

STATES OF JERSEY

OFFICIAL REPORT

THURSDAY, 12th DECEMBER 2024

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[9:31]

The Roll was called and the Greffier of the States led the Assembly in Prayer.

PUBLIC BUSINESS - resumption

1. Jersey Overseas Aid: Appointment of Non-States Commissioner (P.81/2024)

The Bailiff:

We now continue with Public Business.

Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier Central:

Sir, may I just say - I am never quite sure when to say - I have to accompany a family member to something for about 25 minutes or so. I will be out of the Assembly from about 9.55.

The Bailiff:

Thank you for letting us know, Deputy. The next item is the Jersey Overseas Aid: Appointment of Non-States Commissioner, P.81, lodged by the Minister for International Development. The main responder is the chair of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel. I ask the Greffier to read the proposition.

The Greffier of the States:

The States are asked to decide whether they are of opinion – to appoint Ms. Julia Yun Hulme as a non-States Commissioner of the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission until 1st January 2028, in accordance with clause 7.6 of the constitution of the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission as set out in Schedule 1 to the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission (Jersey) Law 2005

1.1 Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville and St. Martin (The Minister for International Development):

I am seeking the Assembly's approval to appoint Ms. Julia Yun Hulme as a non-States Commissioner for Jersey Overseas Aid. This is an honorary position. Ms. Yun Hulme is an international lawyer and she has worked in Africa and with women and children in the development aid field and her governance experience will be very valuable. The recruitment process was overseen by the Jersey Appointments Commission and, if approved, Ms. Yun Hulme will take up her post on 1st January after the end of term of Douglas Melville, who I would like to publicly thank for his considerate contribution to Jersey Overseas Affairs. **[Approbation]** I make the proposition.

The Bailiff:

Is the proposition seconded? **[Seconded]** Does any Member wish to speak on the proposition?

1.1.1 Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier:

I hope I may be permitted to take this opportunity, not only echoing the thanks to Mr. Melville for his many years of service as a commissioner, but also more generally to recognise the tremendous work being done by Jersey Overseas Aid. Coincidentally, in this respect, yesterday I received a message from the mayor of Mykolaiv, the twin town of St. Helier in Ukraine. If I may just quote what he says. He first of all refers to, of course, the problems that they are having, continue to have, with the war on Ukraine, and I quote: "Multiple shelling and constant attacks. As a result, unfortunately, a great number of citizens and soldiers who are constantly putting their lives at risk for our well-being and safe future have been injured. In this connection, I would like to express my boundless gratitude", he refers to me as the mayor but we will just come across that, "my boundless gratitude to Jersey Overseas Aid for active involvement and assistance in providing equipment for a rehabilitation centre as an emergency aid to the city of Nikolaev for provision of high-quality medical assistance." I think it is a coincidence that the work being done by Jersey Overseas Aid is of practical use and help to a city that is still beleaguered in the war. I am sure all Members join me with wishing not only Mykolaiv but the whole of Ukraine a just peace as soon as possible. **[Approbation]**

Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement:

Can I raise the défaut on Deputy Ozouf, please?

The Bailiff:

Deputy Ozouf? Sorry, I just did not hear you.

Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour:

Sir, in a similar vein, can I raise the défaut on Deputy Philip Bailhache?

The Bailiff:

Yes, the défaut is raised for Deputy Ozouf and Deputy Bailhache.

1.1.2 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf of St. Saviour:

Apologies for being slightly late for the start of proceedings. I wanted to just take this opportunity, following the remarks of the Constable of St Helier, to not only endorse the Minister's proposal for this new commissioner and to echo the thanks of the Assembly to Mr. Melville but also to just take a moment to reflect on just how well this commissioner is coming into an organisation after an organisation that has seen such a difficult year but has continued to deliver, notwithstanding the very sad and very public, because he was such a marvellous individual and an individual who I knew from the start in the London office, the departure of the chief executive. I think that it is a tribute to both his management style and the management style of the Minister, that the Commission has continued to deliver what this Assembly asks it to do, which is improving the lives of others in a way that has been seamless, notwithstanding the tremendous difficulties. I am sure the new commissioner will add further value to the wonderful organisation which we are so privileged to have. **[Approbation]**

1.1.3 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

Just with my Scrutiny hat on, to also add thanks to Mr. Melville who is now leaving this post. We have only been in the role a small amount of time, certainly I have as a Scrutiny chair, and we have had the Minister and Mr. Melville in, along with other officers, and it was very clear that he added great value I am sure to the job but also to the Scrutiny process when we had him in, in clarifying the many questions we had about the vital work that Overseas Aid does around the world on behalf of us and our Islanders. I also would wish Ms. Hulme the very best for the job. What I would say is just some general comments about the work that Ms. Hulme will be doing in her role as part of the team and it is clear that we live in an increasingly volatile world, one where there is a tendency in some quarters towards greater populism and greater nationalism which Jersey is not necessarily immune from either. There will be potentially calls in the future for reprioritisation and questions about money that we spend on overseas aid. We know that we have just passed a Budget where there are modest commitments to increase the amount of overseas aid that we give as an Island, and I think that should have the Assembly's support now and into the future. I think we should be vigilant about protecting and safeguarding what we do as a responsible, outward-looking Island for those in the international community. I wish Ms. Hume and the team all the very best, and we look forward to continuing to hopefully add value and effective scrutiny to that position.

The Bailiff:

Does any other Member wish to speak on the proposition? If no other Member wishes to speak, then I close the debate and call upon the Minister to respond.

1.1.4 Deputy C.F. Labey:

I am very grateful for the sentiments that have been expressed here by the Constable of St Helier, Deputy Ozouf and Deputy Tadier. I think it is very apt that we consider those *in situ*, especially in this sitting where we are going to be hearing Christmas addresses later. I think it is very apt that we consider that we are in such a fortunate place here in Jersey, and there are many ... you do not have to look very far to see the many around the world who are suffering now. Unfortunately, things seem

to be getting worse. But I think we have to continue to fly the flag for Jersey. We have many strings to our bow, and it is not just finance, it is not just cows, but it is demonstrating that we have a place in the world to help those less fortunate. I would like to make the proposition. I will have a vote on it, because I am sure the sentiments I will relay to Douglas Melville, I am sure he will appreciate this very much. Thank you.

The Bailiff:

So the appel is called for?

Deputy C.F. Labey:

Yes, please.

[9:45]

The Bailiff:

I ask the Greffier to open the voting and Members to vote. If Members have had the opportunity of casting their vote, then I ask the Greffier to close the voting. The proposition has been adopted.

POUR: 44		CONTRE: 0		ABSTAIN: 0
Connétable of St. Helier				
Connétable of St. Lawrence				
Connétable of St. Brelade				
Connétable of Trinity				
Connétable of St. Peter				
Connétable of St. Martin				
Connétable of St. John				
Connétable of St. Clement				
Connétable of Grouville				
Connétable of St. Ouen				
Connétable of St. Mary				
Connétable of St. Saviour				
Deputy G.P. Southern				
Deputy C.F. Labey				
Deputy M. Tadier				
Deputy S.G. Luce				
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet				
Deputy K.F. Morel				
Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat				
Deputy S.M. Ahier				
Deputy R.J. Ward				
Deputy I. Gardiner				
Deputy I.J. Gorst				
Deputy L.J. Farnham				
Deputy S.Y. Mézec				

Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf				
Deputy Sir P.M. Bailhache				
Deputy T.A. Coles				
Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée				
Deputy D.J. Warr				
Deputy H.M. Miles				
Deputy J. Renouf				
Deputy C.D. Curtis				
Deputy L.V. Feltham				
Deputy R.E. Binet				
Deputy H.L. Jeune				
Deputy A. Howell				
Deputy T.J.A. Binet				
Deputy M.R. Ferey				
Deputy R.S. Kovacs				
Deputy A.F. Curtis				
Deputy B. Ward				
Deputy K.M. Wilson				
Deputy M.B. Andrews				

2. Support Scheme for Individuals Qualifying to Represent Jersey in Off-Island Competitions (P.82/2024) - as amended (P.82/2024 Amd.)

The Bailiff:

The next item is Support Scheme for Individuals Qualifying to Represent Jersey in Off-Island Competitions, P.82, lodged by Deputy Kovacs. The main responder is the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development. There is an amendment lodged by the Minister. Do you accept the amendment?

Deputy R.S. Kovacs of St. Saviour:

Yes, please and can we have it read as amended?

The Bailiff:

Are Members content to have the proposition taken as amended? I ask the Greffier to read the proposition.

Deputy K.F. Morel of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

If I may, sorry, it is just to confirm, the respondent will be the Constable of St. John as Assistant Minister who has responsibility for sport.

The Bailiff:

Thank you very much indeed. I ask the Greffier to read the amended proposition.

The Greffier of the States:

The States are asked to decide whether they are of opinion – to request the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development – (a) to establish a permanent support scheme through Jersey Sport, funded through the Arts, Heritage, and Culture budget, or other relevant sources, to a maximum of £300,000 per annum, for sporting associations or other appropriate bodies to provide travel grants of up to £1,000 per individual per year for costs related to off-Island participation in sports or other similar competitions for those representing Jersey, with such subsidies to be accessible to fund relevant travel, accommodation, competition fees, and associated costs for a responsible carer to accompany a participating minor or an adult with care and support needs; and (b) to commence the subsidy scheme in the first quarter of 2025, according to feasibility and existing resources, with a view to full development and implementation of the scheme before the end of 2025; (c) to undertake, before the end of January 2025, a review of the associations, individuals, or organisations eligible for this funding with a view to ensuring that a wide range of those representing Jersey are in scope of this funding.

Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

Before we start, I would like to remind Members that I circulated a ruling that yourself made, and you can confirm as well, in regards to the potential conflict of interest I have with this proposition, given my daughter's past and potential future qualification in the Dance World Cup. The ruling was that I have a personal interest but it is shared by many, and does not constitute a direct financial interest, and participation in funding scheme requires first to qualify to represent Jersey in competition abroad, which is not automatic, and this principle could also apply to any States Members whose family member could potentially qualify for Jersey representation in future competitions in any discipline. Therefore I declare an interest and if anyone needs to.

The Bailiff:

Thank you very much, Deputy. We have noted that declaration of interest and, as you have rightly said, I have already outside the Assembly ruled on it and Members will see that ruling. Very well, we call upon you to make the proposition.

2.1 Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

Today I want us to discuss a proposal that will make a lasting impact on Jersey's exceptional individuals. Whether they excel in sports, the arts, or academia, our Island has produced world-class performers and achievers. These individuals proudly represent us on the international stage. However, current funding mechanisms fall very short of meeting their evolving needs. My proposal seeks to establish a permanent support scheme to financially support individuals across all disciplines, all ages, and all abilities as they compete abroad to represent Jersey on world stages. I thank the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development and the Assistant Minister for Sport, their officers, Jersey Sports and ArtHouse for their collaboration to find common ground and discuss my proposition. Although this amendment does not fully align with the broad inclusivity I originally envisioned as it primarily addresses sports, I see it as a positive first step, leaving room for further expansion of scope. If this is adopted, by the end of January a comprehensive review of what can be included will take place, as per point (c) of the amendment. I urge the Minister to ensure that this review will aim for the scheme to include as many disciplines as possible after. This will ensure fair and equal opportunities for all of Jersey's talented individuals. My initial proposal also stated that this funding could be used to cover costs related to uniforms, such as Team Jersey or necessary equipment. However, I have learned from the Minister that there is a separate budget of about £40,000 specifically allocated for support with the kids in uniforms. This budget would address those needs through a different application process. For too long, individuals from diverse fields have been held back by insufficient financial support. Whether it is an athlete striving to compete globally, an artist eager to share their work, or a student excelling in international academic competitions, they all deserve the opportunity to represent Jersey with pride. Financial constraints should not stand in the way of their potential. The proposed initial allocation of £500,000 per year up to £2,000 per individual would have significantly improved access for more to necessary resources. However, the

reduction to £300,000 per year and up to £1,000 per individual is still a good step forward and a considerable increase from the current provision. Although it might not address all the needs, it gets the ball rolling to have such a support scheme available as soon as possible, and it will make a significant difference to many. The amendment refers to a streamlined application process through sports associations. However, we must ensure this does not exclude independent athletes who might not be part of an association or supported with their association for any reason, or those in fields outside traditional sports. The funding must be accessible to all individuals with the talent and drive to represent Jersey. It must be available to everyone who qualifies to represent Jersey, regardless of association, ensuring equal opportunity for support. While the focus of the amendment on sports is understandable, given Jersey's sports expertise and remit, I urge the Minister to explore partnerships with other bodies at the same time. The ArtHouse Grants Committee or other bodies could support the arts in academic sectors as well. All talented individuals in every field deserve equal resources to succeed globally. The scheme must be truly inclusive. This can be achieved as all these disciplines fall under the same department, with very capable officers to find a solution for all. I believe it is very doable to have the same scheme separated to maybe 2 organisations as well, each focusing on their related discipline's applications as long as they operate under the same terms of reference. That is just a suggestion. I also asked the Minister to commit to monitoring the scheme. The scheme must evolve to also meet adequately growing demand within possibilities, and it must adapt to the needs of our talented individuals, both in budget and scope. By collecting statistical data from applications, we will gain valuable insights. We will better understand the full extent of the need. This will allow us to make informed adjustments to the funding in the future, should any be needed. It will ensure the scheme remains effective and inclusive. If necessary, I will return with a proposal for a larger budget if there will be a proven need for this. This scheme is about more than financial support. It is about cultivating a culture of excellence, equity and pride in Jersey's achievements. It is about demonstrating to the world that when Jersey's flag is raised, it represents the best of our Island, whether it is sports, the arts, or academia. Investing in our achievers is investing in Jersey's future. Supporting athletes, artists and scholars benefits not only them, but also strengthens our community, culture and global reputation. It is an investment in the legacy we leave for future generations. In conclusion, I urge Members to support the amended proposal. While it may not fully meet all our aspirations, it represents a crucial first step. It ensures that Jersey's talented individuals have the resources they need to fulfil their potential. I ask the Minister as well for a commitment to broaden the scope, adjust funding as required, and ensure the scheme evolves to meet the needs of as many talented individuals as possible across every discipline. This is not just an investment in our people. It is an investment in Jersey's identity. Our achievers serve as role models. They inspire future generations and bring global recognition to our Island. We tell our youth to aim high. Let us make sure their ambitions are not limited by our Island's borders. Thank you, and I move the proposition.

The Bailiff:

Thank you very much, Deputy. Is the proposition seconded? **[Seconded]**

2.1.1 Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. Johns (Assistant Minister for Sustainable Economic Development - rapporteur):

This is unquestionably an important and worthwhile proposition which will provide an important boost to the funding available to those who are representing Jersey off-Island in sports and in other competitions. I am grateful to Deputy Kovacs for accepting the amendment lodged by the Government and for her engagement with us. Deputy Kovacs was robust in making representation to us and her passion to make a positive change was very clear. It is a passion we share, and I am pleased that we were able to discuss, listen and compromise. We have arrived at a proposition which will deliver meaningful change. As the Assistant Minister for delegated responsibility of sport, I would like to provide unending support to Islanders who are travelling to represent Jersey in sporting competition abroad. As we all know, though, it is not quite as simple as that. The Arts, Heritage and Culture budget is set aside for important reasons, and the money in that budget is not waiting to be

spent. There are already plenty of calls on this funding. Unfortunately it is not as simple as lifting a figure from those funds, or indeed anywhere else. That is why we have asked Deputy Kovacs to compromise on a sum of £300,000 per annum, and we appreciate her doing so. This still represents a significant uplift on the travel funding which is currently available, but it is one we believe can be balanced with other commitments and priorities. As Members may know, Jersey Sport already have travel grant structures in place to provide funding for that purpose. This has been updated recently, and I thank Jersey Sport for their work in this respect. The amendment therefore specifies that this additional support will be provided through Jersey Sport, which will ensure the most efficient use of this additional funding. The second key part of the amendment is to ensure that the funding is delivered through the sporting associations or other appropriate bodies rather than directly to individuals. This reflects the process for the updated sport grant, which will be in place from 2025. Grants will be distributed to sporting clubs and associations who will then have the autonomy to distribute the funds to their Members as they see fit. We consider that clubs and associations are best placed to allocate this funding most effectively and to those that need it most. We recognise though, and Deputy Kovacs has made this case to us, that there are instances where an individual feels they do not have reasonable access to sports clubs or associations or are not receiving appropriate support with travel costs for another reason. In such circumstances, and this is an important point to emphasise, an individual athlete can discuss this directly with Jersey Sport, and funding can be provided, if it is appropriate, in those circumstances. I can also confirm that we are happy to work with other bodies, as described by Deputy Kovacs. Members will have seen that the funding to be provided has been amended to a travel grant of up to £1,000, rather than a more general subsidy of up to £2,000. This narrows the focus of the proposition and means that a greater number of Islanders can be supported for a more specific purpose. While the amendment therefore removes from part (a) references to arts and academic competitions, it inserts a new part (c) which commits to review the associations, individuals and organisations who would be eligible for the funding and commits to ensuring that a wide range of those representing Jersey are in scope. This was a key area of discussion between Ministers and Deputy Kovacs, and I am pleased we are able to reach a position from which we are all content to move forward. In considering this amendment, we have been conscious of other financial support that is already available or will be available in 2025. In addition to the sport travel grant, which this proposition will boost, the report to the amendment makes reference to the performance support programme of £120,000 to support our most talented athletes. There are also grants for participation in the Island Games and Commonwealth Games. In 2025, a new Jersey sport access fund of up to £40,000 will be launched. It is for this reason that the amendment removes reference in this proposition to support for uniform and equipment. In addition to ensuring that we do not overcomplicate a travel grant process by adding another criteria that can be applied for, we must be cognisant that the £40,000 access fund can assist with the cost of uniform, equipment and other fees. I remind Members that uniform for our Commonwealth and Island Games teams is already provided to Jersey athletes. I am also advised, for example, that the Jersey Football Association provides team kit for players representing Jersey. I hope this explains to Members the thought behind our amendment, and I would encourage Members to support the amended proposition with the additional funding that it provides to Islanders.

The Bailiff:

Thank you very much. Before moving on, I am grateful to the Connétable of St. Mary for his contribution by way of fine to the Greffier's charitable funds.

[10:00]

2.1.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

I just rise briefly because we actually have a team off-Island at the moment raising the flag for Jersey. It is the Jersey women's cricket team who is currently playing in the European Cricket Championship and they are doing extremely well, and I wanted to recognise that and send all our good luck to them. But also that Deputy Kovacs talked about youngsters, and the captain of the Jersey women's cricket

team is in fact a teacher at my son's school and my son was able to watch the match between Jersey and Germany. Jersey was able to comfortably win against Germany on Tuesday, and we heard that they were filmed watching that match. Hearing the delight of the children seeing that win and seeing the captain celebrate, and the celebration that the captain did was chosen by the children. It was a bit of a funny celebration, but to show that the children were able to see that win, to be able to celebrate the captain and the team's win, and able to see their little mark on that in an international fora is fantastic. So good luck to the Jersey women's cricket team.

2.1.3 Deputy D.J. Warr of St. Helier South:

I congratulate Deputy Kovacs on bringing this forward because I passionately believe that if we can fund sport in a better way and get more access to international sport that will enable Jersey, which already punches above its weight, to punch its weight even further. I think the national lottery in the U.K. (United Kingdom) has proven that British athletes now are on a world stage in a way that they were never before through funding. Athletes need money. They need funding. They need to be able to practice, and it is in an ever-increasingly competitive world, the more funding, the better. But I think we also need to remind ourselves of the health benefits, the benefits to our community of sport as an activity, and encouraging youngsters to get into sport. I have been playing tennis for many, many years, fortunate to be able to fund my own way, but I would really love to see more youngsters get access to tennis. Equipment is expensive to get into there, to find a coach, and coaching time is expensive. There is a huge amount of money that is required to achieve the standards that are required. I would just say I wholeheartedly support this, and I would encourage the sports departments to find more money, find ways in which we can invest in our future athletes, our future heroes, our future stars.

2.1.4 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

I also welcome this proposition, but I do want to ask some questions of the Minister when he sums up, something which obviously piqued my interest.

The Bailiff:

There will not be a summing up by the Minister.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Oh, yes, sorry, that is right. I do wish to ask something of the Minister who has not yet spoken on this proposition. I know that the Assistant Minister has spoken and he is the rapporteur, but he may be able to help me, or anyone else who has got an interest. But I think it is the Minister who is left to speak if he wants to. It is quite clear that many of our Islanders do travel, not just for sport, but also I came across a friend I know, musician, who is a very good drummer. He has recently turned his hand to conducting as well, and he conducts the Jersey Big Band; I think it is the right band. I know there are a number of bands around, and they travel often off-Island, and he said that they were travelling in the new year to represent Jersey, and it is something that ... because it is a big band, literally, they have to provide a lot of fundraising to get themselves off the Island. But they are literally flying the flag for Jersey or, rather metaphorically, certainly playing their own trumpets for the Island, and trombones when it comes to it. One of my concerns, and what piques my interest, is the mention of the percentage for Arts, Culture and Heritage, which obviously we know has been secured for the time being at least. I am concerned about the proliferation of the use of this fund. There is definitely a cultural element if people are travelling abroad to represent our Island. Even you could probably extend that tenuously to sport, but certainly for bands, et cetera. My concern is that we get into a situation of salami slicing for that fund. Technically it is to be used. It is a ring-fenced fund and I know that many Members of the Assembly feel passionately about ring-fenced funds not being used for purposes other than which they were originally set up for. When we start to potentially proliferate into sports activities that is not cultural, arts and heritage, I am sure that the Minister and the department will be very sensitive to that already. I do also flag up the fact that I think that the money that has been allocated to Cultural, Arts and Heritage has already been subject

to creative accounting; I have raised this issue before. For example, I think that that fund is already £500,000-plus short by the way that the Treasury accounts for the money that is going into Economic Development because Jèrriais is counted as funding for Arts, Culture and Heritage, when in fact it is used to pay teachers. I feel quite strongly that actually that ... and that money is being paid by the Education Department, not by the Economic Development Department. It is Education who pays for Jèrriais teachers to do their jobs, and it should not be counting towards that anyway. A simple solution would simply be to increase the funding from Treasury, because that is where the money comes from, to Economic Development to say that actually we have shortchanged you by £500,000 already, so here is that £500,000, which would easily cover the £300,000 that we are talking about for this, if the Minister wished to proceed in that way. But like I said, I think it should be a more sophisticated model that the Minister has, and I think this is why the amendment is helpful. First, it is a reduced amount that we are talking about, and it was good of Deputy Kovacs to accept that to get it over the line. It does represent compromise, but actually that if any money is being used from the Culture, Arts and Heritage per cent, that it should really be only those that qualify under that particular aspect and that the sports funding should come from a different revenue. That is my feeling. Of course it is something that we will be happy to scrutinise as a wider panel as and when we need to. But otherwise very much welcome that. Why not finish on a parting salvo after yesterday's debate. I do hope that all of the young people that are representing Jersey and the Island in sports or wherever are all British because we want to make sure that they are truly loyal to our Island, do we not, when they are traveling abroad to represent Jersey otherwise they might accidentally score a goal for the other side, and we would not want that to happen, would we?

2.1.5 Deputy K.F. Morel:

I was not intending to rise but as the chair of the Scrutiny Panel has effectively asked that I do, I shall. I also share concerns about the Arts, Culture and Heritage budget being used for purposes other than arts, culture and heritage. But I also share concerns about ring-fenced funding, and I expressed in the appropriate debate a few weeks ago the issues of 1 per cent tied to expenditure. But that is all on the side. I am pleased that we are going to provide more funding for travel, for sport and other activities. As a result of Deputy Kovacs's initial thoughts and then ultimately the proposition, I looked further into it, and it does seem that there sadly is not really sufficient travel funding, which for sports ... so the travel budget at the moment is easily oversubscribed, and that in itself tells me that funding should be made available. I think that is the right thing to do. With regard to things like the Jèrriais funding, which I know is an aside, I have happily funded Jèrriais and the teachers, mainly because I want to make sure they are funded. I know that I am a Minister who is passionate about the growth of Jèrriais and Jèrriais teaching in the Island. From that perspective, I will do anything I can to make sure that we are continuing the teaching of that language. I think it would be appropriate for the Scrutiny Panel to look at the issue that they have raised, but I will leave it to them to do that. In the meantime, I will continue to fund Jèrriais because I think ... I want to make sure it is funded and I am not going to get too touchy about where it gets funded from, but I am happy to be directed otherwise. But I do ask Members to support this proposition. I am pleased to have worked with Deputy Kovacs and the Constable of St. John to make sure that we have something which should go through with as little turbulence as possible, but I am holding on to the desk which is made of wood because who knows what the debate in the States may bring. I ask Members to support it.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Could I ask a point of clarification?

The Bailiff:

Do you give way for a point of clarification? Yes.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Could the Minister seek to come back, if he cannot clarify now, because it is my understanding that his department does not fund the Jèrriais; they are paid by Education.? If that is not the case, because I would not want him to inadvertently mislead or me to be ... maybe I am labouring under false apprehension.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

From the perspective of clarification, my understanding is that my department pays the Education Department to pay the teachers. That is my understanding of the situation, but I will double check and revert to the chair.

The Bailiff:

I am afraid I am required to impose a second fine upon the Constable of St Mary.

Connétable R.D. Johnson of St. Mary:

The offender has been removed, as you can see, Sir.

The Bailiff:

Yes, I can see, and I am grateful for that. We were not banishing you from the Chamber, Connétable, just the errant computer, perhaps.

Connétable M.A. Labey of Grouville:

My colleague, Deputy Tadier, has reminded me I am a member of the Jersey Big Band, and I require your guidance as to whether I should be voting in this debate.

The Bailiff:

No, I do not think you do need to be voting in the debate because there was merely a desire that it reaches out to things like the big band in the future. The vote is on Deputy Kovacs's proposition and nothing else.

2.1.6 Deputy A. Howell of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

I, like many in this Chamber, are passionate about sport. It is good for all of us, from tiny tots to those of more advanced age. It is good for us physically and for our mental health. For some it is great just to take part in sport on a social basis, swim in the sea, walking football, beach cricket, or cycle around the Island. But it is my belief that for some competition is really important. I do not think that we should put a ceiling on the aspirations of our young people. We should encourage them. I thank Deputy Kovacs for bringing this proposition, and I thank the Minister for the amendment. I ask us all to vote for this amendment, so that we can encourage our young people to represent Jersey with pride.

Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North:

Just for the hands up, I probably need ... it is nothing planned and it is maybe some time away, but my daughter is a member of the sports squad and she might be beneficial of this at some point so I am not sure if ...

The Bailiff:

No.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Okay, but at least it is there.

The Bailiff:

In exactly the same way that Deputy Kovacs does have a potential interest in the outcome of the matter, it is only a potential interest and the same would apply for the circumstances you have just

described. Does any other Member wish to speak on the proposition? If no other Member wishes to speak, then I close the debate and call upon Deputy Kovacs to respond.

2.1.7 Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

Thank you to everyone that contributed to the debate. I equally, I reiterate, do not want to have the funds for Art, Heritage and Culture being misused but I truly believe that the Jersey ambassadors are part of the culture and heritage of this Island and should be supported in that way. I just want to reiterate a few points. We are very quick to celebrate when these hard-working individuals bring medals and achievements for Jersey but often overlook their sacrifice and the support they need to be able to get there. We need to support Jersey's talented ambassadors, making sure they have the support they deserve. Many talented individuals are left feeling that their hard work and sacrifices may be in vain if the financial barriers prevent them from crossing the water to showcase their skills. We must do better to ensure that all our very talented individuals have the opportunity to thrive. This scheme will help break down an important part of financial barriers and ensures our athletes, sports individuals, but equally artists and scholars, young or old, or of any ability, can shine to their full ability, and I trust that the Minister will bring as many of these categories as he can in scope as well after the general review. The great achievements in all disciplines should be worthy of recognition and support. Imagine the heartbreak of a young athlete who has trained tirelessly only to discover that financial constraints prevent them from participating in a crucial competition. Picture the aspiring artist with the golden opportunity to showcase their work in global competitions but unable to afford the travel expenses. Consider the brilliant student excelling in engineering, mathematics or other fields who could potentially win at international Olympiads yet misses out on opportunities to be seen and contribute to potentially groundbreaking world projects all because they lack the financial means to cover the travel costs. They are all important for our Island representation and everyone should be included.

[10:15]

These stories are not just numbers, they are real people with dreams, aspirations and incredible potential and should be all considered as the support scheme develops. We have the chance to change this narrative. As I mentioned, there are also occasions where individuals representing Jersey could be a freelance sports person or not part of a club or simply the coach in an association that does not like them and does not want to support them. Also individuals in different sports that perform more individually than on teams, book their own travel, some by car, train, some by flights. They book their own accommodation, some sharing a house with other families, some on their own. So it is hard for an association to apply for all these individuals. I ask the Minister, in collaboration with Jersey Sport and maybe other organisations, to think in these cases of the best mechanism and process of how these individuals can apply without mandating it to have only applications from associations or club backing them or apply for them. I am glad to hear that the Assistant Minister had confirmation from Jersey Sport that individual circumstances can also be considered. I hope this scheme will be designed to bring certainty that if they qualify to represent Jersey they are entitled for such support. Jersey's remarkable talent deserves to be celebrated and supported. Their success not only supports the personal development of these talented individuals, not only showcases our Island's potential, but also boosts Jersey's visibility, bringing along exciting tourism and growth opportunities. Therefore, I ask Members to join me in flying the flag for adequate financial support for those representing Jersey in competition abroad, putting Jersey on the map with their great results of their hard work. With now literally flying the flag for them, I call for the appel.

The Bailiff:

The appel is called for.

Deputy M. Tadier:

May I correct something I said earlier? It is not the Jersey Big Band, it is the Jersey Premier Brass, who will be representing the Island, and it will be in London, at the Southern Counties Brass

Championship in March. So, I just wanted to ... otherwise, there will be lots of people contacting us saying: “What are you talking about, Deputy?” They both do a thoroughly good job.

The Bailiff:

The appel is called for. I invite any Members not in the Chamber to return to their seats. The vote is on P.82 and I ask the Greffier to open the voting and Members to vote. If Members have had the opportunity of casting their vote, I ask the Greffier to close the voting. The proposition has been adopted.

POUR: 43		CONTRE: 0		ABSTAIN: 0
Connétable of St. Helier				
Connétable of St. Lawrence				
Connétable of St. Brelade				
Connétable of Trinity				
Connétable of St. Peter				
Connétable of St. Martin				
Connétable of St. John				
Connétable of St. Clement				
Connétable of Grouville				
Connétable of St. Ouen				
Connétable of St. Mary				
Connétable of St. Saviour				
Deputy G.P. Southern				
Deputy C.F. Labey				
Deputy M. Tadier				
Deputy S.G. Luce				
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet				
Deputy K.F. Morel				
Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat				
Deputy S.M. Ahier				
Deputy I. Gardiner				
Deputy I.J. Gorst				
Deputy L.J. Farnham				
Deputy S.Y. Mézec				
Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf				
Deputy Sir P.M. Bailhache				
Deputy T.A. Coles				
Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée				
Deputy D.J. Warr				
Deputy H.M. Miles				

Deputy J. Renouf				
Deputy C.D. Curtis				
Deputy L.V. Feltham				
Deputy R.E. Binet				
Deputy H.L. Jeune				
Deputy A. Howell				
Deputy T.J.A. Binet				
Deputy M.R. Ferey				
Deputy R.S. Kovacs				
Deputy A.F. Curtis				
Deputy B. Ward				
Deputy K.M. Wilson				
Deputy M.B. Andrews				

Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

I just want to thank everyone.

3. Comptroller and Auditor General Board of Governance: appointment of Chair and independent member (P.84/2024)

The Bailiff:

The next and the final item of Public Business is Comptroller and Auditor General Board of Governance: appointment of Chair and independent member, P.84, lodged by the Chief Minister. I ask the Greffier to read the proposition.

The Greffier of the States:

The States are asked to decide whether they are of opinion – in accordance with Article 2(2) of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Board of Governance) (Jersey) Order 2015, to approve the recommendation of the Chief Minister and the chair of the Public Accounts Committee to appoint Mr. Michael Whitehouse O.B.E. (Order of the British Empire) as chair and Ms. Cosette Reczek as an independent member of the Board of Governance of the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, for a term of 5 years.

Deputy L.J. Farnham of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter (The Chief Minister):

Deputy Ferey is leading on this, thank you.

3.1 Deputy M.R. Ferey (Assistant Chief Minister - rapporteur):

It is a pleasure to take the last piece of public business for this year. This proposition, if adopted, would appoint a new chair of the Comptroller and Auditor General Board of Governance and a new independent member from March 2025. These appointments would replace the current chair, Grace Nesbitt O.B.E., whose term of office expires at the end of March 2025, and Professor Russel Griggs O.B.E, independent member of the board. Both have reached the maximum time allowed within their roles, having served 2 terms of office. The Comptroller and Auditor General Board of Governance is established under the Comptroller and Auditor General (Board of Governance) (Jersey) Order 2015 to keep under review whether the Comptroller and Auditor General has used and is using the resources provided to their office properly. There is an important scrutinising function providing assurance to the Assembly and to the public of Jersey that the Audit Office continues to be

run effectively. The board is comprised of high-calibre members, the board's running costs are low, with ordinary board members providing their time without remuneration. I am grateful to the chair and all board members for their continued work, and I am sure that the Assembly will join me in recognising the important work that they undertake. Applications for the roles of chair and independent members were received from the United Kingdom and further afield, and interviews were held in October. The recruitment panel unanimously recommended Michael Whitehouse O.B.E. for appointment as chair and Cosette Reczek for appointment as independent member. These appointments have the support of the Jersey Appointments Commission and the Public Accounts Committee. I therefore commend these appointments to the Assembly, and I make this proposition.

The Bailiff:

Is the proposition seconded? **[Seconded]** Does any Member wish to speak on the proposition?

3.1.1 Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North:

First of all, as the chair of the Public Accounts Committee, I would like to say thank you for the work for Grace Nisbett and Russel Griggs that they have been for twice for 5 years. I remember interviewing Grace when I was chair of the Public Accounts Committee in the previous term and her contribution as a chair was very, very valid for the work of the Public Accounts Committee and obviously supporting the Comptroller and Audit General. I am welcoming new members. I think it is really nice to finish public business of this year, because I would like to also say thank you for the Assistant Chief Minister that we worked, I think, really well in collaboration. It was a unanimous decision of the panel. This demonstrates really good work between Executive and non-Executive. I hope this will be approved by the Assembly.

The Bailiff:

Does any other Member wish to speak on the proposition? No other Member wishes to speak? Then I close the debate and call upon Deputy Ferey to respond.

3.1.2 Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I would like to thank Deputy Gardiner, the chair of the Public Accounts Committee, for her support and for her kind comments. I maintain the proposition and, as it is Christmas, I'd like to say Joyeux Noël and I call for the appel.

The Bailiff:

You rhymed. **[Laughter]** The appel is called for. I invite Members not present to return to their seats. I ask the Greffier to open the voting. The vote is on P.84. If Members have had the opportunity of casting their votes, then I ask the Greffier to close the voting. The proposition has been adopted.

POUR: 43		CONTRE: 0		ABSTAIN: 0
Connétable of St. Helier				
Connétable of St. Lawrence				
Connétable of St. Brelade				
Connétable of Trinity				
Connétable of St. Peter				
Connétable of St. Martin				
Connétable of St. John				
Connétable of St. Clement				
Connétable of Grouville				
Connétable of St. Ouen				

Connétable of St. Mary				
Connétable of St. Saviour				
Deputy G.P. Southern				
Deputy C.F. Labey				
Deputy M. Tadier				
Deputy S.G. Luce				
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet				
Deputy K.F. Morel				
Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat				
Deputy S.M. Ahier				
Deputy I. Gardiner				
Deputy I.J. Gorst				
Deputy L.J. Farnham				
Deputy S.Y. Mézec				
Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf				
Deputy Sir P.M. Bailhache				
Deputy T.A. Coles				
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Deputy D.J. Warr				
Deputy H.M. Miles				
Deputy J. Renouf				
Deputy C.D. Curtis				
Deputy L.V. Feltham				
Deputy R.E. Binet				
Deputy H.L. Jeune				
Deputy M.E. Millar				
Deputy A. Howell				
Deputy M.R. Ferey				
Deputy R.S. Kovacs				
Deputy A.F. Curtis				
Deputy B. Ward				
Deputy K.M. Wilson				
Deputy M.B. Andrews				

That concludes Public Business and we now move to the arrangement of future business and I call on the chair of P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee).

ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

4. **Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin (Chair, Privileges and Procedures Committee):**

At the moment there are 5 items listed for our next meeting, which is on 21st January 2025; P.74, Modern Languages in Schools; P.78, Draft Employment and Discrimination (Jersey) Amendment Law; P.79, Draft Termination Pregnancy (Jersey) Amendment Law; P.86, Selection of Elected Member to Preside at States Meetings; and P.71, which is Reporting on Ministerial Affairs, which was moved to the next item yesterday. I would like to wish all the Assembly happiness, good health and peace for Christmas and the New Year, and I make the arrangement of public business.

The Bailiff:

Does anyone have any observations on the arrangements for public business? Very well, I will take those as adopted by the Assembly and those are the arrangements for public business.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

5.1 **Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier:**

The peroration of my Christmas speech on behalf of the Connétables last year was the following, and I quote: “Finally, in a departure from tradition, I hope the Assembly will join with me in wishing the compliments of the season to the members of the States of Deliberation in Guernsey, and in hoping that the 2 Bailiwicks of the Channel Islands will be able to work more closely in future.” **[Approbation]** I fervently hope that this year’s speech will not jinx matters in the same way. This time last year I also referred to the tragic loss of life at Haut du Mont, St. Helier, and a little way out to sea, the sinking of the L’Ecume. These events can rightly be considered still recent, still painful to survivors of the former calamity and to grieving friends and relatives of both events. Sadly, we have to add to these, shocks to our close-knit community the impact on friends and family over the past year and a half of the tragic deaths of Dean and Charlie Lowe. One of the joys of the job of Connétable, as Mother or Father of the Parish, is hosting one or more Christmas lunches for the senior citizens. But on these festive occasions, one is struck too by the number of parishioners who have passed away during the previous 12 months. Parishioners whom one has got to know over the years, and in the case of members of the municipality with whom one has worked closely. A final word in this necessarily sombre section of my speech is to express our condolences to all Islanders who have been bereaved during the past year, whose loss will be felt particularly keenly during the coming celebrations of Christmas and the New Year. **[Approbation]** On a happier note, our community came together this year to welcome His Majesty King Charles III and Queen Camilla, and we were privileged to attend meetings of the States Assembly and the Royal Court in the Royal Square. The royal visit will be remembered by others for the walkabout and the generous amounts of time the King and Queen spent meeting Islanders and visitors. People are still talking about the conversations they had on that day with our royal visitors. Others will recall the expo on the Weighbridge which showcased so well the Island’s traditional industries of agriculture, dairy farming and fishing, at the same time as our pursuit of environmentally sustainable goals. While few present on the day will forget the deluge that left them wetter than they had ever been, especially the numerously smartly turned out members of our cadet forces and voluntary organisations. Honorary service, not only that of the Honorary Police but of the very many groups in Jersey who don a uniform, undergo training, and give up their time to support the community, is one of the things that makes our Island special. The Connétables pay tribute to everyone who has volunteered in any capacity over the past year and wish them a well-deserved Christmas break. On behalf of the Connétables, I wish you and your family a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. I do so with a special fervour, as this is to be the final set of Christmas speeches over which you will be presiding. No doubt you have discovered the Countdown clock on your phone, as well as the dictionary, and you are enjoying seeing the number of days left dwindle, especially when a long debate is extended by a reference back, or when you are required to respond to numerous spurious points of order. If you have not

discovered the timer app yet, there are several States Members who will be able to show it to you as they sit through their penultimate set of Christmas speeches. We extend our greetings to the Deputy Bailiff and his family, the Attorney General and Solicitor General and their families, the Greffier and her team, everyone in fact who has supported the States Assembly this year. We hope that our Lieutenant Governor and Dr. Kyd have enjoyed their second full year in the Island, and wish them a well-earned festive break from their many official duties. We wish the Deputies and their families a relaxing Christmas and New Year, the Dean and his family, the Judicial Greffe and the Jurats, the ushers and Jan, the Scrutiny officers and everyone else who work so hard to facilitate the workings of this legislature, not forgetting the Island's media. We send our best wishes to the staff of the Parish Halls, who do so much to support the vital work of the Parishes **[Approbation]**, not forgetting our hard-working and supportive partners. The Constables work closely with the emergency services and we wish their officers a very Happy Christmas and a restful New Year with their families, and we acknowledge the vital contribution of everyone who works in health and social care, especially those who will be working in the hospital, the Island's care homes, community centres and Jersey Hospice, while we are sitting down in front of our turkeys or nut roasts. Thank you. **[Approbation]**

5.2 Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier Central:

It is that time of year - how quickly it comes - that time of year when I browse my library in search of a nice juicy quote.

[10:30]

No, not Dickens this year, nor the gospel according to Matthew. What shall it be this year, I wonder? As possibly - probably - the grumpiest, as well as the longest-serving Member of this Assembly **[Approbation]** - I note the agreement - it falls to me once again to wish all Members the very best of wishes at Christmas from the Deputies. But this is a surprisingly difficult task for me with my limited range of small talk and obsession with all things political. My natural reaction on hearing Christmas greetings is to mutter a Scrooge-like bah humbug. While the Dickensian-type of Victorian Christmas merely serves to remind me just how much we are reliant on charitable giving to enable the poorest in our society to share in the festivities. Looking back at my previous 2 efforts at the Christmas speech, I note that in each I have felt compelled to highlight the increased need for, or use of, food banks to alleviate poverty experienced by too many in our community. Once again, I call upon Members to act to eliminate poverty on this Island. It is possible. We are a rich Island and we can and must do better. **[Approbation]** In this year's Budget debate, I spoke briefly about income inequality. I take the liberty of returning to it now. First, to congratulate the Assembly on its decision to endorse a mechanism for the delivery of a living wage. Such a brave decision deserves to go a long way to reducing inequality in many areas, such as housing, education and access to healthcare. Surely the basic concerns of all of us involved in Government, whether as Back-Benchers, Ministers or scrutineers. But back to my library shelves: what is the right quote this year? Shall I settle for joining those who have given up on the hunt for equality and adopt the pessimistic view of George Orwell back in 1949, when his quote was: "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others." But no, when faced with such a negative prognosis, I turn to my inspiration, "The Spirit Level" or "Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better" by Wilkinson and Pickett. This frees me up to take the longer view, which I heartily recommend to all Members, trapped as we often are in the short term between one Christmas and the next, or one 4-year period between one election and the next. Take the long view and you will find an almost unstoppable historical trend towards greater equality from, for example, the limitations on the divine right of kings, the principle of equality before the law, the extension of the franchise to non-property owners and women, and indeed the abolition of slavery. Picking up pace more recently with the development of free education, healthcare, and protecting the rights of workers and tenants, and laws to prevent discrimination. It includes the decline of class deference and the abolition of capital and corporal punishment, all positive achievements of bodies such as ours. Yes, there is still a long way to go in the fight for equality, but we have already achieved much. On this positive note, and with no sign of humbug

whatsoever, I wish a peaceful and restful Christmas to His Excellency and Dr. Kyd, to the Bailiff and the Deputy Bailiff, to the Greffier and her Deputy and Assistants, to the Dean, to the Attorney General and the Solicitor General, to the Viscounts and their staff, to the ushers and all the staff behind the scenes. Above all, I particularly praise the Scrutiny officers and all those who ensure that the States can function. Thank you. **[Approbation]**

5.3 The Bailiff:

Messr Le Connétable, Deputy Southern, thank you for your kind words and your good wishes on behalf of the Assembly. It is, as you have foreshadowed, Connétable, something of a poignant moment for me, as this will be the last time that I have the opportunity of presiding at this time of year, and so I am very happy indeed to have the traditional opportunity to reciprocate those wishes for this last time. Do not worry, this is not going to be a recurring theme in the months to come. The staff of my Chambers have already threatened to buy me a badge that lights up whenever I say: "This is the last time I will do this", or words to that effect. There is always a sinking feeling when you are speaking third in a group of 3 because pretty much everything that one might have wanted to say has already been said, and there is of course a Standing Order that prohibits repetition. However, as everyone else ignores it **[Laughter]** I thought I might hazard one or 2 repetitious remarks. It seems to me that the high point of the year was indeed the visit of their Majesties. The Island came together, notwithstanding the almost biblical deluge to which you have made reference, to celebrate and welcome the King and Queen. You mentioned, Connétable, that people were still talking about it. Well, the best information that I have is that His Majesty is still talking about it. He remembers the weather very well indeed, but he very much also remembers the welcome that the Jersey people have given him. The visit of the King and Queen and the way in which they discuss it, they think of Jersey very fondly, because when they visited as Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall, they were welcomed as a couple for the very first time in the British Islands, and they have very much fond memories. Those memories, I am informed, were reinforced by the warmth of the welcome that the Jersey people extended to them this summer. The organisation and the commitment of those who worked towards that visit, which you have mentioned, Connétable, was absolutely superb and we are entitled to be proud of the way the Island showed itself on the international stage, except perhaps for the weather advertisement. I am not going to speak for too long. It has been an arduous week at the end of an arduous year and all Members will be justifiably tired and looking forward to a break. In the year to the beginning of this particular sitting, we have sat, excluding this week, for about 171 hours, 86 propositions have been lodged, 4 statements made, and 393 written questions and 229 oral questions asked. The prize for the most questions asked goes to Deputy Renouf, with an impressively inquisitive 62, and the prize for the most speeches to Deputy Ozouf, whose powers of oration were deployed some 44 times, so I am told. I also have the statistics for the Members most *en défaut*, but I will not, in the season of goodwill, name names or mention the 2 of them who share first place, nor will I name the Ministerial and non-Ministerial Members who were the most *Absent de l'Île*. What is clear, though, is that the Assembly has worked hard, and particularly, I think, over the last few weeks. In a statement made by Deputy Doublet yesterday, in the context of neurodiversity and the questions that followed in the Assembly, Members reflected on the need for tolerance, for understanding, and for kindness. That was, it seems to me, an example of the Assembly expressing itself at its best. Sometimes though, over the last year, arguments have perhaps been advanced in a way that was unnecessarily tendentious, or the critical finger has been too easy to point and the benefit of doubt too easy to withhold on some occasions. I hope Members will not mind me saying that as we come to the end of this year and move into next year we can perhaps put those slight elements behind us and move in with a new philosophy and start afresh. **[Approbation]** This Assembly, in my experience, is an incredible place in many ways. It is capable of functioning in a way marked by mutual respect and regard, with robust challenges nonetheless, and with a high quality of debate. If the people of Jersey knew that Assembly more, as I do, they would be justifiably proud of it, as I am. That is the Assembly that it is a pleasure and honour to preside over, and that is the Assembly that best serves our people. In reflecting on the business of the Assembly, of course, it would be wrong

not to say how much both I and Members have relied hugely on the Greffier and her team. I would like to pay tribute to the enormous contribution [**Approbation**] to the work of the Assembly that she makes, as does the Deputy Greffier and all of the team at the States Greffe. Perhaps I am particularly aware of that contribution because of the amount of help I get personally on an almost daily basis, and I am grateful for the level of support and guidance that I receive in the day-to-day functioning of this part of my office. I would also like to mention the ushers who sit occasionally, pass notes and do the things which are necessary, and of course Jan, whose birthday indeed it is today. [**Approbation**] They all work in the background but they provide invaluable support in small ways and sometimes big ways and make our lives easier and more enjoyable in this building. Whether or not you approach this time ... Deputy Tadier, are you looking up a brand new word to use?

Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

I am listening, Sir.

The Bailiff:

I am joking. I did not mean that. Whether you approach this time of year from the point of view of the traditional Christmas story or simply from the natural human experience of the winter solstice, which itself signalled the growth of life in a new year, this is a time we can pause, we can reflect and we can anticipate what is to come. We hold in mind, as I know we do, those who are less fortunate than ourselves. We also keep in mind those among our number who have suffered bereavement or challenges, and who together with others are facing this time, which should be one of happiness, with sadness or with anxiety and we hold them very much in our thoughts. But whatever your views and whatever your philosophies, it is time now, as I have said, for everyone to take a well-earned rest. I would like for myself, the Deputy Bailiff, on behalf of His Excellency, the Crown officers, the Dean and the Greffier, the Viscount, the chief officer and all members of their respective teams, to thank all Members very much for their kindness and support and to wish you all and your respective families a very peaceful and happy Christmas break and an optimism for a joyful 2025. [**Approbation**] Thank you. The adjournment does not need to be proposed because we have run out of steam and the Assembly accordingly stands adjourned until 9.30 on 21st January 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

[10:43]