 – I think it is 5,730 but I like to round things up. And even at a modest figure of £10 per hour that means the public purse, the taxpayer, having to find somewhere in the region of £60,000 each year to fund that work now being undertaken as a public service. I think that is something we do need to consider.

Once more we are only being asked in the Proposition to take note of the Report, therefore I shall be voting for the Proposition.

495 Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you Conseiller Guille.
Conseiller Moerman.

500 **Conseiller Moerman:** First of all, I share completely Conseiller Guille's point of view about the conflict of interest between being a Conseiller and working as a committee support officer. Secondly, there is one part that I found very interesting in that Report:

Changing the numbers of Conseillers without looking at the work of government as a whole is at risk and would be irresponsible. We need to look at the risk of change and the risk of not changing.

I think we also need to look and do an analysis of the financial consequences of changing.
Thank you.

505

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Moerman.
Do we have any other comments?
Conseiller Edric Baker.

510 **Conseiller Edric Baker:** Thank you, sir.

As an information paper the contents are very good; all the required data is there. My opinion is that this paper, like similar Agenda Items, has the effect of making some Conseillers feel very inadequate, particularly those like myself who are cursed with a bad education. Please remember we are all unpaid volunteers.

515 Thank you, sir.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Baker, points well made.
Do we have any other points or comments from the floor?
Conseiller Cottle, thank you.

520

525 **Conseiller Cottle:** There is a long list of people on page 3 of this Report that we already employ. Most of them are various degrees of part-time and several people perform more than one of the roles listed, but the wage bill adds up to a very significant part of the Island's budget already. Then there are volunteers who fulfil roles that may be paid elsewhere, but because it is what Sark has always done and what has always happened on Sark, people do their bit to get things done and it is affordable for everyone collectively.

Conseillers are included in filling those unpaid voluntary roles, not just doing political work but also doing many other tasks that we do not employ someone else to do. No one should be criticised for volunteering; it is what has made Sark work. There are plenty of capable people

530 here who turn their hands to many things and are willing to learn new skills when there is a gap,
and are appreciated for doing so.

Having said all that, there is a 'but' that follows. Volunteers do lots of things well but there
are jobs that are best done by those who have had training and have qualified in their specialism
and made it their career. We already have a number – such as a doctor, teachers, a chartered
535 accountant as Treasurer – whose expertise benefit the Island greatly, but there are other roles
that need expertise that we do not employ to do work we are not getting done currently. It is up
to us whether we want to get more done more effectively and whether we want to make an
investment in that.

There will be cost in that but there will also be cost in choosing not to do things. There will be
540 opportunities we will miss and unforeseen outcomes that could have been avoided if action had
been taken. That is the choice we have to make. There will also be efficiencies from doing things
properly, more chance to avoid waste and getting things done on time when delay can cost
money.

While we are saying we cannot afford it, we also need to consider if we can afford not to. If
545 we have less people volunteering to be Conseillers then we cannot stop doing the things that
have been done by them in the past or present. In that event we need to decide how best we
replace and potentially enhance that.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Cottle.
550 Are there any other points or comments?
Conseiller Moerman.

Conseiller Moerman: Before we dig further on the debate I thought I should set the financial
scene.

555 I have been looking at the evolution of the amount of the total direct taxes raised since 2008
and it is rather breathtaking: in 2008, £489,000; in 2009, £510,000; in 2010, £504,000; in 2011,
£535,000; in 2012, £557,000; in 2013, £574,000; in 2014, £658,000; in 2015, £713,000; in 2016,
£728,000; in 2017, estimated £743,000.

560 Where do we stop? The sky seems to be the limit. We do not need more taxes. What we
need is more taxpayers; and in order to get more taxpayers we need an economy and we need
to focus on that.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Moerman. Sorry –

565 **Conseiller Moerman:** By the way, the calculation – based on the current number of taxpayers
and in the current proposed draft budget – to meet that would be an additional tax per taxpayer
of £174.

Thank you.

570 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you once again, Conseiller Moerman.
Are there any other general comments on the points that have been raised in the last few
minutes?

Conseiller Raymond.

575 **Conseiller Raymond:** We are trying to work out how many numbers we actually need sitting
in this Assembly, sir.

I think to do that we need to be pretty clear of what we are trying to achieve. Yes, we must
aim at contested elections and if lowering the numbers makes that possible then that will have
580 to flow from that. There is an implied undercurrent that the vacuum – if there is one – may have

to be filled by paid employees of the Island and the cost, and thereby the effect on the taxpayers, are at present unknown – and I can feel quivering to my left.

585 Sark is very small and we know that it tries to operate on a minimum system of taxation; therefore it cannot expect to have everything that other jurisdictions utilise and that must be borne in mind when people have aspirations for future expenditure. We could, however, look at the way in which we work. Can we any longer manage if we insist that we separate the policy Committees from those that administer; or should we reduce the number of Conseillers on those Committees – and I have heard Conseiller Guille say this before – and release some for administration? I say this because out of 24 Conseillers some nine are not available for
590 administration as they are confined to policy Committees.

We have not researched the greater use of unpaid volunteer assistants on Committees and it may be that people would volunteer for a one-Committee assignment. A number of members of the Island community do have valuable experience which they would be prepared to devote to the work of one Committee, and this would reduce the amount of time demanded of
595 Conseillers.

But overall there must be a move: we have to try to work smarter and not just harder and this means that we must work out what we seek to achieve, what we can achieve and what those, who regrettably judge us, will allow us to achieve. Whilst we live and work amongst the community of Sark we are judged by those who do not. We have to accept that to them we are
600 just a file on a desk; they have no real concept of what we are and what we need. They judge us instead alongside the rest of the world – they ignore our size and they ignore our attitude to the community.

Increasingly, we find ourselves winding our way through legal complexities and we do not have ready access to lawyers working in Committee alongside us and that I think slows our
605 progress. It will greatly aid swift progress if we have a lawyer joining in our deliberations as we go along. This is in my opinion a necessary recruitment.

So I advocate a design of what we do and how we do it; working out what we need to do to make Chief Pleas more effective and more attractive to potential members and speedier in achieving what needs to be done. We just have to make more progress more quickly.
610

What is at stake is a simple question: are we to continue to be a self-determining, self-governing entity? That has to be in the minds of those who sit in judgement on what we do.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Raymond.
Conseiller Sandra Williams, thank you.

615

Conseiller Sandra Williams: I would just like to say: ‘Well said, Conseiller Raymond!’

A Member: Hear, hear.

620 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you for that.
Conseiller Fry.

Conseiller Fry: I would just like to take up one point. Several of the points I agree with, but to say that being Members of P&P or F&R restrict working on other items I think, looking at these
625 reports, cannot really in fairness be said.

Conseillers in all Committees work on administration affairs as well and what Conseiller Norwich has produced is ample proof of that.

Thank you.

630 **The Deputy Speaker:** A point well made, which I am sure is shared by many people. Thank you, Conseiller Fry.

Before we go to the vote on this Proposition, Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich is there anything you would like to add in closing? No? Thank you; very good.

635 In that case if we may go to the Proposition attached to this Report which is that Chief Pleas takes note and gives consideration to the current work undertaken by the mandated Committees; to look at the standards, the skills and capabilities required by those Committees of Chief Pleas, to operate in an effective, efficient and proportionate way, for the foreseeable future. Those in favour; those against. **Carried.**

Thank you for that.

**6. Future Shape of Chief Pleas Amendments to the Reform (Sark) Law, 2008 –
Policy & Performance Committee Report considered –
Debate commenced**

To consider a Report with Six Propositions from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Future Shape of Chief Pleas Amendments to The Reform (Sark) Law, 2008'.

Proposition 1:

That Chief Pleas approves the reduction to 14 of the number of Conseillers specified in the Reform (Sark) Law, 2008 for the composition of Chief Pleas.

Proposition 2:

That Chief Pleas approves the recommendation that Option 2 be adopted as the preferred method of transitional arrangements to implement the change in the number of Conseillers.

Proposition 3:

That Chief Pleas approves the recommendation that the number of Conseillers required for a quorum at a meeting of Chief Pleas remain at 9.

Proposition 4:

That Chief Pleas approves the recommendation that a by-election should be held upon the occurrence of a single vacancy as set out in this Report.

Proposition 5:

That Chief Pleas approves the changes to the closure period of the electoral roll and the correction of the drafting error outlined in this Report.

Proposition 6:

That Chief Pleas directs the Policy and Performance Committee to request the Law Officers of the Crown to draft the necessary legislation required to implement the above resolutions.

640 **The Deputy Speaker:** Moving on to Agenda Item 6 and once again I will read this out, to consider a Report with Six Propositions from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Future Shape of Chief Pleas Amendments to the Reform (Sark) Law, 2008'.

This is a very important document, a very important Report, and once again I am going to call on Conseiller Jane Norwich to introduce it.

645

Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich: This Report, given some of the important legal aspects, was written with the support of the Law Officers.

When I was being encouraged to stand for Chief Pleas by the late Dave Melling, I asked him what the future held for Sark and Chief Pleas. He was very clear that he wanted things to remain

650 as they were, for Sark to get on with things as we always had; but that change was coming to
Sark whether he liked it or not and that it was better to fight from the inside rather than criticise
from the outside. He spoke often about his sadness and frustration at the lack of willingness of
people to serve in various capacities in Sark in Chief Pleas and in other areas such as charity
events. He spoke about the pool of the willing that was getting ever smaller and older. As ever,
655 he was also concerned about the cost.

But his major concern at our many discussions was about the reputation of Sark and of
wanting it to succeed and to remain in the driving seat where its future was concerned. Little did
I realise it was going to be me presenting this Report that asks Chief Pleas to look to the
foreseeable future and face that change.

660 Today is a day for looking at the reputation of Sark, its future and how many people will be in
the willing group in December 2018.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Norwich.

Do we have any comments or questions from the floor?

665 Conseiller Maitland.

Conseiller Maitland: Firstly, I have always found change an exciting process, an opportunity
to do things differently, learn from the past, learn from past mistakes and generally improve
things. But I also understand that to others change is uncomfortable and threatening.

670 Because nothing much had changed in Sark for so long and then the enormous upheaval
leading to 2008, nothing had been done to make the structure of Government more workable
and Chief Pleas has been faced with a really daunting challenge over the last few years. We
tweaked the Committee structure last year but were not brave enough to completely reform it.

The consultation process undertaken by the PDT – and I have nothing but admiration for the
work undertaken by Conseiller Jane Norwich and her team – shows that there is a deep disquiet
out there about how Sark governs itself. And I have to agree that Sark deserves better than the
present system. Also I have the firm belief that unless Sark changes and modernises the way we
govern ourselves we shall never get to grips with the challenges that face us – I think I have been
banging on about this subject for quite a number of years. Failure to adapt might also mean that
680 we lose the self-governing status that we now enjoy.

The trouble with voluntary Conseillers undertaking operational tasks – and it is quite a
reasonable problem – is that no one likes to challenge incompetence or inadequate work; there
seems to be this feeling that because we are unpaid, that can be tolerated. For instance, why
has the Government spent £40,000 plus on buying a new incinerator as a matter of urgency
685 which six months later sits down at the Harbour, still not commissioned and not yet operational?

If you pay people you can demand standards of work and give them contracts of employment
and terms of employment. That is why I am of the firm belief that the Government should be
professionally run to modern standards and that on the whole a Conseiller's role should be that
of setting policy and not operating the policy. Of course such change may affect some of those
690 Conseillers who at present undertake paid work for the Government and I expect some of those
may wish to declare their interest before we come to a vote.

Back at the Easter Meeting in 2013, Sark faced a similar challenge when it refused to agree to
the role of the Senior Administrator. It was a close-run thing with Chief Pleas being divided down
the middle and the Proposition was lost by just one vote. Predictably a number of Conseillers
695 voted against the Proposition, saying that the move could not be afforded. Unfortunately I was
not present five weeks later, having resigned at that meeting after recovering from a serious
operation, when the same Conseillers underwent a miraculous conversion and voted for the
role. Perhaps they peered over the precipice and realised that there was really no alternative.

We are in a similar position today: the precipice is before us and I think it would be very
700 unwise to think that if this Proposition is rejected we shall necessarily get another chance. We

have to consider the question, 'What if ... ?' I do not know what would happen if Conseillers refused to accept the work of the PDT and the evidence that is before us.

705 His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor was asked this question last week when he came over. In his reply he referred to interventions by the UK government where there had been unrest or corruption in Overseas Territories. But such a situation does not apply to Sark. The situation that might apply, however, was if there was no workable government in Sark – in other words, if the Government of Sark was deemed to be unable to meet the challenges in front of it.

710 As we now know, the appointment of the Senior Administrator did not lead to the bankruptcy of the Sark Government and we can, and do, afford the cost. In fact we have continued to accumulate surpluses of around £100,000 per year at the same rate as before. I am sure, having chaired GP&A and then P&P before and after the introduction of the role, that it is absolutely crucial to the way that Sark governs itself. Much of the work of the Senior Administrator takes place behind the scenes and does much to reassure other jurisdictions that we are doing things properly and are beginning to mature as a new democracy.

715 I should just mention here Kath Jones's qualifications, should anyone need reminding of the depth of her training and experience: she has had 23 years in the public sector in the UK as a senior human resources manager, senior IT manager and numerous other corporate roles which include governance, policy and strategy. She has a Master's degree in Business Administration – an MBA – and has done a Future Leaders Programme for the public sector at Ashridge Business School, as well as a course at the Tavistock Institute on organisation, culture and change. She is just the person to carry Sark forward and help us to develop a government that is fit for the 21st century.

720 The role of the Senior Administrator, together with the new draft job description and proposed upgraded salary, is being dealt with in Item 8. But I would like to urge all Conseillers to meet Adam Barker when he visits Sark on 14th July in order to discuss the rationale behind these proposals.

730 Originally when looking at the ages of the present Conseillers and who is coming up for retirement, myself included, I had settled on 12 as being the number that Sark could well support, but 14 as suggested here seems as good a place to start as any. It is important we are realistic and do not fudge the issue.

So I urge Conseillers to support the Proposition and then help to work out the best structure of Government to take us forward. A small, streamlined, efficient organisation, professionally run, that is fit for Sark and its future. I think that is an exciting prospect.

Thank you.

735

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Maitland, points well made.
Conseiller Sandra Williams.

740 **Conseiller Sandra Williams:** In an ideal world wouldn't it be lovely that Sark could afford a fully paid Civil Service? And I just wanted to say that I was not aware we were discussing the Administrator's role in this Report, I thought it was coming later on.

745 I think somewhere along the line it slightly underestimated the amount of work that is done by the operational Committees. I am struggling to understand how 14 Conseillers, when you have got four on F&R, and four on P&P – and you are going to end up with five on P&P – that leaves five Conseillers to work on all the other Committees, whether you make them into three Committees or five Committees or however many Committees you are going to decide we are going to have ... I think you are going to struggle.

750 I will not be supporting any of these Propositions unless the Committees can be persuaded to change the number. We are not being asked to accept them, we are being asked to allow you to go to the Law Officers to deal with the composition of Chief Pleas. I think you need to be looking at 17 or 19 Conseillers.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Williams.
Conseiller Guille was first, I think.

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Conseiller Guille MBE: After two ‘take note’ reports we have now come to the crux of the matter and decision time for the future of this parliament and of the way this Island is run. The decision we take today will determine if our parliament continues to function in a similar way to that which it has done since the 1920s, with reforms in 1951 and 2008; but leaving the essential structure of political and public service, provided by the membership of Chief Pleas, for the good and benefit of the community with very limited Civil Service support and with all investigations and decisions being made by those same Members of Chief Pleas.

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After 2008 the system changed little until the appointment of a career civil servant in 2013, and I am making a similar point to which Conseiller Maitland did earlier. The appointment was resisted by Chief Pleas at the Easter Meeting of that year. However, as has been the instance for the past 20 years, pressure was brought to bear on Chief Pleas to change its mind and only some six weeks later Chief Pleas held an Extraordinary Meeting and voted for the appointment of a permanent Senior Administrator. The vote at the Easter Meeting was 13 for and 14 against, whilst at the Extraordinary Meeting the vote was 21 for and 4 against – a spectacular turnaround.

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As an aside, both the late Seigneur and I came to the same conclusion independently, that the appointment of a professional civil servant would change Sark even more than the 2008 reforms had done. I believe that over time our conclusions have merit.

It seems to me that the political landscape has changed considerably with many Conseillers and PDTs being afraid to move until they have sanction from the Senior Administrator for their course of action. And I am not denigrating the amount of work that the Senior Administrator does, she does an enormous amount of work; and she takes on an enormous amount of work because she is there and the Committees now say, ‘Would you please do that.’ In the past the Committee got on with its work, brought a short but succinct report to Chief Pleas, written by them and seeking approval to go forward. It did not always get its own way but at least it was openly debated. The Island still operated at a surplus back in those bad old days as it does today.

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An alternative to going for a Chief Pleas made up of 14 Conseillers with Option 2 as the transitional arrangement which is proposed in this Report, is to take a more pragmatic if less evidence-based view. Remember the evidence based on the Report that we discussed earlier – was 88 respondents from an adult population of probably close on 500 – is to reduce the number of Conseillers in bite-sized chunks starting with an Ordinance at Michaelmas reducing the current maximum of 28 down to a maximum of 24. This would also mean that we would not have to hold a by-election to try and build up to 28 over the next two years.

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Then in 2018 we reduce to 22 Conseillers, and in 2020 we reduce again by a further two bringing the total number down to 20; whilst at the same time keeping as much of the public service element of Conseillers’ work going and only employing further paid civil servants where it is deemed to be absolutely necessary. This approach, whilst it contains an element of risk in that there is a greater likelihood of further uncontested elections, provides greater continuity and a Chief Pleas more akin to its roots. I did not stand for election last year in attempting to bolster numbers to obtain a contested election, just to see the number of Conseillers slashed in half just a few months later. That is not why I became a Conseiller.

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It has been said to me that if we do not make the sort of changes proposed in this Report before us then some Conseillers may choose to give up the struggle and step down or not stand for election in 2018. However, under Option 2 there is an election in 2018 for *only one* Conseiller, there being only one vacancy from the 2016 cohort unless other vacancies are created by illness, Father Time, the Grand Reaper or resignations. It is likely therefore that many of the 2014 cohort will just not stand again for that one seat which would be up for contest. Remember that to reduce the number of Conseillers we only need an Ordinance to amend the Reform Law in accordance with section 21(5) to reduce the numbers as I suggested earlier.

800

805 Under the circumstances of just reducing the number none of the Propositions 1 and 2-4
would be required, and we would need to make minor amendments possibly to Propositions 5
and 6. We have plenty of time for further debate on numbers if we go for a staged reduction via
Ordinance whereas we do not have the luxury of time if we proceed down the route of a Projet
de Loi as is currently required.

810 After careful consideration I cannot support Proposition 1 and will vote against it. However,
should Proposition 1 be carried then I will support the remaining Propositions as they make
sense for a smaller Chief Pleas.

I apologise to the Assembly for not providing this in an alternative report with alternative
Propositions, but I did not see this Report until I was leaving Sark to go away on a pre-planned
815 expedition to the battlefields of north-west Europe from World War I. When I came back I was
snowed under with other work and I just did not have the time to put an alternative written
report in front of you supported by, I would hope, at least one other Conseiller.

Before I sit down I would make one further point, and that is how much is the Civil Service
going to cost if a Chief Pleas of 14 Conseillers no longer carries out unpaid public service roles,
820 and where are we going to recruit this burgeoning Civil Service from? Surely this information
should have been provided and costed as part of this Report. As it is, we are being asked to vote
blinker to the cost implications of a decision to reduce to 14 Conseillers. And I call for a named
vote on Proposition 1, Mr Speaker.

Thank you.

825

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Guille.
There is a show of some hands over here.
Conseiller Maitland.

830 **Conseiller Maitland:** I think an answer to Conseiller Guille's concerns, and I can see where
they are coming from, is that we really have to grasp the nettle this time; and if you actually are
realistic about those of us who are sitting here now, there are at least five people who came in
at the last moment in order to carry on for a short time because they had work in progress or
just wanted to help Chief Pleas out. So I think that the realistic number of those actually here for
835 the long term is more like 19, not 24. We cannot carry on revisiting this scenario every year or
two, it is too time-consuming, it has involved an enormous amount of time with the Good
Governance PDT and it is one of those things that have got to be dealt with.

I also think that actually we employ a large number of civil servants or paid employees, and
what is lacking at the moment is the joining-up from the centre to join the whole thing up as one
840 efficient organisation; and that joining-up work is actually done by Conseillers – which I am sure
is not the most efficient way of doing it.

If we actually have an efficient little Government you would be very surprised about the
money that can be saved in all sorts of ways from IT provision, and I know that work has been
done on that already, to the handing out of licences, and all sorts of different ways where the
845 provision is duplicated with different Committees having different responsibilities.

I think we cannot carry on just tweaking at the edges, I think that it is time now for a
21st century Government in Sark.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Maitland.
850 Conseiller Jane Norwich.

Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich: I just wanted to clarify that we need an *even* number, which is
why we have chosen 14; you cannot have an odd number because it causes great problems in
the future.

855 The PDT did look at the current House of Chief Pleas; we have all done it, we have all had the
back of the envelope, sat down with all the names and worked our way through. We have all

had discussions with our colleagues as to whether they will serve their full four years or whether they will consider standing again in 2018, and the number is well below 19 that we will be left with.

860

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Norwich.
Do we have any other comments from the floor?
Yes, Conseiller Moerman first, thank you.

865

Conseiller Moerman: I agree with the reduction of the number of Conseillers. That said, I do not know whether 14 is the right number. Why 14? Why not 10? Why not five? Why not one?
What I would like to know first is how much is all of this going to cost? And when we know the bottom line we could then make a decision.
Thank you.

870

The Deputy Speaker: Good question.
Before we go on to the other questions, Conseiller Norwich would you like to address that comment? (*Interjection by Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich*)
No? Okay, thank you.
Conseiller La Trobe-Bateman.

875

Conseiller La Trobe-Bateman: Thank you.
Proposition 1 does not sit very comfortably with me, with the proposed reduction to 14 Conseillers. I understand the need for a contested election in 2018 but to reduce the numbers to 14 will mean the current form of Committee structures will not be able to function. Has Policy & Performance got an idea of the Committee structure and what it would look like with 14?

880

Also, with a huge hole to fill in Conseiller numbers that hole would need to be filled by CSO staff. Has Policy & Performance, with the help of F&R, got rough cost implications for such an increase in staff?
Thank you.

885

The Deputy Speaker: I think in answer to the costing, we just had that answered by Conseiller Norwich. Would you like to address the other point made there, Conseiller Norwich?

890

Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich: Neither the PDT, nor P&P – so with two hats on – have looked at a future Committee structure. It depends on what we vote today as to how we can go ahead. If we do not know what the number is we cannot work out where it goes, and with not knowing what the number is you cannot work out what support staff you are going to need to make it work.

895

But I agree it is not comfortable not knowing the cost, I feel equally difficult about that but you have to start at some point.

The Deputy Speaker: Good point, thank you, Conseiller Norwich.
There are some more hands over here.
Conseiller Dunks.

900

Conseiller Dunks: Prior to the speech by Conseiller Guille I could not see where in the Propositions Conseiller Maitland is referring to me having an interest.

905

When Conseiller Guille raised how much the Civil Service would cost it brought my role as CSO into the debate and therefore I declare a pecuniary interest. Too late to withdraw from the previous part of the discussion but I should withdraw now.

910 **The Deputy Speaker:** Are Members in agreement with that? (*Interjections*)
Conseiller Guille.

Conseiller Guille MBE: I do not believe that he has any more interest than any other
Conseiller who is paid by the Island and I think if they all withdraw we probably will not have a
915 quorum. It is down to the other Conseillers, but I would say that this is such a general subject
that a declaration of interest is not required under the Rules.

The Deputy Speaker: I think what I will just do – and I am a rookie here – I am going to ask
for a show of hands on whether people would feel more comfortable if Conseiller Dunks
920 withdrew at this stage or whether Members are happy for Conseiller Dunks to remain. So can I
have a show of hands for those who initially are happy for Conseiller Dunks to remain? And
anyone who would prefer Conseiller Dunks to retire? Thank you. That is carried. So Conseiller
Dunks may be retained.
Thank you.

925 **Conseiller Dunks:** Under the Rules though I still cannot speak any further nor vote.

The Deputy Speaker: No, good point, thank you very much indeed.
Conseiller Guille.

930 **Conseiller Guille MBE:** That was the issue I was going to raise as I believe this is an important
subject. It is dealing with the size of Chief Pleas and every Conseiller in here, whether they are
employed by the Island or not, should vote on this very important subject.

I would ask Conseillers to consider that this is not a direct pecuniary interest issue for
Conseiller Dunks any more than it is for Conseiller Baker or Conseiller Scott, who are employees
935 of the Island, and they are all going to vote on this and they should vote on this. There is a
fundamental issue here and I would ask you, sir, to think about it and ask the Assembly if they
believe that Conseiller Dunks should be able to speak *and* should vote on this very important
subject.

940 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Guille, a point well made.

So we have voted on the fact that we are happy for Conseiller Dunks to remain in the
Assembly during the debate. Can we please have a second vote on whether Members are happy
that Conseiller Dunks and the other employees should be allowed to vote on all of the
Propositions forthcoming? A show of hands that they should remain and vote. Thank you.

945 And a show of hands for those that think they should not vote. Thank you, I take that as
carried. So those Members employed by the Island are allowed to remain both in the debate
and also be allowed to vote on the various Propositions.
Conseiller Plummer.

950 **Conseiller Plummer:** Thank you.

Just looking at the reduction to 14, I know it has got to be an even number as it has been
pointed out. To have less stress on the Committees should 18 be taken into the whole working
of it? Instead of 14, 18?

955 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Plummer.
Conseiller Norwich.

Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich: I would have to discuss with my colleagues as to whether that number should be changed.

960 **The Deputy Speaker:** Okay, so we will stick with 14 for the time being. Whilst we are discussing that, any other points?
Conseiller Diane Baker.

965 **Conseiller Diane Baker:** I would just like to second Conseiller Plummer's number of 18. I know we are supposed to put a reasoned argument forward but it is a gut feeling, I just feel it is a far better number for sitting in Chief Pleas.

The Deputy Speaker: Very good, thank you.
Conseiller Bateman.

970 **Conseiller La Trobe-Bateman:** I agree also.
I believe reducing the number of Conseillers to 18, or even 20, would mean the current Committee set-up and CSO staff would still work, and give Policy & Performance time to gather more information on the proposed reduction. Twenty would hopefully give us a contested election without putting a huge tax burden on the taxpayer.

The Deputy Speaker: Very good, so we have got three points that would like to review the number.
Conseiller Cottle, I think.

980 **Conseiller Cottle:** Thank you.
The suggestion that was made by Conseiller Guille for an alternative phased reduction in the number of Conseillers: I was one of the ones he referred to that returned to the Chief Pleas at the last minute in the uncontested elections at Christmas last year. I also feel that I came back because I felt there was unfinished work to do and I wanted to be involved in whatever changes were necessary rather than seeing it happen from the outside. That said, how long I continue is a matter of how that pans out.

990 And a phased reduction, I do not see as being a sustainable solution where the number of Conseillers who will stay on in Chief Pleas, and to work down through that reduction of two at a time, two years at a time, will happen. I believe that there will be attrition before that time and we will be forced into another option, or again have uncontested elections. I do not believe that is an option we can take the risk of, I suppose.

995 The proposal to reduce the number of Conseillers to 14 is because it has a very good chance of producing a contested election in 2018 – that is the reasoning behind it; it is not just plucking a figure out of the air. While a gut feeling for 18 might be an alternative we really need a reason behind it so that we can see how that would work.

1000 What *will* be the number that will be workable as a Chief Pleas, there is no way we can be sure about that. The detail of how that will work has not been set out yet. That will require more work and more decisions, and you probably think we are not providing enough information there. But it will in all probability also mean employing more staff to do some of the work currently carried out by the current 24 Conseillers because it is unlikely that unpaid volunteers will do all that work.

1005 What will it cost? We cannot say for certain. It depends on what model is adopted and the extent of the workload allocated to civil servants. However, there should be efficiency savings along with that that can be made. We raised £100,000 more in taxes and other income than we spent last year. We do not need to do that and we should not do that, so Finance & Resources Committee will be looking at why that has happened and working out how the money that is

raised can be spent more effectively; and if some of that money is freed up for the work that will be necessary after if this Proposition is carried then that is there as an alternative.

1010 The only alternative to the Report, other than the phased reduction that has just been brought, is voting against the Proposition and preserving the *status quo*. Preserving the *status quo* will not actually mean that, it will in all probability mean another uncontested election and an unsupportable government. That does not seem to me like a choice we can make, however challenging the alternative is. I think we need to face that challenge. There are no guarantees, but if we do not try we will not know. There are alternative arguments and having listened to them all we have to vote for a course of action that we believe is correct and is best for Chief Pleas going forward and everybody will have to make their own decision on that.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Cottle.

1020 Are there any other comments or points from the floor?
Conseiller Maitland.

Conseiller Maitland: I would just like to make the point as well that Sark is sitting on a nest egg, or whatever you would like to call it, of over one and a half million – I think it is £1.7 million – and there is no reason why for this sort of major project a one-off payment cannot be taken from those resources to help. I mean, that it is obviously for the Chief Pleas to decide, but we are sitting on a good sum of money and you cannot carry on just accumulating these funds *ad infinitum*.

1030 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Maitland.
Conseiller Norwich next, please.

Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich: I just wanted to say that on the phased proposition by Conseiller Guille, I would like to speak with our Law Officer who is here today to find out what that situation is. So if there is a convenient moment for a short adjournment that would be helpful.

1040 Also to say that the PDT, in consultation with lots of Conseillers we asked, looked at *active* Conseillers – and not all Conseillers in this House are active, some are restricted by their family and work commitments. But I think we should all look, on our Committees, how many do turn up every time whilst they are on Island and how many undertake work between; and that further reduces the number of Conseillers who are actually supporting the current Chief Pleas with a lot of hard work.

The Deputy Speaker: Point well made, thank you very much indeed.

1045 In a few moments I am going to call for a recess to allow the Committee to speak with Crown Officer Ogier, I think I shall call a 10-minute recess. But before I do that I would just like to take points from Conseiller Moerman.

1050 **Conseiller Moerman:** I would like to say that I absolutely, completely disagree with Conseiller Maitland's statement. I really do not feel it is appropriate to use reserves to fund the operation of Government.

Thank you.

Several Members: Hear, hear.

1055 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you.
Conseiller Cottle first, followed by Conseiller Raymond.

Conseiller Cottle: Thank you.

1060 I was just going to make the same point. But really if we are talking about using reserves, then that may be appropriate if there is a one-off cost involved in something that is proposed and we can see the benefit of it; but if we are putting a structure in place that has a defined ongoing cost then we could not possibly consider dwindling the reserves so that we trickle them away and do not raise enough tax to support whatever system we put in place.

1065 We have to have a tax system that supports the system we put in place and do not expect that to be reserves until sometime in the future when we are no longer sat here, the Island has a crisis. I do not support that view at all.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Cottle.
1070 Conseiller Raymond first, please.

Conseiller Raymond: Just a further howl of protest from F&R, sir, to say that ongoing revenue expenditure such as salaries must be raised from taxation. That is *not* what our reserves are for.

1075 **The Deputy Speaker:** Good point, thank you very much indeed.
There were some other hands there.
Conseiller Maitland, again.

Conseiller Maitland: I probably did not make myself clear – it would be purely on a one-off
1080 basis.

Actually it was a point raised by Belinda Crowe in her report, which I also quote in the Role of the Senior Administrator Report:

Failure to invest in the Island and its democratic processes now could result in people being unwilling to stand for election in the future or government being unable to function effectively.

1085 She makes the point that we have a healthy financial surplus, and if we need to use a little bit of it to ensure that Sark has a future and its Government has the support it needs to govern well then we should do so.

I mean it would be a one-off, it would not be an ongoing situation; but as Conseiller Cottle made the point, there could be an argument for one-off payment from it.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Maitland.
1090 Some other hands, I think. Conseiller Cottle is next please, and then I come over to this side.
Conseiller Cottle, thank you.

Conseiller Cottle: I would just like to thank Conseiller Maitland for that clarification.
1095 We do not know what a one-off cost would be so we would have to consider a proposal; it would have to be brought to Chief Pleas if there was a project that needed undertaking to make this work. That would have to come to Chief Pleas for its approval before we could sanction using reserves for that kind of thing but that would be the process, it would be normal.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you for clarifying that.
1100 On this side we have Conseiller Diane Baker.

Conseiller Diane Baker: If we are to have a short break could I ask the Committee to reconsider their number of 14 Conseillers? There have been a number of us that have said it is a little bit too low and I think consideration may just help us all to decide that we would like to
1105 vote for this.

The Deputy Speaker: Very good, okay.
Conseiller Sandra Williams.

1110 **Conseiller Sandra Williams:** I would just like to come back to the point that I am failing to see
how it is going to be a one-off payment. If we are going to reduce the Conseillers from 28 to 14
we are going to enhance the administration in the office, so surely it is going to be a yearly
burden on the taxpayer. There are less taxpayers on Sark now than there have been or will be by
the end of this year, judging by just the few people that I know have left. And yes, I know people
1115 have come into the Island but we cannot say it is a one-off payment for something that is going
to recur every year.

You cannot employ a fully paid Civil Service this year with a surplus and then next year say,
'We cannot afford to pay you that this year, so we are not going to have it.' You need to decide
whether it is going to be a fully paid Civil Service now out of what is made by the taxpayers'
money. And I urge you to give serious consideration to your 14 Conseillers because I fear that if
1120 this goes to the vote now it will lose and we will be no further ahead, looking towards the 2018
elections, than we were before we walked in the door this morning.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Williams.
Conseiller Fry.

1125 **Conseiller Fry:** Thank you.

I, like Conseiller Cottle, stood for re-election last election because of wanting to finish various
things I could see we urgently needed to make changes on. It is very hard to see how we can
continue as we are.

1130 Going on to the financial point, I have been so interested to see that in the new structuring of
the office money has been saved by the new employees being brought in on a part-time basis.
With the Senior Administrator and with the retirement of Brian Garrard, who was the Secretary,
the office is running on a lower price at the moment. It is running extremely efficiently. The
different people employed part-time have different expertise and they are doing the jobs, they
1135 are coming in particularly to do a particular job and they are getting it done quickly and
efficiently and money has been saved. That is the way it is.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Fry.
Conseiller Sandra Williams.

1140 **Conseiller Sandra Williams:** Money was saved last year, but that was with 25 Conseillers. I
am not arguing the fact that the office has managed to save money, what I am saying is that if
you reduce the number of Conseillers to 14 there are going to have to be more hours in the
Committee office spent by *paid* people to do the job that the Conseillers are doing unpaid at the
1145 moment.

I am sorry, but that is the fact.

The Deputy Speaker: Conseiller Fry.

1150 **Conseiller Fry:** Unfortunately the point that Conseiller Jane Norwich made, or somebody
made, is that not all of the Conseillers at the moment are ones who work hard. (**A Member:**
Ooh!) It is a sad truth. I mean I am sorry, I know Conseiller Williams does. Some do not attend
Committee meetings, they do not contribute, they do not take on tasks, and that is a fact.

1155 **The Deputy Speaker:** Okay, thank you, Conseiller Fry.
Conseiller Paul Williams.

Conseiller Paul Williams: Presumably, like you say, there have been savings in the office with
1160 the moneys that are there, but people tend to forget the £35,000 that is paid to the Senior

Administrator, so if you add the two together that is a damn site more than what we were paying before.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Paul Williams.

1165 Do we have any other comments or points from the floor on this very important matter?

I would like to just go back to Policy & Performance and Conseiller Norwich: would the benefit of a 10-minute recess to have a Committee discussion with Crown Advocate Ogier, be useful to you?

1170 **Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich:** It would be very helpful, thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker: Okay, so I would like to propose now, it is 20 minutes to 12, we will take a recess for 10 minutes to allow the Committee to meet with Conseiller Ogier, while the rest of you take a toilet break.

1175 Thank you very much indeed. We will come back at 10 to 12.

*Chief Pleas adjourned at 11.40 a.m.
and resumed its sitting at 11.54 a.m.*

Control of Electricity Prices (Sark) Law, 2016 – Statement by Conseiller Fry

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much indeed.

The Committee did come and ask if they could have two or three extra minutes which we allowed.

1180 Just before we come to the response from the Committee, I would like to call on Conseiller Hazel Fry to make a short statement.

Conseiller Fry: Thank you, sir.

1185 I have some good news that has nothing to do with the current debate. A message arrived this morning, just now, from the Ministry of Justice and I would like to read it out without any further comment:

I can confirm two petitions have been received asserting that the Control of Electricity Prices (Sark) Law, 2016 should not be granted Royal Assent. The MOJ does not consider it appropriate to release the name/names of any petitioner or the substance of any petition without the consent of the petitioner. Both the law and the petitions have been cleared by the UK Ministers for submission to the July sitting of the Privy Council for Her Majesty's consideration. The July sitting of the Privy Council is scheduled for 19th July. MOJ is unlikely to provide any indication of the outcome, it would not be constitutionally appropriate to pre-empt the decision of the Queen in Council.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Fry.

**Future Shape of Chief Pleas Amendments to The Reform (Sark) Law, 2008 –
Policy & Performance Committee Report considered –
Debate continued**

1190 **The Deputy Speaker:** So going back to the Policy & Performance Committee; Conseiller Norwich, would you like to say a few words?

Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich: I was still scribbling there so I hope I read out the right bits.

1195 The PDT has very much listened to the debate which has been swinging in various directions this morning. We have spoken with our Law Officer and we have looked at the suggestion of a staged process and whether that was possible or not and the advice is that whilst it is possible, it is difficult. There are some legal issues. In particular, it affects the transitional process which is part of the whole process and it is that section that requires a Projet, so the Stage 1 would still require a Projet at some point in that process. It is very difficult to achieve that by Michaelmas
1200 to have everything in the right place. So whilst it is possible, it is very difficult, and we do have some restrictions on time with the election being in December 2018.

We have heard about the different numbers of Conseillers that we might include in the Proposition. We have recommended 14 based on the evidence of looking back to well before
1205 2000. We have looked at debates in Chief Pleas, we have looked at the consultation and so on, and we have heard very much the concerns of Conseillers this morning, which are all very valid and I personally do understand that concern. The PDT has had much of the same debate over the last six months.

We have been talking about 18, 20, 19, and there has even been talk earlier about the possibility of going down to 10 and below. Ten and below we do not believe is viable for Chief
1210 Pleas and creates huge risk and huge expense. There are risks to only reducing to 20 and only reducing to 18, and the PDT still feels that with those figures the risk of not achieving a contested election in December 2018 is still a very strong possibility, and we would find that difficult. However, we would consider increasing that number from 14 to 16. It may not seem a large increase and that still has an increased risk of not having a contested election but the PDT
1215 all felt this morning, whilst outside, that we could go with that.

It may not be palatable but we believe that 16 is something we hope Chief Pleas would accept if we are able to change the Proposition.

The Deputy Speaker: Okay, so you would like to make a Proposition to amend the
1220 Proposition to read: 'That Chief Pleas approves the reduction to 16 of the number of Conseillers specified in the Reform (Sark) Law, 2008 for the composition of Chief Pleas'?

Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich: Yes, merely changing the number from 14 to 16; but beyond
1225 that we feel the risk to Chief Pleas and the reputation of Sark is too great.

The Deputy Speaker: Okay, Members you have heard that – thank you, Conseiller Norwich.

Do you have any further questions or any further debate on that primary point of changing it from a proposed 14 to 16? Comments please.

Conseiller Moerman.

1230 **Conseiller Moerman:** The position is still the same, we need some math.
Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: You are asking for the figures, very good, once again.
1235 Any other comments?
Conseiller Raymond.

Conseiller Raymond: Can I just echo what my colleague on F&R has said? We do not know the likely costs of these proposals and it is difficult to support them in isolation.

1240

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.
Any other comments from any other Members?
Conseiller Edric Baker.

1245

Conseiller Edric Baker: Yes, sir.
I think there was a suggestion of 18 by Conseiller Plummer and I certainly would support that.

The Deputy Speaker: We have 16 as the proposal. Do we have any other comments from the floor?

1250

Conseiller Dunks.

Conseiller Dunks: If we modify Proposition 1, you will have to modify the effect of Proposition 2 which still refers to 'Option 2' in the text, which has 14.

1255

The Deputy Speaker: Yes, that is a point well made.
Are there any other comments before we go to the vote on the amended Proposition 1?
Conseiller Sandra Williams.

1260

Conseiller Sandra Williams: I would just like to ask the Committee to reconsider and come back with a figure of 18, sir, otherwise I do not believe it will be passed.

The Deputy Speaker: Okay, you have heard the comments from the floor. Before we go to the vote does the Committee have any further comments to make?

Conseiller Fry.

1265

Conseiller Fry: I would say the compromise we have come to is because we really, really do not want to have another uncontested election and we fear from, not just the questionnaire, but from all that has been said ... I can remember you, Conseiller Sandra Williams, once saying to me you thought 12 Conseillers would be sufficient and we felt that – (*Interjection*) Yes, in a discussion you did, that 16 was a very good compromise.

1270

If we have another uncontested election we are going to be in real trouble of not fulfilling good governance. However, I believe that the other Members of the Policy Development team are open to further discussion about this – am I right Conseiller Norwich? But we have not plucked 16 out of the air as a magic figure: we have plucked it from a lot of research and from the 14 we started with; from counting what people have to say; from counting the Conseillers that will not stand again and that have no intention of moving forward. We are quite an elderly Chief Pleas – I speak for myself – and it will be difficult.

1275

I think we will be in serious trouble if we have another uncontested election; but if the House is in favour we can have another debate about it.

1280

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Fry.
Still on the table at the moment we have the Proposition to change from 14 to 16.
Conseiller Sandra Williams.

1285

Conseiller Sandra Williams: I just wanted to come back and say that out of the 88 people that filled out the forms, I believe there were six or seven that said they would possibly stand in 2018 and I think it is wrong to predetermine what is going to happen in 2018, sitting here in judgement today.

1290 If six Conseillers resigned and did not re-stand in 2018 we would still be 18, so I believe that
with the figure of 18 – with maybe a possibility of two or three more people who filled out the
questionnaire saying that they will possibly stand – we should have a contested election.

The Deputy Speaker: There we are; you have heard the debate – full and interesting.
1295 Before we go to the vote I am just going to go back to Conseiller Norwich to see if you want
to stick with your proposal.
Conseiller Norwich.

Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich: Could we possibly pop out for a few more moments to discuss
1300 the number 18, please?

The Deputy Speaker: You want a further recess. Just one second, I am going to consult on
this because I am not totally familiar with the Rules of Procedure.

Yes, good point. It is now five past 12, I am aware of that and I was going to call a break at
one o'clock for lunch.

1305 I think given the importance of this particular Agenda Item I would like to give the
opportunity for the Committee to go away for an hour and 10 minutes. So I am going to call a
recess for lunch early, now, for an hour and 10 minutes. If the Committee could go away please,
have further discussions with Crown Advocate Ogier and then if we could all return to the
Chamber at quarter past one please.

1310 Thank you very much indeed.

*Chief Pleas adjourned at 12.05 p.m.
and resumed its sitting at 1.14 p.m.*

**Future Shape of Chief Pleas Amendments to The Reform (Sark) Law, 2008 –
Policy & Performance Committee Report considered –
Debate continued; Proposition 1 carried with amendment; Propositions 2-6 carried**

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much indeed for being so prompt. It is just marginally
before quarter past by the clock on the wall.

1315 So, ladies and gentleman of Policy & Performance, through the auspices of Conseiller Jane
Norwich, what have you managed to come up with?

Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich: I would like to thank everyone for giving us the extra time for
further debate; it is very difficult to do it when people are sitting behind and so on in Chief Pleas.

1320 We have listened hard to the debate here today and we share many of your concerns. We
are concerned for the reputation of Sark and the absolute need for good governance. It is
important for Chief Pleas to move forwards, we cannot go backwards. It is with very serious
concerns relating to the risk about increasing the number to 18, but we have listened to the
debate in this democratic House and we accept the need to change the number within the
Proposition to 18 to ensure Chief Pleas moves forwards.

1325 We have great reservations about this number and we hope that those who vote for this
Proposition accept fully the need for their direct engagement in the very necessary process of
making the new committee structure, which will be necessary, work well and support the
alteration and increased workload within the committee office.

1330 The alternative of no Proposition being passed is unthinkable. Progress is better than the
alternative, even if it has got increased risk. Therefore we propose to change the Proposition
from 14, via 16, to 18.

Proposition 2 does not need to be changed as it relates to a process not a given number, the number of 14 was used as an example.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Norwich.

1335 Before we go to the vote on this amended Proposition are there any other comments from Members of the Assembly?

Conseiller Diane Baker.

1340 **Conseiller Diane Baker:** I just want to say thank you. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) I am happy to vote for it with 18, thank you.

Two Members: Hear, hear.

1345 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Any other comments from the floor before we go to the vote? No, okay.

A named vote has been called for, so, Greffier, if we could proceed with that?

I will just read out the amended Proposition, and please correct me if this is not correct: 'That Chief Pleas approves the reduction to 18 of the number of Conseillers specified in the Reform (Sark) Law, 2008 for the composition of Chief Pleas.'

1350 That is the amended Proposition 1 in Item 6.
Greffier.

There was a named vote.

Carried – Pour 18, Contre 5

POUR

Conseiller Diane Baker
Conseiller Edric Baker
Conseiller Peter Byrne
Conseiller Charles Maitland
Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich
Conseiller Dr Roger Norwich
Conseiller Helen Plummer
Conseiller Stephen Taylor
Conseiller Alan Blythe
Conseiller Robert Cottle
Conseiller Antony Dunks
Conseiller Hazel Fry
Conseiller Peter La Trobe-Bateman
Conseiller Christopher Nightingale
Conseiller Cormac Scott
Conseiller Anthony Ventress
Conseiller Sandra Williams
Conseiller Pauline Mallinson

CONTRE

Conseiller Nicolas Moloney
Conseiller William Raymond
Conseiller Reginald Guille MBE
Conseiller Sebastien Moerman
Conseiller Paul Williams

The Deputy Speaker: Very good, thank you.

I can confirm that Proposition 1 is carried: 18 votes Pour, and 5 votes Contre. So Proposition 1 is **carried**.

1355 Moving therefore, if we may, directly on to Proposition 2, which reads: 'That Chief Pleas approves the recommendation that Option 2 be adopted as the preferred method of transitional arrangements to implement the change in the number of Conseillers.'

1360 As Conseiller Jane Norwich pointed out this has not changed and even though the previous Proposition has changed this remains unchanged. So we will have a show of hands, if we may. Those in favour; those against. Proposition 2 is **carried**.

So therefore Proposition 3 ... I think Proposition 3 therefore does not happen. Am I correct in that thinking?

Conseiller Fry: It stays the same.

1365

The Deputy Speaker: It says the same, okay.

So Proposition 3 therefore: that Chief Pleas approves the recommendation that the number of Conseillers required for a quorum at a meeting of Chief Pleas remain at nine. Those in favour; those against. **Carried.**

1370

Moving on to Proposition 4: that Chief Pleas approves the recommendation that a by-election should be held upon the occurrence of a single vacancy, as set out in this Report. Can we have those in favour; those against? **Carried.**

1375

So Proposition 5: that Chief Pleas approves the changes to the closure period of the electoral roll and the correction of the drafting error outlined in this Report. Those in favour; those against. **Carried.** So Proposition 6 is carried. (**Two Members:** Five.) I am sorry, 5 – leaping ahead of myself!

Proposition 6: that Chief Pleas directs the Policy & Performance Committee to request the Law Officers of the Crown to draft the necessary legislation required to implement the above resolutions. Those in favour; those against. **Carried.**

1380

Thank you for bearing with us through that very important debate.

**7. Establishment Review Update –
Policy & Performance Committee Report considered –
Proposition carried**

To consider a Report with Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Establishment Review Update'.

Proposition –

That Chief Pleas notes the content of this report and that further reports will be made to Chief Pleas addressing points 1 to 4 in section 5 above.

The Deputy Speaker: Moving on if we may to Agenda Item 7: to consider a Report with Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'The Establishment Review Update'.

I am going to call on Conseiller Charles Maitland to introduce the Report.

1385

Conseiller Maitland: The Report is self-explanatory and the conclusion sets out the next steps that would have to follow from our decision to reduce the number of Conseillers to 18. It includes what resources the Government would need and will no doubt lead to the costing of the changes and how much can be safely done by using volunteers.

1390

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Maitland.

Does anyone have any questions or comments they would like to make with regard to this Report?

1395

Conseiller Guille.

Conseiller Guille MBE: I have not much to say on this Report other than it is a résumé of what has happened in and around Chief Pleas over the past nine or so months, with no real progress reported on the main establishment review. However, as we have just voted now to reduce to 18, then of course that is going to affect the Establishment Review quite considerably.

1400 I would raise a couple of small but I believe relevant points for consideration. In paragraph 2 it talks about the review of the Seneschal's Court that has been conducted and is only just awaiting the recommendations from the Remuneration Panel. However, Chief Pleas was never asked to approve this review, nor the budget to conduct it. All Chief Pleas had in early 2016 was an information report saying what had happened and what was to happen. For the future I
1405 I would ask Members to be alert to keep check on the policy Committees or any other Committee for that matter where they might be seen to be exceeding their mandate.

Paragraph 3 is just a rehash of the first two reports on this Agenda and a reinforcing of the message in those reports, and an assumption that we must have supported the Proposition in the third report, which of course we have just done but with an increased number of Conseillers.

1410 Paragraph 4 talks about the 5,000 hours of public service administration done by, currently, 24 Conseillers which takes into account of course the four current vacancies. As an aside, having reduced to 18 I hope we will not have any by-elections to try and build ourselves up to 28. We cannot be 24 because the two policy Committees are not allowed to serve on the operational Committees, and there are nine of us on those two Committees. So by my reckoning there are
1415 effectively only 15 Conseillers doing the 5,000 hours of public service work.

I can support the Proposition as it is only a 'to note further work'.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Guille.

1420 Could I just pick you up on one point? The 'cost' that you referred to there, was that borne by Chief Pleas or by the Court?

Conseiller Guille MBE: I believe it came out of the Court expenses budget, but as I was always told when I was trying to spend money as an Island trustee we should know which pot it
1425 comes from; so in my view the Seneschal's Court review should have come out of general revenue so that we, the Assembly, can see how much money was proposed to be spent and actually was spent on the review.

So there was money spent, I have no idea how much for that review to be conducted, and Chief Pleas as a body has no idea how much the review happened either.

1430 Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Based on that point would it be useful for Members to know what that amount was and whether it came from Chief Pleas funding or whether it came from Seneschal's Court funding? Would that be of benefit or is that a side issue?

1435 Conseiller Cottle.

Conseiller Cottle: There is no reason why that amount should not be known, so I will undertake to get that and find that amount out and report it to the Members of Chief Pleas.

1440 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, that would be very useful, I believe.

Any other comments or points with regard to this Agenda Item? No? Thank you very much.

We will now therefore go to the vote, and so Agenda Item 7: to consider a Report with Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'the Establishment Review Update'. The Proposition being: that Chief Pleas notes the content of this Report and that
1445 further reports will be made to Chief Pleas addressing points 1 to 4 in section 5 of the Report. Those in favour; those against. **Carried.**

**8. The Role of the Senior Administrator –
Policy & Performance Committee Report considered –
Proposition carried**

To consider a Report with Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled ‘The Role of the Senior Administrator’.

Proposition:

Conseillers are asked to note the content of the report, take the opportunity to speak with Adam Barker when he visits Sark, and agree to receive further reports on this matter in due course.

The Deputy Speaker: We move now on to Agenda Item 8 which is: to consider a Report with a Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled ‘The Role of the Senior Administrator’.

I would like to ask Conseiller Charles Maitland to introduce the Report.

Conseiller Maitland: Thank you, sir.

I will not repeat much of what I said this morning on the importance of the role and the vital part that the Senior Administrator plays in actually effecting good governance in Sark. I suspect that much of the criticism centred on this Report will have to do with the proposal that the salary attached to this position should be upgraded.

The only thing I would observe is that the figure suggested is very much in line with the package received by Sark teachers, and the head teacher in particular, and that if we were to recruit a replacement this is the sort of figure, at least, that we would have to pay. We expect professional standards in the way the school is run and should expect no less as far as the Government is concerned.

Otherwise, I am happy to answer questions. I should also add that Mr Barker is coming to Sark on 14th July and Conseillers are encouraged to come and meet him and discuss any concerns, because he was the expert that advised the Committee.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Maitland.

Does anyone have any questions or comments of the Committee?

Conseiller Guille.

Conseiller Guille MBE: This is the Report that I take most issue with, and this is not a secret or an ambush of the other P&P Members as I have made my views very clear in Committee. The nub of the problem as far as I am concerned is in the first paragraph on the last page of the Report when it quotes:

... within six months of the Establishment Review findings.

The Senior Administrator was tasked by this Assembly to conduct an Establishment Review and in the Report that came to Chief Pleas it said that their Establishment Review would be followed by a review of the Senior Administrator’s role. Whilst we have had several reports, with a further update at the last Agenda Item, the review has not been completed. Has the Senior Administrator’s eye been taken off the ball by ensuring that the P&P Committee have taken her review out of turn and completed a review without any reference to Chief Pleas for the review to be conducted ahead of the Establishment Review, and allocated resources for the review to be done? And here I am making exactly the same point that I did about the Seneschal’s Court Review: it happened without sight or approval of Chief Pleas conducting that review, and public money has been spent on Mr Barker in producing his report.

1485 I was appalled when I joined P&P to find that the Committee have been acting as if Chief Pleas have an executive style of government and they are the executive. The penultimate paragraph of the review of the Report gives their justification:

The Mandate for the Policy and Performance Committee gives the Committee responsibility to 'nominate the Senior Administrator as directed by Chief Pleas and to recommend their salary and terms of employment.'

1490 Well, the Senior Administrator *was* nominated and a salary and terms of employment set and approved by Chief Pleas in 2015. That mandate does not in my opinion, and I have told them this, give them *carte blanche* to go ahead with the review and pay for that review without any reference to Chief Pleas.

I say again, that P&P – and I am a Member of that Committee – are not an executive Committee, they are a Policy & Performance Committee. They cannot, in my opinion, make major decisions without Chief Pleas' approval.

1495 We *have* a Senior Administrator. I have already said in earlier debate she works diligently, as she is instructed to do, to carry out her tasks, as are the terms of employment; and until the Establishment Review is completed that is how, in my opinion, the situation should remain. That Establishment Review should be conducted by the Senior Administrator under her current terms of employment and salary.

1500 Cunningly, whilst the Report attaches a new draft job description the only reference to a proposed new scale of pay is in the second last paragraph of the Report which says:

The proposed enhanced salary ... has been included in the budget process for 2018 ...

Why not say it in the Report? You have to go and look somewhere else to see what the proposal is for the new job description of the 'senior civil servant', the Senior Administrator at the moment, to be.

1505 And if you look at the P&P budget request, which we are going to come on to in a few minutes, there is an enhanced figure of £53,425 quoted. What you do not know is that this is the middle of a top and bottom range provided by the reviewer. That is a proposed increase for 2018 of something like £16,500. Well, wouldn't we all like an increase of that magnitude in our pockets! And for doing what more work *exactly*?

1510 The Senior Administrator is working for us under terms and conditions at an agreed salary. If Chief Pleas were to be seriously considering upping the role significantly and upping the pay scale to go with it, then surely we should put that new job description, 'Head of the Paid Service' – and I have an issue with Head of Paid Service, does that mean that they are head of the Seneschal who is part of the Paid Service? The Speaker, who is Head of the Paid Service?

1515 No. I think let's be honest about it, we have a Senior Administrator. Head of Paid Service is another word for Chief Executive Officer – three words actually, chief executive officer. If we want a chief executive officer we should be prepared to say so and not hide it as Head of Paid Service, which is a pretty nebulous term. What does it actually mean? I do not know of anywhere else that I have heard that the head of a civil service is Head of Paid Service, and I think it is because people do not want to use the term 'chief executive officer'.

1520 Going back to where I went off-script, we should put that new job description – Head of Paid Service, which I would recommend we change – and salary, out for application and seek appropriately qualified persons to apply for this new role and new salary, with the current Senior Administrator applying for the role in competition with any other applicant. In my view
1525 this is not an attack on the current Senior Administrator, this is saying we are upping the role and we are making the job description much increased in authority, responsibility and possibly powers and therefore that should go out to competition.

I believe this subject to be an appropriate use of the Rule of Procedure for an informal meeting of Chief Pleas, except that the Rule begins:

1530

At the request of a Chief Pleas committee which wishes to discuss a matter that has been directed by Chief Pleas to investigate ...

But of course the problem with the beginning of the Rule is that the Committee has not been directed to review the role of the Senior Administrator, or at least not until the Establishment Review has been conducted. I also do not believe this to be an appropriate matter for the PDG, the Policy Development Group.

1535 Let me now take you to the document enclosed with the Report entitled 'Terms of Reference for the Establishment Review'. Please turn to page 5 under the title 'The scope of the Establishment Review' and look at the note:

The Senior Administrator will not review her own role ...

Jolly good –

... thus avoiding any conflict of interest; however the role should be reviewed independently by competent persons within 6 months of the Establishment Review findings.

1540 It is actually in this Report that this review should not have happened yet, not until the main review was over. With that in mind, why are we discussing the Senior Administrator's role at all? It should not be on the Agenda for this meeting and we should require the Senior Administrator to do her job and complete the Establishment Review before considering her role further.

In view of my concerns about the way that this has been handled, without Chief Pleas' authority, I would ask the Committee Chairman to withdraw the Report.

1545 Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Guille.

Do we have any other points or comments from the floor?

Conseiller Moerman.

1550

Conseiller Moerman: First of all I would say that we are not in Hong Kong, but if we *were* in Hong Kong Mrs Jones would be chief secretary and not chief executive officer. Chief executive officer would be Conseiller Maitland. Secondly, I feel that looking at the bottom line the cost of actually replacing the Senior Administrator would be crippling.

1555 I understand both objections, but for your information what I really oppose actually is the paragraph, the quotation of Belinda Crowe, saying:

There will be a cost. But for Sark to thrive and maintain its uniqueness, it must invest in itself. It has a healthy financial surplus ...

And then she finishes by:

How right she was.

1560 Again, we are not going to fund the pay rise of the Senior Administrator out of reserves. I think that should be funded, if it was deemed appropriate, by taxation. And for your information looking at the draft budget and the proposal, an increased salary for the Senior Administrator would cost the taxpayer £34.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Moerman.

1565 Are there any other points, comments, observations from the floor?

Yes, Conseiller Edric Baker.

1570 **Conseiller Edric Baker:** Yes, sir. I share Conseiller Guille's concerns to a certain extent, although I found the Report quite revealing. I would like to go through it in a bit more depth starting with Mrs Belinda Crowe, who I have known for many, many years. She first visited Sark in 2003 as Head of the Crown Dependencies Division of the DCA; she came to Sark again in 2004 with Lord Faulkner. Belinda's review of the Sark administration in 2012 was produced by a woman who had had many, many years in the Civil Service and that was in her mindset when she produced this review.

1575 I now turn to the Perception Survey. Again, Catherine Hannah from the MOJ produced this and she put in all the headings; and one of the headings which is quoted in the Report is 'Government administration'. Actually 225 residents completed the survey – we have percentages in the Report here in front of us – and in fact it was 93 people that were satisfied or very satisfied; 86 were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied; and 30 did not know. And it said at the end of that statement:

1580

... there was concern over cost and mixed views on the need for a civil servant.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Baker.

I think, Conseiller Fry, you were next.

1585

Conseiller Fry: I was a Member of GP&A when the role of Senior Administrator was passed – with difficulty – and I was involved in the agreement of salary, of job description, of placement and of the choice of the person.

1590 I would say that over the last four years it has been shown to us that the role has grown and developed and changed enormously. I would believe we are very fortunate to have a professional, qualified person – as Conseiller Maitland spoke of earlier – that I would say has held the Government of Sark together over the last years and has assisted us greatly.

1595 The Establishment Review was completed, Chief Pleas decided not to go ahead with it and it was pushed aside. I believe that now, four years later, the time has come when this role actually has to be looked at. I think if we were suddenly without a Senior Administrator we would be in a very sticky situation indeed.

1600 As for re-advertising the job, which has been suggested, I realise the expense and the time involved in that and I wonder does Chief Pleas really want to go through all that again when we have somebody in the role who is actually fulfilling the demands that are made? I would really recommend anybody with any doubts about what our current Senior Administrator is doing to make a point of going and talking to her and just asking her, 'What exactly are you doing?' I think they will be quite surprised at how much is being covered and how important this role is.

Thank you.

1605 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Fry; thank you very much.

Conseiller Guille.

1610 **Conseiller Guille MBE:** Point of correction: the Establishment Review has not been completed. At Midsummer last year a report came in and it is mentioned in the update to the Establishment Review and the Committee chose, because there was opposition to the Propositions in the report of Midsummer last year, to defer any voting on those Propositions. So the Establishment Review has *not* been completed and no one yet from the Policy & Performance Committee has said to this Assembly why they have taken the action without Chief Pleas' authority to conduct a review and spend money without permission of Chief Pleas.

1615

It is clear in the report that the Senior Administrator's role was to be reviewed within six months of the Establishment Review being completed. It is not completed. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Guille.

1620 Would anyone from Policy & Performance like to come back on that?
Conseiller Maitland.

Conseiller Maitland: The Establishment Review, as we have seen today, is an ongoing process and until we actually get the form of Government right it will go on going on.

1625 Last year, unanimously, all five Members of P&P decided that it was time we started to look into the review of the Senior Administrator's role and the salary that she was being paid. None of us are experts in this matter and it took quite a lot of work, including going to see Paul Ferbrache in Guernsey and finding out who would be the right person to do it.

1630 As far as we were concerned the mandate that P&P has, where we recommend the salary and terms of employment of the Senior Administrator, gave us the role to do that. We might be wrong, but that was our perception at the time. We did it in the best interests of the Government and in maintaining the goodwill of the Senior Administrator who, because she is being paid so much less than other professional people on this Island, has really found it a difficult task at that wage. I know she took the job at £35,000 a year, but that actually is not
1635 what her job is worth. That was the perception of the Committee, which included at the time the now President of Chief Pleas.

And there we go, we did it. We have done the Report so what else can we do?

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Maitland.

1640 One second, Conseiller Cottle.
Conseiller Guille first, please.

Conseiller Guille MBE: I have no problem if Chief Pleas had authorised the review. The Committee said that last year the five of them took the view that they had the mandate to go
1645 ahead with the review without the authority of Chief Pleas, which is contrary to all of the reports that they have written.

If they had come to Chief Pleas last year and said, 'The Establishment Review is taking a rather longer time than we thought because of all the changes we are doing. We want now to bring forward the Senior Administrator's review. We wish that to go ahead. We have
1650 investigated and found a person and it is going to cost £x and we will report back in 2017 with the Review', I would have no problem with that whatsoever, Mr Deputy Speaker. The fact is the Committee have conducted a review which I do not believe they were authorised to do without this Assembly's approval.

1655 It is done. It is there. It has made its recommendations. I still do not believe that is the correct way for the Committee to have behaved. Maybe they thought that if they came to Chief Pleas and asked to have the Establishment Review put on one side while we did the administrator's role Chief Pleas might have said, 'No, we do not want you to do that. We want you to get the Establishment Review done and then we will look at the Senior Administrator's role.' I have no
1660 idea what their thought processes were. However, they bypassed this Assembly and I really do object to that.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Guille.

On this side, Conseiller Cottle was first, please – next.

1665 **Conseiller Cottle:** I have not a response to that, so if Conseiller –

The Deputy Speaker: Okay, Conseiller Fry. Thank you.

1670 **Conseiller Fry:** Well, I have to just say it has been done. I am not sure what Conseiller Guille wants us to do. I think maybe the Constable needs to arrest us all or would you like us all to resign? It is a fact: we did what we did with the very best intentions. Nothing has been agreed. As we have said we are asking all Conseillers to go and to speak to Adam Barker when he comes on 14th July in order to understand what we are doing.

1675 This is the beginning. There is no Proposition here to be voted on. We are moving forward as we believe was the correct way to do it and if we have broken protocol I just apologise but say ... I do not know. I do not know what you want us to do. Conseiller Guille is smiling, I am pleased to note; but really what is, *is*.

1680 This is something that urgently needs to be tackled and needs to be looked at, and I do not know what else to say. We are where we are at. This Adam Barker who is an expert is coming to speak to all Conseillers to explain ... to begin to review. This is where we are at and we cannot go back a year.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Fry.
Conseiller Guille was next.

1685 **Conseiller Guille MBE:** I think I will give way to somebody else for the moment, but I do have some other points to make.

The Deputy Speaker: Okay. I will come to Conseiller Bateman in a minute.
Conseiller Cottle.

1690 **Conseiller Cottle:** Thank you.

1695 I have not got a response on that and I am not part of Policy & Performance Committee, but the Report before us is effectively an information report with a Proposition to take note of the contents, so we are not deciding anything today; this Report is before us to consider. We are not changing the contract or the terms of reference or the job description of the Senior Administrator at this point. I think that point just needs making.

1700 But I did have some other comments that I wanted to make. When the job description of the new role of senior administrator, and the associated contract, was being written in 2013 it was something that had not been done before here – setting out what was expected of a person in a role that did not exist at the time of writing. I was in my first year in Chief Pleas and newly appointed on GP&A Committee at the time and I was somewhat surprised that there was not more help being offered from outside to assist in getting those documents right. With that background it was decided that as good a job as possible should be done and it would be seen as a work in progress that would be updated with experience and to reflect the actual extent of the job.

1705 Just relating to the discussion that has gone on, we are all amateurs at this, we are not professional politicians, and if we make mistakes then sometimes we have to hold our hands up and say we will put it right, or look at what we have done and if it needs to change we change. So we brought a job description and a contract with the view that we would review it and consider whether it needed changing. The reason that it has taken until now to bring a proposed updated job description to Chief Pleas is due mainly to the number of other matters that have needed attention in the meantime and provided such a heavy workload for the Senior Administrator.

1715 This new description now reads as a far more realistic assessment of what the job entails and what responsibilities it bears. The role described within it is essential for a properly functioning Government and I believe it should be recognised as such.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Cottle.

1720 Conseiller Bateman. No?
 Conseiller Sandra Williams.

Conseiller Sandra Williams: I would just like to say that we had been informed yesterday, I think – by email if I remember correctly, the email came yesterday, or maybe the day before – to tell us that his gentleman was coming to talk to us about the Senior Administrator’s role, but we are being asked to approve something today. We are only being asked to take note of the Report, to take the opportunity to speak with Adam Barker when he visits Sark and agree to receive further reports on this matter in due course.

1725
 I am slightly concerned about agreeing to anything today, because it appears to me if we agree to something it means we are all happy for it to go ahead and then before we know where we are it will be coming back to us as a report because it was agreed upon. I would like to see the Review completed; I would like to then see the job descriptions changed. I would like to see it come back to Chief Pleas in October or whenever it has to come back and follow the correct procedure. We are talking about £17,500 just in one job description here. We have got a lot more to come yet.

1730
 The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Williams.
 Conseiller Fry again.

1740 **Conseiller Fry:** Just a second. I think that for the similar role in Alderney the amount that is being paid is far in excess of what we are looking for in a similar position.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Fry.
 Just one second, Conseiller Guille. In view of what we have heard, do Policy & Performance want to come back with any closing statement before we go to the vote on this?
1745 Before we do that – just one second – Conseiller Guille.

Conseiller Guille MBE: I have no issue with the role of the Senior Administrator being conducted. I have very real concerns that this has been done without the permission of Chief Pleas. Every report we have seen of substance on the Establishment Review has said – and it is quoted in the Report before us – that it will be done within six months of the Establishment Review being completed.

1750 The Senior Administrator’s role, her current role, her current salary and her current job description was debated in Chief Pleas and approved by Chief Pleas. Conseiller Fry said, ‘Should we all resign?’ No, for God’s sake, do not resign – I take the Lord’s name in vain. We do not need teddy bears thrown out. We are politicians – amateur, might be – we get criticised all the time.

 I am saying that due process and due consideration of the primacy of Chief Pleas – maybe with the best of intentions by the then current membership of the Policy & Performance Committee – has been done with the best of intentions. That is not the point. Chief Pleas is the ultimate authority. We do not have an executive style of government. This body is the executive – nobody else.

1760 I asked earlier for the Report to be withdrawn. I did not just throw that remark in. I believe that the Report should be withdrawn and held in abeyance until such time as the Establishment Review is completed. When we have conducted the Establishment Review and we have decided to look at all the salaries of every other person ... we are going to be quibbling in a couple of months’ time about our Seneschal probably getting another £2,000 a year, bringing him up to probably less than what the Senior Administrator’s role is now requesting as an additional sum of money for that job description.

1770 So the whole object of the administrative review was a global look at Chief Pleas, its establishment, its salaries, the remuneration it pays; and then when that was done and all of that was in the melting pot *then* we conduct a review of the Senior Administrator’s role. It was in

1775 that order that Chief Pleas, last year – or it was the year before, or the year before that? – approved the Establishment Review with the caveat that the Senior Administrator would be looked at once the Review has reported within six months. So I still say that this Report should be withdrawn now – not thrown away. Let’s get the Establishment Review done and then let’s look at the administrator’s role.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Guille.

1780 Are there any other comments from the floor before we come back to the Policy & Performance Committee?

Yes, Conseiller Moloney.

1785 **Conseiller Moloney:** I would just like to say that I completely agree with Conseiller Guille and would like to repeat his call for this Proposition to be withdrawn – or with this Report, sorry, to be withdrawn.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Moloney.

Therefore going back to Policy & Performance, any closing comments from yourselves?

1790

Conseiller Maitland: Well, personally because we are just asking Chief Pleas to note the contents of the Report, I think it should stay. We have put an awful lot of work into it. The present occupant of the post will have been in post for four years this coming November, I think. I was not around in my role when she was first appointed, but I think we owe it to her that we carry this through. It will be up to Chief Pleas to decide what they want to do in due course when the whole thing is presented to Chief Pleas.

1795

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Maitland.

1800 So, therefore, Agenda Item 9: the Proposition remains – (*Interjection*) Sorry, 8, I am working ahead of myself. The Proposition remains: Conseillers are asked to note the content of the Report, to take the opportunity to speak with Adam Barker when he visits Sark on 14th July and agree to receive further reports on this matter in due course. Those in favour; those against. That is close. I think I am going to call for a named vote on this one, please.

Greffier.

There was a named vote.

Carried – Pour 13, Contre 10

POUR

Conseiller Diane Baker
Conseiller Charles Maitland
Conseiller Elizabeth Norwich
Conseiller Dr Roger Norwich
Conseiller Helen Plummer
Conseiller Stephen Taylor
Conseiller Alan Blythe
Conseiller Robert Cottle
Conseiller Antony Dunks
Conseiller Hazel Fry
Conseiller Sebastien Moerman
Conseiller Anthony Ventress
Conseiller Pauline Mallinson

CONTRE

Conseiller Edric Baker
Conseiller Peter Byrne
Conseiller Nicolas Moloney
Conseiller William Raymond
Conseiller Reginald Guille MBE
Conseiller Peter La Trobe-Bateman
Conseiller Christopher Nightingale
Conseiller Cormac Scott
Conseiller Paul Williams
Conseiller Sandra Williams

1805 **The Deputy Speaker:** Right, it was close. It was carried, 13 Pour and 10 Contre. Therefore, that Proposition is **carried**.

**9. Consultation on the Creation of a Statutory Affiliation Jurisdiction in Sark –
Policy & Performance Committee Report considered –
Proposition carried**

To consider a Report with Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Consultation on the Creation of a Statutory Affiliation Jurisdiction in Sark'.

Proposition:

That Chief Pleas notes the contents of this Report, encourages inhabitants to make their views known to the Senior Administrator and agrees to receive further reports in due course.

The Deputy Speaker: Very good, so moving on if we may, to Agenda Item 9: to consider a Report with Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Consultation on the Creation of a Statutory Affiliation Jurisdiction in Sark'.

1810 I will ask Conseiller Maitland to introduce this one.

Conseiller Maitland: Conseiller Hazel Fry will be taking this.

Conseiller Hazel Fry: Thank you.

1815 This is less controversial, and you will be pleased to know I have very little to add to this Report.

I have one or two corrections to make: the Report was first presented to Easter Chief Pleas 2017 – it was lost – so please correct that on the Report, as it is down as 2016. And may I once again emphasise that the purpose of this law is to ensure that Sark children are afforded the same or better protection than their counterparts in other parts of the developed world. Guernsey and Alderney have a statutory law in place. It seems to me to be a disgraceful anomaly that this is not already the case in Sark. Is this the Sark way?

1820 This law is solely for the protection and support of children whose parents are not married. As has come from the shocking report from Jersey this week, welfare of the child trumps all other interests. You will see that there is an explanatory note in layman's terms, in plain English, which will be the basis for consulting the residents of Sark by mail drop. This consultation will begin shortly.

1825 The date of the consultation may change a little from what is on your papers. It has been a very busy time and it may be delayed, but it will be for three weeks when it comes. I would urge you all to encourage every Sark resident to make their views known to the Senior Administrator. Everybody's views will be sent to our Law Officers for consideration and will be incorporated into the law which will come back to Chief Pleas in Michaelmas Chief Pleas meeting.

Thank you.

1835 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Fry.

Does anyone have any points or comments they would like to make on this Report?

Yes, Conseiller Guille.

1840 **Conseiller Guille MBE:** I support the Report. *(Laughter)* **(A Member:** But!) But I wonder why in the Proposition that responses are to be to the Senior Administrator. This is a Policy & Performance Committee Report; we are the Committee that the consultation will go out under. It is our title and I believe the Proposition should be amended to say, '... views known to the Policy & Performance Committee ...' who may direct the Senior Administrator to collate them and come back to the Committee with the report. I would just ask Conseiller Maitland and the remainder of the Policy & Performance Committee ... and once again I apologise for the ambush
1845 but I really only noticed it the other night.

That is my only comment on it. I think the Report and the affiliation proceedings should be supported and the sooner we get it in, the better.

Thank you.

1850

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Before I come to Conseiller Baker – just one second – I come back to Conseiller Fry. Thank you. (*Interjection by Conseiller Fry*) It is, yes. Conseiller Baker had a question, but I will come to Conseiller Baker in a second.

1855

Conseiller Fry: Just to answer Conseiller Guille, this is a question of good governance. The information will be fed to the Senior Administrator, it will be passed on to Policy & Performance Committee and to the Good Governance Committee. It is just to make it easy to have a central point for any comments to be made to. This is not something highly dramatic.

1860

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Fry.
Conseiller Diane Baker.

Conseiller Diane Baker: I have no idea how you can encourage people to take part if earlier consultations of Sark are anything to go by.

1865

This is another important subject which residents should make their views known on. Even if you do not support the Affiliation Proceedings Law, everyone – mums, dads, grandparents, uncles and aunts, or just family friends – must have a point of view. This is one area that needs to come up to date and I support Policy & Performance in their consultation.

1870

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Baker.

Are there any other questions from the floor, of the Committee? There has been a verbal proposition with regard to changing the point of reference in the Proposition.

Policy & Performance, are you sticking with the wording as it stands at the moment?

1875

Conseiller Maitland and Conseiller Fry: Yes.

The Deputy Speaker: Yes, thank you.

Conseiller Guille MBE: I may have voted, obviously, on the Policy & Performance Committee.

1880

The Deputy Speaker: But that will be debated within the Committee, I am sure.

Therefore, if we may, the Proposition attached to this Report reads as follows: that Chief Pleas notes the contents of this Report, encourages inhabitants to make their views known to the Senior Administrator and agrees to receive further reports in due course. Those in favour; those against. **Carried.** Thank you.

1885

**14. Harbour Hill Transport Contracts –
Road Traffic Committee Report considered –
Proposition not carried**

To consider a Report with Proposition from the Road Traffic Committee entitled ‘Harbour Hill Transport Contracts’.

Proposition:

That Chief Pleas instructs the Road Traffic Committee to put the Harbour Hill Transport contracts out to public tender.

1890 **The Deputy Speaker:** Moving on, if we may, to Agenda Item 10 which is to consider a Report with a Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled ‘Top Level Domain Progress Report’.

Once again, I am going to ask Conseiller Roger Norwich to introduce the Report. Sorry, just one second, Conseiller Norwich.

1895 **Conseiller Sandra Williams:** Sorry, could I just ask if anybody has any objection to us moving Item number 14 next on to the Agenda, as we have two bus drivers both sitting in the room and they will be needing to get passengers off the three o’clock boat shortly? If anyone could support that Proposition, I would be grateful.

Thank you. *(Interjections)*

1900 **The Deputy Speaker:** A quick show of hands. Okay, let’s go to that, then. Agenda Item 14, let’s flick forward to that. Thank you, Conseiller Norwich, for holding fire. Agenda Item 14, which is to consider a Report with Proposition from the Road Traffic Committee entitled ‘Harbour Hill Transport Contracts’.

I would like to ask Conseiller Anthony Dunks to introduce the Report.

1905 **Conseiller Dunks:** The matter of tendering for the contracts was brought to the attention of the Committee and resulted in the Report before you. However, a little more needs to be said in order that Chief Pleas are able to make a decision.

1910 If the Proposition fails, then the contracts will be awarded to the current operators. The contracts, which are almost identical to those issued 10 years ago, will go to the Chief Pleas meeting in Michaelmas for discussion and hopefully approval before they are signed. If, however, the Proposition is approved, the Road Traffic Committee will then put the contract out to tender in which case it would appreciate some input from Chief Pleas *now* as to its preferred option. As in the previous case the contracts will go to the Michaelmas Chief Pleas for discussion and approval before they are signed.

1915 For the tendering process the Committee sees two possibilities: a blind tender in which each prospective operator submits to the Committee a sealed envelope within which would be a figure they are prepared to pay in order to run the service for the lifetime of the contract. It is important to stress that the Committee should not automatically take the highest bid, but instead the highest bid that offers the best service. In particular, any person other than the current operator would have to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Committee that they have access to an appropriate tractor and a bus vehicle to run the service. This could mean that any bid the Committee might receive would be from the current operators, in which case they would have to accept regardless of the amount offered.

1920 The alternative process is that Chief Pleas, or more rightly the F&R Committee, sets the amount an operator shall pay each year for the lifetime of the contracts to be awarded to run that contract. The bids therefore will be from people who are prepared to pay this figure to run the service. It is very likely that only the current operator will make realistic bids, and as in the

1930 previous example any person other than the current operator would have to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Committee that they had access to an appropriate tractor and bus vehicle to run the service. This may still mean that the only bids the Committee might receive would be from the current operators though in this case it would be at the figure set by Finance & Resources.

If there are any questions I will answer them now.

1935

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Dunks. Any questions? Conseiller Moerman, I think was first. Thank you.

1940 **Conseiller Moerman:** I must say I do not understand: there are two contracts, the Island does not own these businesses and the contractors own the tractors and the trailers, so basically the contract only gives in my opinion the right to drive up and down the Harbour Hill.

Why are you going to tender? In practice there are only two contractors with an expensive trailer to buy, so there is only the existing contractor who would be bidding.

So what I am wondering, and it is this one sentence that made me wonder:

... the Committee had separately considered whether one, or both, of the contracts should go out to tender.

1945 Is it therefore the intention that, for example, one contract could be renewed automatically giving that particular contractor the ability then to tender for the second contract?

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Moerman.

1950 Conseiller Dunks, do you want to answer that particular question?

Conseiller Dunks: The reference in the Report is that the Committee had separately considered but did not make a decision because it is not in a position to make a decision. They just had to consider it should be one or both, but have made no decision and that is why it has come to Chief Pleas.

1955

The Deputy Speaker: Any other questions?

Conseiller Plummer.

1960 **Conseiller Plummer:** I would just like to say this, that after 42 years of running the buses up and down the hill, I feel that the contract should not go out to tender but offered to the two families that own the buses and the tractors. C Guille bought the bus 15 years ago because Chief Pleas found it too expensive to keep. The running cost, the insurance, licences, and keeping the tractors and the trailers up to specification for the safety of passengers, does come at quite a cost; and the new contract I would like to see, if it *was* sent out, would be for 10 years, and also keeping the work open for the younger generation of those families.

1965

I will not be voting for that contract to public tender.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Plummer.

1970

Any other questions?

Conseiller Sandra Williams was next.

Conseiller Sandra Williams: Yes, I agree with Conseiller Plummer and I think we should be allowing the two families to carry on doing the buses.

1975

It was brought to my attention at lunchtime though that it says here:

While the Road Traffic Committee has been in negotiations with the incumbent operators as to the content of the replacement contracts ...

I have been informed that one of the contractors has not been kept informed about anything that is going on and the only reason he knew what was in the contract today was because he went to Chief Pleas office yesterday and managed to obtain a copy.

1980 **The Deputy Speaker:** Okay, just one second.
Conseiller Dunks would you like to come back on that point?

Conseiller Dunks: That is not quite true, they were all sent copies by email last week – so it was not yesterday.

1985 I admit though it has been over the past few months that we started talking to both operators as a group and only Colin Guille's in the past week, but it was not yesterday.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.
Conseiller Moerman.

1990 **Conseiller Moerman:** I confirm Conseiller Williams' views.

The Deputy Speaker: You agree with Conseiller Williams?

1995 **Conseiller Moerman:** Completely, it is my understanding too.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.
Conseiller Fry.

2000 **Conseiller Fry:** I agree with Conseiller Plummer, absolutely. I think that the same families and the younger generations of the same families should get the contracts.
I would not want it to go out for tender.

2005 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Fry.
Conseiller Cottle.

Conseiller Cottle: Thank you.

2010 Just for reasons of transparency, not particularly because I have a view about whether the contract should remain in the same families or otherwise, I do not think that after a contract period of 10 years it should be automatically assumed that the contracts should be reissued to the current contract holders without some open process that lets us see what contracts are being issued.

2015 The contracts should be reviewed including what length of contract would be appropriate, and that may well be 10 years to enable them to invest in the equipment that they use; and whether the contracts should include an annual fee should also be reviewed. Again, the conclusion may be that there is no appropriate fee as in the current contract which involves no payment of any yearly fee. It may be that the current contract holders turn out to be the only ones who wish to supply the service and it may be concluded that any fee should be either nominal or zero, but I think proper consideration should be given to that.

2020 Therefore I think the best course of action would be to agree to put the contracts out to tender and agree that further consideration is given to the detail of the contract terms put out to tender – whether it be to open bids, for a set annual fee or no fee, and for what length of time. This needs more investigation and thought.

2025 I do not think we can make any further decision on the hoof today as it needs to return to Chief Pleas before Michaelmas, and there is likely to be an opportunity for that. So I think my proposal would be that we approve the Proposition and then return with more detail possibly at an Extraordinary which may be lined up for August.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Cottle.

2030 Conseiller Guille was first, and then Conseiller Moerman second.

Conseiller Guille MBE: As far as I am aware, the two current contractors commenced the operation – or at least back in the distant past they were commenced – as a private venture, providing the necessary tractor and trailer to support their venture and with the Island giving them contracts to operate. Over the years the contracts have been tightened up by discussions between the Committee and the operators, and maybe what has not happened is that the various conditions and provisions of the contract have not been enforced as they should have been. That would not be the fault of the operator but of the supervising Committee.

2035

I have a problem with this going out to tender unless the operators are not providing the service that is required of them by the contract, because we are interfering in what is essentially a private business and the livelihoods of the current operators. A more honest method, if we are not satisfied with the service provided, would be to enforce the conditions or alternatively take the operation into public hands and run the Harbour Hill transport ourselves. But to take it into public ownership would require us to buy the businesses including the current tractors and trailers at an agreed price – possibly a good premium rate there – provide insurance, provide drivers and maintain equipment and buy new equipment as their life runs out.

2040

2045

Currently we have a service that costs us nothing other than preparing and renewing contracts and issuing licences. I will not be supporting the Proposition.

Thank you.

2050

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Guille.

Conseiller Moerman.

Conseiller Moerman: I would disagree with Conseiller Cottle. I think that entire matter is lacking complete transparency. I think I will be voting against the tender and I think the contract should be awarded to the current contractors.

2055

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Moerman.

2060

Back to Conseiller Dunks, in response.

Conseiller Dunks: No response.

The Deputy Speaker: No response.

2065

Does anyone have any further points they would like to make before we go to the vote on this Proposition? Any other comments?

Conseiller Ventress.

Conseiller Ventress: As an ex-Chairman of Road Traffic there had been problems in the past with certain of the operators. This has been resolved and I personally would vote for the current operators to remain in position. I think that is the simplest way for us. It costs us nothing and we do have, in the contract, the ability to withdraw the contract at any time if necessary.

2070

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Ventress.

2075

Before we go to the Proposition vote, do we have any other comments? Any other Members like to make any points?

Okay, so the Proposition before us, Agenda Item 14, is that Chief Pleas instructs the Road Traffic Committee to put the Harbour Hill transport contract out to public tender. Can I have a show of hands: those in favour; those against? Therefore that is **defeated**.

2080

**10. Top Level Domain Progress –
Policy & Performance Committee Report considered –
Proposition carried**

To consider a Report with Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Top Level Domain Progress Report'.

Proposition:

That Chief Pleas agrees that, once ISO has issued the country code, the Sark ID Group may make application to IANA and ICANN for the assignment and delegation of a country code Top Level Domain for the Island of Sark and instructs the Chairman of Policy and Performance Committee to sign the Letter of Support on behalf of Chief Pleas.

The Deputy Speaker: Very good, so if we backtrack to where we were, Agenda Item 10 it was. Once again I will reintroduce this if I may, and thank you for your patience, Conseiller Norwich: to consider a Report with Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Top Level Domain Progress Report'.

2085 Once again, I am going to ask Conseiller Roger Norwich to introduce the Report.

Conseiller Dr Roger Norwich: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

2090 This Progress Report fairly illustrates where we are up to in the process of our Top Level Domain Application. This is a technically complex process and Conseillers, in order to understand where matters stand at present, should have read and reread this Report.

The PDT has of course this week provided detailed presentations both in groups and individually to Conseillers who were interested in learning of some of the complexities and also responding to questions and clarifying queries. This presentation was put together so that people would be allowed to have more information prior to making any decision today.

2095 Inevitably there are those who may have further questions and I think some of these might be best dealt with by an exercise in participatory democracy. I would like to emulate Jeremy Corbyn and bring to the floor of the House (*Interjections*) this email question posed by a constituent, and for the sake of anonymity let's call this person 'Vera'.

2100 Now, Vera has ignored in her email the fact that we have not yet reached the detailed public consultation progress and forgets that over the last 18 months a number of presentations have been made, and ignores the fact that unless and until we have achieved support from the ISO – the International Standards Organisation – there will be nothing to consult about. If Conseillers refer to this Report they will know exactly where we are in this process as far as the ISO application stands; nonetheless, Vera raises some important points which I am very happy to comment upon.

2105 She asks: 'It is not clear why a not-for-profit organisation, the Sark ID Group, is necessary to facilitate the progress and allow further communication.' She states: 'These responsibilities are currently with the PDT and should remain so.' She states: 'It is possible that it has been suggested to P&P that there should be a separate entity to manage the Top Level Domain, but this does not appear to be the case. Many countries' – and she cites the Falklands as her example – 'have applied for and managed their own Top Level Domain.'

2115 The fact is that the non-profit organisation was created so that the PDT could engage with external entities. We needed to have an organisation to do this as it cannot be done as individuals. Some countries choose to do this themselves – the Falklands, for example – however, some do not. Examples of those that do not are the United Kingdom, Guernsey and Jersey who all chose to use a third party. Indeed, the UK country code TLD – which is '.uk' – is run and managed by a non-profit company, and it seems to me that if it is good enough for the UK jurisdiction it is probably good enough for that in Sark.

2120 In addition, we need to demonstrate as the progress of the application goes on that we have community engagement and interest, and the non-profit organisation is a vehicle which can be used for this purpose. Community support can be represented by an NPO and its membership expanded. We cannot have a company on Sark, but this NPO (*Laughter*) is registered and accountable. Future members of the non-profit organisation is in the hands of the PDT, which is a servant of Chief Pleas.

2125 Vera goes on to ask for more information, this time about the aims of the non-profit organisation, and it is the case that the aims in the initial application were purposely broad and they would of course develop as the complicated application develops, and will do so as matters move forward past a hopefully successful result from ISO. The Sark ID Group will as part of its role promote the digital identity of Sark by the provision of a country code Top Level Domain (TLD), following all applicable laws and in accordance with the policies developed in consultation with the community. This will enable positive social and economic benefits for the Island as well as help create a trusted space for the Sark community on the internet.

2130 As the sponsoring organisation for Sark's country code TLD, the Sark ID Group undertakes to manage the TLD and the policy is approved in consultation with Chief Pleas and the community, in particular to safeguard its reputation by implementation of robust anti-abuse policies. It will also work in accordance with international best practice for stability and security of the domain name system on the internet and for the social and economic benefit of the Sark community; and also to conduct these responsibilities in a transparent manner reporting to all its stakeholders including Chief Pleas.

2140 Vera goes on to complain that there are no details of those in the non-profit organisation, and that there is no information as to whether its administrators will be making charges for doing work associated with the NPO. In fact as most people will know all you need to do is go into the Greffe Office and ask to see a list and rather unsurprisingly the list consists of Roger Norwich, Nicolas Moloney and Stephen Taylor who are Members of the PDT, and Mike Locke and Raedene McGary who are the representatives of the potential commercial partners for the Island. No charges have been made and both the PDT on behalf of Chief Pleas and the commercial partners are looking for the final outcome which we believe, and hope, will lead to a successful financial partnership which will bring income to the Island.

2145 Vera further wonders how we may demonstrate community interest to support our application to comply with IANA – the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority – rules, in order to facilitate the issuance of a country code Top Level Domain. Now, if Vera reads the Report carefully she will see that the ISO country code is needed, hence as stated clearly in this Report the ISO submission and conclusion is crucial to any progress.

2150 So, as should be clear, the application for a TLD is a complex and technically challenging process. The process has changed considerably in the period since 2000 when an application was first ever made on behalf of this Island. There are still many chickens and many eggs and many organisations involved in achieving a successful outcome and much work to do.

2155 This application is not only supported by many on Sark, but the Ministry of Justice is actively and positively involved and has been very supportive, as are the States of Guernsey, as Sark having a separate TLD will assist them in updating their own '.gg' TLD. I must emphasise that at every stage the Law Officers are an active part of our process.

2160 Vera states she will be very disappointed if the consideration of reputational risk and potential loss of control of the application is ignored. Well, I can assure our constituent that we have again and again made it very clear that strong controls on internet content will be put in place. I think I can almost read in the question an implication that the TLD could be used for some form of pornographic palace. I can assure fellow Members that the public will see that this is quite the opposite situation and that control will be very firmly under the control of the Chief Pleas or its delegated officers, with the ability to switch off any unsavoury content much more quickly than in many other jurisdictions.

2170 Did Guernsey have any serious issues in this regard when they started their ‘.gg’ domain?
Absolutely not and neither would we allow it.

I think we should make it clear that the TLD PDT has no other agenda of its own, we are simply servants of Chief Pleas and of the electorate. The PDT was set up by the Policy Development Group, a formal Committee of Chief Pleas, to promote this initiative which if successful will promote Sark’s internet and geographical identity. It will help Sark tourism; it will help Sark businesses; it will help promote Sark products – and it is currently the only project which has the potential to provide the Sark Government with some welcome commercial income.

2180 As I already stated, the PDT Members are entirely the servants of Chief Pleas who at any time can choose via the PDG to choose others to continue this onerous but commercially important task. The wording of the current Proposition proves that at every significant step Chief Pleas has the final word, and I commend this Proposition to Chief Pleas.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Norwich.
2185 Are there any questions or comments from the floor?
Conseiller Guille.

Conseiller Guille MBE: Sir, could I ask you to rule that gentlemen may remove their jackets because I am broiling in the sun – and the ladies remove their hats?

2190 **The Deputy Speaker:** You are not alone in that and I am very happy to agree to that proposition because I am going to do precisely that. Jackets may be removed, gentlemen; and hats may be removed, ladies. (*Interjections*) Right, probably a stage too far at the moment. Hairbrushes will be issued!

2195 So once again thank you, Conseiller Norwich. Are there any questions for Conseiller Norwich or for the Committee with regard to the content of this Report?
Conseiller Moerman.

2200 **Conseiller Moerman:** First of all I would like to thank the team for a very, very good presentation on Monday evening. I would just like to ask: my understanding from that presentation was that the NPO was actually set up because there was a need for a structure based in Sark to support the application. But am I correct in thinking that the future of that holding structure is not definite and it could well be in the foreseeable future that it will be held by Chief Pleas directly?

2205 Thank you.

Conseiller Dr Roger Norwich: Conseiller Moerman, thank you very much.
Yes, everything, under the way in which we have set things up, is able to be moved and altered in order to facilitate the progress of the project. The fact that we have an NPO and the ability to introduce other individuals to it, or leave them out of the organisation, means that we can bring in community interest and fully represent that, and comply with the rules of the different parties that we have to deal with in order to move the project forward.

2210 As I have stressed, the key is to get the ISO backing and once we have that we can then move on to the other organisations that have to be dealt with in the process.

2215 So, thank you, Conseiller Moerman.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Norwich.
Any other questions?
Conseiller Raymond.

2220 **Conseiller Raymond:** Thank you, sir.

I would just like to say that when we looked at this originally the economic benefit would flow through to Sark – can I be vulgar and refer to it as ‘the cash’? – would go to the Treasurer and any disbursements would then be administered under the jurisdiction of Chief Pleas.

2225 Will that still prevail or will the contracting party – and therefore the cash – flow through the NPO under this new proposed organisation?

The Deputy Speaker: Conseiller Norwich.

2230 **Conseiller Dr Roger Norwich:** That is entirely a matter for negotiation between Chief Pleas. As I have made clear, Chief Pleas remains in charge of this project at all stages and detailed negotiations will have to occur between the relevant Committees that will be appointed by Chief Pleas. It is not up to me to guess the final and exact financial structure and I do not intend to try to do so.

2235

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Norwich.
Are there any other questions from Members?
Conseiller Guille.

2240 **Conseiller Guille MBE:** Not a question, sir.

I support the thrust of the Report. With the late Seigneur we started this off in 1999, so it has been a long time coming. It would be a wonderful 20th birthday present if it happened before 2019.

2245 One of my issues with TLDs – and you can stop me if you think I am straying off-piste – is that they have no statutory authority within Chief Pleas, a point that I have raised in the PDT and have been tasked to investigate. Were the Top Level Domain PDT to have been a special-purpose Committee of Chief Pleas and it could report back to Chief Pleas directly without having to fudge the issue by bringing the report to Chief Pleas through the P&P Committee who, as a body ... others may have seen it but I certainly had no sight of the Report until the papers were
2250 sent out. Had it been a special-purpose Committee that is not an issue, but a PDT has no statutory authority in this Chamber. Conseiller Roger Norwich is speaking as a temporary member of P&P whilst the PDT is there and to me it is a very cumbersome system.

However, I have gone off-piste; I will be supporting the Proposition and I urge others to do so.

2255

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Guille.
Do you want to come back on that point, Conseiller Norwich?

Conseiller Dr Roger Norwich: No, I have got no further comment. No, thank you.

2260

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any other observations, comments or questions from the floor?

Very good, in that case I will go to the vote on this Proposition and I will just make sure that I read this correctly and I am going to spell it out as follows: the Proposition is that Chief Pleas agrees that, once the ISO has issued the country code, the Sark ID Group may make application to IANA and ICANN for the assignment and delegation of a country code Top Level Domain for the Island of Sark and instructs the Chairman of Policy & Performance Committee to sign the Letter of Support on behalf of Chief Pleas.

2265

My apologies for the hiccup there.

2270 So, those in favour; and those against. **Carried.**

**11. Securing Sark's Future –
Policy & Performance Committee Report considered –
Proposition carried**

To consider a Report with Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Securing Sark's future – Progress Report'.

Proposition:

That Chief Pleas takes note of the contents of this progress report.

The Deputy Speaker: Moving on to Agenda Item 11.

Agenda Item 11 is: to consider a Report with a Proposition from the Policy & Performance Committee entitled 'Securing Sark's future – a Progress Report'.

2275 I would like to ask Conseiller Charles Maitland to introduce the Report or to delegate that authority.

Conseiller Charles Maitland: Very briefly, we have heard at length from the Reform Law (Good Governance) PDT and the Top Level Domain Name PDT, and I have nothing further to add.

2280

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Are there any questions from the floor or observations with regard to this Proposition?

Conseiller Mallinson.

2285 **Conseiller Mallinson:** I just wanted to ask: maybe I misunderstood but I thought we were going to get a verbal report from the Land Reform group at this meeting, but ... *(Interjection)*

Okay, can I just say that I am concerned that time is passing and we are not getting an update from the Land Reform group?

2290 **The Deputy Speaker:** Conseiller Maitland.

Sorry, Conseiller Guille.

2295 **Conseiller Guille MBE:** I was prepared to make a report but there was a development last night which has not been able to be discussed by the PDT therefore I am not making a report at this stage; but I would hope that we will come back to the PDT through P&P and will come back at the next meeting of Chief Pleas with a written report rather than a verbal update that I was going to give now.

Thank you.

2300 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you.

Any other questions or observations from the floor of the Committee?

Therefore we will go to the Proposition if we may, which is that Chief Pleas takes note of the contents of this progress report. Those in favour; those against. Thank you. **Carried.**

**12. Marine Ambulance Service –
Finance & Resources Committee Report considered –
Proposition 1 carried; Proposition 2 carried**

To consider a Report with Proposition from the Finance & Resources Committee entitled 'Marine Ambulance Service'.

Proposition 1:

That Chief Pleas approves that the grant to the St John Marine Ambulance Fund for 2018 be increased to £5,000.

Proposition 2:

That Chief Pleas approves that the grant to the St John Marine Ambulance Fund for 2017 of £2,064 be topped-up by an additional £2,936 from unforeseen expenditure, to total £5,000.

2305 **The Deputy Speaker:** Moving along to Agenda Item 12: to consider a Report with two Propositions from the Finance & Resources Committee entitled 'Marine Ambulance Service'. I would like to ask Conseiller Cottle to introduce the Report.

2310 **Conseiller Cottle:** Can I hand the presentation of this Item to Conseiller Diane Baker of the Medical & Emergency Services Committee?
Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Cottle.
Conseiller Baker.

2315 **Conseiller Diane Baker:** The Medical & Emergency Services Committee was approached by John Beausire of St John's to see if we could help in any way with raising funds. St John's is funded by public donation. We have placed posters around the Island to try and encourage residents to take a subscription out at £149 for a family. It does, we feel, offer a safety net should any member of a family need the service of the *Flying Christine* Ambulance Launch and the road ambulance once you are in Guernsey. It does not cover the cost of the Sark ambulance.

2320 Sark has been the main user of the *Flying Christine*. In an ideal world we would like to be asking for a larger donation from Sark but we are conscious of asking for any extra finance and the Sark taxpayer is always in the forefront of our considerations. But the same taxpayer relies on St John's in any medical emergency. Should the time ever come when we must cover the full cost per evacuation, many will find it very difficult.

2325 The lifespan of the *Flying Christine III* expires in 2024 and we have no idea what will happen next; but this Committee asks you to please support our requests and let's do as much as we can while we can.

2330 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Baker.
Are there any questions or observations from Members?
Let's start with Conseiller Cottle first.

2335 **Conseiller Cottle:** This is an essential service for Sark; nobody wants to be in the situation of needing to use it but if it is not maintained then it is hard to see what the alternative is.

2340 I would urge everyone who can afford it to pay into the subscription scheme, but it is for Chief Pleas to decide if it wishes to increase the current grant to a slightly more substantial amount both this year and for ongoing years from next year. It would make a statement about supporting the future availability of the service and go a small way towards ensuring that the *Flying Christine* continues to serve Sark in an emergency.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Cottle.
Conseiller Guille, thank you.

2345 **Conseiller Guille MBE:** There are some very encouraging figures of the take-up of
subscriptions for the Marine Ambulance from Sark residents, of 230 members – I think that is
tremendous. However, I believe there is not a big enough gap between the subscription and the
amount charged to a non-subscriber. For a single person the difference is £784, and £734 for a
2350 family. To encourage a greater take-up of the subscription scheme, maybe St John should
increase the differential by moving closer to the true cost of £2,500 rather than the current
figure of £883.

The issue of taking it from the taxpayer by way of a grant is that it does not encourage a
greater take-up of subscribers to the Marine Ambulance Scheme, which of course also includes
road ambulance use in Guernsey. I note that Guernsey, and I presume Alderney, does not make
2355 any funding contribution and whilst Sark may be the major user and beneficiary it is not the sole
user. As the Marine Ambulance is used for Herm and in other areas of the Bailiwick waters, I
would quite like to see a breakdown of call-outs over the past five years and would ask the
Medical & Emergency Services Committee to see if they could provide us with those figures at
some stage after the meeting.

2360 I will listen to other debate but I am inclined to support the two Propositions.
Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Guille.
Any other questions or comments from the floor?
2365 Yes, Conseiller Sandra Williams.

Conseiller Sandra Williams: I am more than happy to support this; it is nice to see that our
money is going to something useful. *(Laughter)*

2370 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you.
Conseiller Plummer.

Conseiller Plummer: Yes, we will get on to St John and ask for a breakdown of the call-outs in
the last few years.

2375 **The Deputy Speaker:** Very good, thank you for that.
Conseiller Baker.

2380 **Conseiller Diane Baker:** Can I just say that for many years Caroline Bell sat on the St John's in
Guernsey and played a big part in their decisions and that, and St John's would very much like to
have someone from Sark on their panel. So if anybody feels that they would like to play a part in
this please, it would be very, very good for Sark to have a say in Guernsey.

2385 **The Deputy Speaker:** Okay. We will take heed of that request, very wise; Caroline Bell did
sterling work for many, many years.

Are there any questions or comments from the floor? No? In which case we have two
Propositions from the Committee and we will deal with them individually if we may?

So, Proposition 1 reads that Chief Pleas approves that the grant to the St John Marine
Ambulance Fund for 2018 be increased to £5,000. Those in favour; those against. **Carried.**

2390 Moving on to Proposition 2, which reads that Chief Pleas approves that the grant to the St
John Marine Ambulance Fund for 2017 of £2,064 to be topped-up by an additional £2,936 from
unforeseen expenditure, to a total of £5,000. Those in favour; those against. **Carried.**

**13. The Harbour Crane –
Harbours & Shipping Committee and Finance & Resources Committee Report considered –
Proposition carried**

To consider a joint Report with Proposition from the Harbours and Shipping Committee and Finance & Resources Committee entitled 'The Harbour Crane'.

Proposition:

That Chief Pleas approves the purchase of a new crane as detailed in this report and approves the expenditure of £(to be confirmed at meeting) from Island reserves as capital expenditure.

2395 **The Deputy Speaker:** Moving on to Agenda Item 13, the Harbour Crane: to consider a joint Report with Proposition from the Harbours & Shipping Committee and the Finance & Resources Committee entitled 'The Harbour Crane'.

I would like to ask Conseiller Sandra Williams to introduce the Report.

2400 **Conseiller Sandra Williams:** Thank you, sir, and I would like to ask Conseiller Cottle to introduce the Report because I do not do boys' toys. *(Laughter)*

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Williams.
Conseiller Cottle.

2405 **Conseiller Cottle:** Thank you. I will take over introducing this, another piece of useful expenditure that the taxpayers' money may be going on if we approve this Proposition today as well.

2410 You have the Report before you. The Report sets out the proposal to purchase a new crane and trade in the current Kato crane while it still has a value, rather than carry out a mid-life refurbishment including essential rope replacements which will entail sending it away from the Island for a significant period of time. Once brought back to the Island it would then be used for a further number of years until the eventual end of its life. The financial case is made for purchasing the new crane and it is considered that it would be a good investment of reserves to ensure that Sark continues to have a reliable crane service for offloading all of our essential supplies and performing other regular tasks, both at the Harbour and around the Island.

2415 It is confirmed that the proposed crane is still available and this has been checked today – because it is being held at last year's price and if somebody had stepped in and wanted to buy it we did not have a guarantee that it would still be available. But it has been confirmed that it is still available to us and the cost in sterling at the current euro exchange rate, which we promised
2420 to bring to the Chief Pleas today, is £149,000. In addition to that, costs of transport to Sark and returning the part-exchanged crane are estimated at £10,000 maximum. There may be a sharp intake of breath but that is an absolute maximum that we are requesting is approved today, so we do not risk having to come back if we went for a smaller figure. We do not expect it to be that amount but we are not entirely sure of the full amount that it will cost to get it here.

2425 We have had a quote to get the new crane to St Peter Port of £1,400 and it would cost slightly more than that to get the old crane back to the south of England because it is slightly heavier than the new one, so we may be looking at £3,000 in total from Guernsey to probably Poole or Portsmouth. Then we have got the task of getting it from St Peter Port to Sark and offloading on to the harbourside and that may well involve chartering a drive-on drive-off vessel
2430 but we have not got the details of that. The crane driver is investigating that at the moment so we hope it would be significantly less than £10,000 but that is what we are going to ask for today. So the total amount would be £159,000 maximum, which is what I would like inserting into the Proposition.

2435 So the Proposition will read: that Chief Pleas approves the purchase price of a new crane as detailed in this Report and approves the expenditure of £159,000 maximum from Island reserves as capital expenditure.

The detail of the financial justification is set out there in the Report and if you would consider that and then consider our recommendation that a new crane is purchased for the Island for the continued reliable service for all our benefits.

2440 Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Cottle.

Does anyone have any questions of either of the Committees with regard to this Item?
Conseiller Fry.

2445

Conseiller Fry: I am not a crane expert but I am passing on what somebody said to me the other day and he was talking about a roll-on roll-off. But somebody asked me was it true that the old crane that we have now could not lift the new one off the boat?

2450 **The Deputy Speaker:** Good question.
Conseiller Cottle. Conseiller Bateman?

Conseiller Cottle: I will let the crane driver's son answer that – *(Laughter)*

2455 **Conseiller La Trobe-Bateman:** That is true, it would not lift it. The capacity is about nine ton and the old crane weighs about 20 ton.

The Deputy Speaker: Conseiller Cottle.

2460 **Conseiller Cottle:** Matters are in hand to arrange the delivery to Sark and ensuring that it gets on shore and that is all taken into account in this Report, and the costs – *(Interjection by Conseiller Fry)*

The Deputy Speaker: Sorry, Conseiller Fry?

2465

Conseiller Fry: No. I just said it would be a shame if it got as far as – *(Laughter)*

The Deputy Speaker: It certainly would! We have been here before!
Conseiller Guille.

2470

Conseiller Guille MBE: I have a video of the last crane in the old Harbour coming off an Isle of Sark shipping one, and everybody was holding their breath as the crane drove off the boat and the boat tipped up and down. So I think if we can find a suitable landing craft it might save a little bit of heartache for the operators trying to drive it off a normal Sark cargo boat.

2475

The Deputy Speaker: Do we have any contacts in the Armed Services that might be able to help, perhaps?

The Seigneur: Yes, we do. *(Laughter)*

2480

The Deputy Speaker: Possibly worth looking at.

Okay, thank you for the Report. So the Proposition before you is, and I will read it in its amended format with the figure inserted: that Chief Pleas approves the purchase of a new crane as detailed in this Report and approves the expenditure of £159,000 maximum from Island reserves as capital expenditure. Those in favour; those against. **Carried.** Thank you.

2485

15. Committee Elections

Committee Elections: To elect Conseillers to Committees, as required

The Deputy Speaker: Agenda Item 14 we have already done, so we are moving therefore swiftly on to Agenda Item 15, which is Committee Elections: to elect Conseillers to Committees, as required.

2490 We have a single vacancy on the Education Committee and I would like to call for any nominations from the floor. Do we have any nominations to join to the Education Committee?

Okay, so therefore it looks as if –
Conseiller Dunks.

2495 **Conseiller Dunks:** The Committee has considered this situation and are not actively seeking a replacement at this stage.

The Deputy Speaker: Very good, okay.

Well, given that you have got no volunteers from the floor, I think you should proceed as you are (*Laughter*) until further notice!

2500 Thank you, Conseiller Dunks.

16. Committee Elections

Committee Elections: To elect non-Chief Pleas non-voting members to Standing Committees.

The Deputy Speaker: Agenda Item 18, to elect non-Chief Pleas non-voting members to Standing Committees.

I have not received any nominations and therefore can I assume that there are none from any committee? Is that correct?

2505 Sorry, Item 16, I beg your pardon – that was Item 16, just to confuse you all.

Jolly good, so the answer is ‘No’ to that.

17. Budget Requests for 2018 – Finance & Resources Committee Report considered

To consider an Information Report from the Finance & Resources Committee entitled ‘Budget Requests for 2018’.

The Deputy Speaker: Moving on to Agenda Item 17: to consider an Information Report from the Finance & Resources Committee entitled ‘Budget Requests for 2018’.

2510 I would like to ask Conseiller Cottle to introduce this Report.

Conseiller Cottle: Thank you.

2515 I have got a very short piece to say here. This is an information report which presents the expenditure requests of Committees in advance of the Budget process at Michaelmas Chief Pleas. I do not intend to comment any further on the content of the Report other than to say that between now and the closing date for papers for Michaelmas Chief Pleas, Finance & Resources Committee will be following up by scrutinising these requests and seeking further information as appropriate to fulfil the Committee’s amended mandate.

If there are any comments or questions I would be happy to receive them.

2520 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Cottle.
Are there any questions or observations from any Members for Conseiller Cottle and the Committee? No?

Thank you for that information – *(Interjection)* I beg your pardon, I am sorry.
Conseiller Guille, thank you.

2525 **Conseiller Guille MBE:** Just an observation, sir, and that is Appendix J.
The big stand-out increase in the Central Administration is salaries and stipends, which increased by £51,924; then, in Miscellaneous, electricity at £15,000 which is the bulk of the Miscellaneous increase. I would just bring that to Members' attention.

2530 Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, those points are noted.

Does anyone else have any other points they would like to note within this Report or the various appendices?

18. Charging Method for Impôt: Alcohol by Volume – Finance & Resources Committee Report noted

To consider an Information Report from the Finance & Resources Committee entitled 'Result of the Consultation on the Charging Method for Impôt: Alcohol by Volume (ABV)'.

2535 **The Deputy Speaker:** We will move on to Agenda Item 18 which is: to consider an Information Report from the Finance & Resources Committee entitled 'Result of the Consultation on the Charging Method for Impôt: Alcohol by Volume (ABV)'.

I would like once again to ask Conseiller Cottle to introduce this Report.

2540 **Conseiller Cottle:** You say 'impôt', I say 'ampôt', I am not sure which is correct!
Again this is an information report to Chief Pleas and it is fairly self-explanatory.
The consultation responses on this subject are supportive of changing the basis for charging impôt on alcoholic products. Therefore the banding system as described in the consultation will be used to set the various rates of impôt in this year's Budget at Michaelmas Chief Pleas.

2545 The aim of rates set will be to collect the same amount of revenue as before, subject to any proposed increase that may be considered necessary in the normal Budget process.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Cottle.

2550 Do we have any questions or observations from the floor? No? Therefore thank you once again to Finance & Resources Committee for that Report.

**19. Sark Slaughterhouse Upgrade –
Agriculture, Environment, Sea Fisheries & Pilotage Committee Report noted**

To consider an Information Report from the Agriculture, Environment, Sea Fisheries & Pilotage Committee entitled 'Sark Slaughterhouse Upgrade'.

2555 **The Deputy Speaker:** Moving on to Agenda Item 19, which is to consider an Information Report from the Agriculture, Environment, Sea Fisheries & Pilotage Committee entitled 'Sark Slaughterhouse Upgrade'.

I would like to call on Conseiller Helen Plummer to introduce the Report.
Conseiller Plummer.

2560 **Conseiller Helen Plummer:** Thank you.
May I hand this Report over to Conseiller Nightingale, please?
Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Conseiller Nightingale.

2565 **Conseiller Nightingale:** Work is continuing very slowly in some places but we have had great help from Mr John Robinson, a chartered architect, who has been more than helpful in getting the plans in place that keep everybody happy – mainly Guernsey and the States' vet.

We have got to the stage now where Mr Robinson has agreed to help with the tender specification and it is almost ready to go out to the builders, and we are hoping to have it available for Chief Pleas for the Michaelmas Meeting.

2570 Once again, I cannot thank Mr Robinson enough for the work he has done all the way through this fairly complicated process.

Thank you.

2575 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Nightingale.
Does anyone have any comments they would like to make, or observations, or questions of the Committee, bearing in mind that this is an Information Report?
Yes, Conseiller Cottle.

2580 **Conseiller Cottle:** Just a brief question and I did mention that I would ask this to Conseiller Dunks who has been involved in the process.

2585 Finance & Resources Committee are tasked with signing the slaughterhouse lease when it is finalised and that has been in the offing for quite some while now. I just wonder if there is any news on completion of a final draft of the slaughterhouse lease for Finance & Resources Committee to sign on behalf of Chief Pleas?

The Deputy Speaker: Conseiller Dunks, thank you.

2590 **Conseiller Dunks:** The final draft of the lease arrangement is near to completion; there are just one or two more small technical details for us to attend to which will be done very shortly.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Dunks.
Any other points or comments or observations on that Information Report?
Thank you to the Committee for the Report.

2595

**20. Annual Report from the Tourism Committee –
Tourism Committee Report noted**

To consider an Information Report from the Tourism Committee entitled ‘Annual Report from the Tourism Committee’.

The Deputy Speaker: Finally for today, Agenda Item 20, which is an Information Report from the Tourism Committee entitled ‘Annual Report from the Tourism Committee’.

I would like to ask Conseiller Sandra Williams to introduce the Information Report.

2600 **Conseiller Sandra Williams:** Thank you very much. You will be pleased to know that I have nothing more to say. The numbers are what the numbers are, we have not made them up, they are factual; and the numbers are looking promising again for this year.

2605 **The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Williams.
Are there any comments or observations from Members?
Conseiller Cottle.

2610 **Conseiller Cottle:** I would just like to say something about this Report. We are at the end of a very long and tiring meeting, and there is a lot of work gone into this Report so I think it should pass with some degree of thanks to the Tourism Officers and Committee. There is far more than just numbers in here, there is a lot of detail and a lot of information about what the Tourism Office does on behalf of the Island. So I would just like to thank them on my own behalf for producing such a comprehensive Report so we can understand what they do and the value for money that we get from what they receive from Chief Pleas. So, thank you.

2615 **Conseiller Sandra Williams:** Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you; comments well made.
Conseiller Plummer.

2620 **Conseiller Plummer:** May I say thank you to them all too for getting this lovely Report ready. As you all know I have a shop and I come in contact with the public every day. The comments that have been coming over from visitors that are staying here or come here for the day – cruise-liner people too – have been very, very positive in all directions, and a lot of comments have been favourable about the tourism ladies working down there.

2625 Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Plummer.
Conseiller Edric Baker.

2630 **Conseiller Edric Baker:** Yes, I would like to echo Conseiller Cottle’s remarks, I think they have produced an excellent Report – they do most years – and good luck to them.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you; comments well noted, thank you very much indeed.
2635 Does anyone else have anything else to make any comment about this particular Report? In which case, I will say thank you very much indeed to all. It has been a long day, thank you for sticking with us. I make it now 12 minutes past three and I would like to declare the meeting closed and ask the Greffier to say a prayer.

PRAYER

The Greffier

Chief Pleas closed at 3.12 p.m.