

Privileges and Procedures Committee

(2nd Meeting)

25th January 2023

Part A

All members were present with the exception of Deputy P.F.C Ozouf of St Saviour and Deputy I. Gardiner of St Helier from whom apologies had been received.

Deputy C.S. Alves of St Helier, Chair
Deputy M.R. Scott of St Brelade, Vice-Chair
Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St Martin
Connétable M.A. Labey of Grouville
Connétable M. O'D. Troy of St. Clement
Deputy L.M.C Doublet of St Saviour
Deputy R.S. Kovacs of St Saviour
Deputy H.L. Jeune of St John, St Lawrence and Trinity
Deputy M.B. Andrews of St Helier

In attendance -

Mr W. Millow, Deputy Greffier of the States
Ms K. Camara, Research and Project Officer
Ms J. Hahn, Research and Project Officer

Note: The Minutes of this meeting comprise Part A

Minutes. A1. The minutes of the meeting held on 4th November 2022 were taken as read and approved.

Proxy voting. A2. The Sub-Committee discussed a paper by the Principal Committee and Panel Officer regarding the introduction of proxy voting in the States Assembly. The Sub-Committee recalled that a proposition lodged by Deputy I. Gardiner entitled 'Remote Participation and Proxy Voting' (P.63/2022) had asked Members to decide whether proxy voting should be permitted for votes in the States Assembly. Although this part of the proposition had been defeated by the previous Assembly, proxy voting had been highlighted as a matter which should be considered further by the Privileges and Procedures Committee (PPC).

The Sub-Committee noted that Deputy Gardiner's proposition had shown that a number of legislatures had recently introduced proxy voting for a variety of reasons. During the height of the Covid-19 pandemic some legislatures had relied on proxy voting to overcome the difficulties caused by physical meetings. There was also variety in how such proxy voting schemes were designed.

The Sub-Committee was advised that PPC had commented in response to Deputy Gardiner's proposition that, if introduced, proxy votes could potentially be cast in respect of Members absent on States business, malade, absent because of parental responsibilities, or excusé. The Sub-Committee noted that it should not be possible for

Members en défaut to vote by proxy.

In the Comments, PPC had highlighted that, should proxy voting be introduced, there would be a number of matters to decide including:

- Would anyone absent at the roll call (other than Members en défaut) be eligible for a proxy vote?
- Could a Member who was present for the roll call request a proxy vote for later in the day and, if so, for what reasons?
- Who would cast a proxy vote and how could assurance be given that the vote cast was in accordance with the Member's instruction?
- Could a Member change who was casting a proxy vote on their behalf? Could they change their vote and, if so, how?
- How should proxy voting be registered with the States Greffe or Bailiff to keep track of what was going on?
- Could a Member cancel a proxy vote to vote in person and, if so, how much notice should be given?

The Sub-Committee requested further research to be undertaken on the use of proxy voting in other jurisdictions. It was also agreed that the research should include a number of options for the introduction of a scheme in Jersey which would be discussed at the Sub-Committee's next meeting.

Diversity
Forum Legacy
Report.

A3. The Sub-Committee, with reference to Minute No. A3 of 4th November 2022, received and considered a paper from the Principal Committee and Panel Officer regarding the 'States Assembly Gender Audit: Diversity Forum Report' (R.96/2019) which had been presented on 4th May 2022. The Sub-Committee noted that the report listed a number of principal achievements made by the Forum including the publication of a gender sensitive audit of the States Assembly, making Standing Orders more gender neutral and developing a programme of work to enhance the diversity of election candidates, which had been implemented by the States Greffe.

The Sub-Committee noted that a number of outstanding matters had been included which had not been brought to a conclusion during the last term. There were also a number of other issues identified in the report including:

- A number of recommendations made in the gender sensitive audit which had not been implemented.
- The rooms in the States Building which were to be named after Caroline Trachy and Ivy Forster.
- To create a culture in which sitting late was proposed earlier in the day.
- To assess the success of encouraging a broader cross-section of the public to vote.
- To encourage the Government to improve the diversity of recruitment to States-owned bodies and arm's length organisations.
- To produce a behaviour code which set out the behaviour expected from parliamentarians and other people who worked in parliamentary buildings.
- To include the Diversity Forum in Standing Orders, either as a permanent Sub-Committee of PPC or as a standalone body.

- To provide the Diversity Forum with its own dedicated officer.
- To examine other aspects of diversity; for example, disability.
- Consideration of the five priorities following a workshop with the Diversity Network during the previous term:
 - Tackling violence against women
 - Modelling inclusive leadership and behaviour in the States Assembly and civil service
 - Establishing a dedicated Equalities Minister and Department
 - Enhancing social mobility and tackling the growing poverty gap, particularly through education policy.

The Sub-Committee noted that some of the actions suggested by the previous Diversity Forum had already been addressed. In that regard, the Sub-Committee tasked the Principal Committee and Panel Officer to draft a paper which set out the actions under a Red-Amber-Green rated system. The Sub-Committee also asked that those actions rated red included suggestions for a way forward for its consideration.

Commonwealth
h
Parliamentary
Association –
Effective and
Inclusive
Parliaments.

A3. The Sub-Committee, with reference to Minute No.5 of 4th November 2022, received and considered a summary report by the Principal Committee and Panel Officer regarding the report entitled ‘Commonwealth Parliamentary Association - Effective and Inclusive Parliaments’ by Dr Jessica C. Smith.

The Sub-Committee agreed that some of the findings and recommendations made by Dr Smith could be relevant to the States Assembly. In that regard, the Sub-Committee requested that a meeting was arranged with Dr Smith to discuss the report’s findings further.

International
Women’s Day.

A4. The Sub-Committee discussed opportunities to promote International Women’s Day on 8th March 2023. The Sub-Committee noted that diversity within the States Assembly had improved including key statistics such as:

- The very first female Chief Minister, Deputy Kristina Moore
- A 50% increase in the number of female States Members, from 14 in 2018, to 21 in 2022
- A 51% rise in the number of female Deputies, to 19 out of 37
- An increase in equality in the Assembly with 43% of female States Members, 21 women and 28 men

The Sub-Committee agreed that the event should be celebrated and that members of the Sub-Committee would circulate ideas before 8th March.

Meeting
schedule 2023.

A5. The Sub-Committee agreed that its next scheduled meeting would be held in March 2023. The Research and Project Officer was tasked to identify dates for monthly meetings for the rest of the year.