

Privileges and Procedures Committee

Political Awareness and Education Sub-Committee

(9th Meeting)

16th September 2024

Part A (Non-Exempt)

All members were present, with the exception of Connétable M.A. Labey of Grouville, Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John and Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville and St. Martin, from whom apologies had been received.

Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central, Chair
Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North (for items A1-A4 only)
Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade
Deputy R.L. Kovacs of St. Saviour

In attendance -

W. Millow, Deputy Greffier of the States
J. O'Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement
J. Lepp, Research and Project Officer
C. Fearn, Secretariat Officer, Specialist Secretariat, States Greffe
C. Tucker, Assistant Secretariat Officer, Specialist Secretariat, States Greffe
E. Patterson, Assistant Secretariat Officer, Specialist Secretariat, States Greffe

Note: The Minutes of this meeting comprise Part A only.

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| Minutes. | A1. The Minutes of the meeting held on 20th June 2024, having previously been circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed. |
| Coming-of-Age Events. | A2. The Sub-Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A2 of 20th June 2024, recalled that the Comité de Connétables had discussed 'Coming-of-Age' events focussed on encouraging young Islanders nearing the eligible to vote age, or constituents who had recently joined the Parish, to engage with the democratic process. |
| Automatic Voter Registration. | A3. The Sub-Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A7 of 20th June 2024, received a verbal update from Ms. J. O'Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement (DPE), in connexion with the Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) project. |

It was recalled that the AVR project aimed to streamline the voting process by virtue of - the introduction of automatic registration using live data; allowing the electorate to vote outside of their home Parishes; consideration of elector eligibility criteria; creating links to 'Tell Us Once' (to avoid repeated requests for the same information from a household); using the electoral roll for credit reference purposes; and the

provision of photographic identification.

The Sub-Committee was informed that, whilst the system development was progressing well, the project was unlikely to be completed by the end of 2024. However, it was anticipated that the project would be finalised in advance of the 2026 Election, ensuring time was allowed for the necessary testing. The benefits of AVR were reiterated, which included facilitating resources to be focused on incentivising voter turnout rather than voter registration, as well as providing a measure of who, of those eligible, was voting. The logistical issues of the project were also discussed, and the Sub-Committee was informed that allowing the electorate to vote outside of their home Parishes had been deemed out of scope for the 2026 Election.

The budget and data sources for the project were discussed. It was noted that the AVR project did not sit under a particular Ministerial portfolio and that the budget responsibility was held by the Greffier of the States, with the Privileges and Procedures Committee maintaining oversight. Mr. T. Walker, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Government of Jersey, was the lead officer for the project. The Sub-Committee was advised that the constituents' data would be obtained from the Social Security records held by the Customer and Local Services Department, which would be reconciled with information from Parish records. It was recognised that the centralisation of the data would streamline this process and would allow for the possibility of online voting in the future.

The Sub-Committee noted the position and thanked Ms. O'Brien for the update.

New States
Assembly
website.

A4. The Sub-Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A4 of 20th June 2024, received an update from Ms. J. O'Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement (DPE), in connexion with the development of the new States Assembly website.

It was noted that the website was currently undergoing testing to identify any issues which required attention prior to its launch. The Sub-Committee was advised that despite some challenges with software and formatting, the new website was expected to be live by the end of October 2024, foregoing any significant complications. The Sub-Committee raised concerns in connexion with delays to the project timeline and suggested that prospective issues could be addressed once the launch was complete to avoid any further obstruction. Ms. O'Brien advised that she was confident in the anticipated launch date, with the caveat that further issues could be identified during ongoing testing. It was noted that the Deputy Greffier of the States was reviewing the site and States Members would be updated on the matter in due course.

The Sub-Committee noted the position.

Democracy
Week 2024.

A5. The Sub-Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A8 of 20th June 2024, received and noted the schedule for the upcoming Democracy Week and heard from Ms. J. O'Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement (DPE), in this connexion.

The Sub-Committee was advised that the new 'People's Debate' event, taking place on 28th September 2024, had received significant interest, with over 40 members of the public expected to participate. It was noted that the debate would be centred around Jersey's goal of net zero carbon emissions, and it was hoped that the event would provide valuable insight into the parliamentary procedures in the Island.

The Sub-Committee noted that tours of the States Chamber, school visits by States

Members and officers, pop-up stands, and a democracy themed walk around St. Helier would also take place during the week. ‘Politics 101’ sessions would be delivered in Portuguese, and explanatory videos and other content would be translated into Portuguese, Polish and Romanian.

The Sub-Committee noted the position and thanked Ms. O’Brien for the update.

Jersey Voter
Engagement
Focus Groups:
Pilot Study
undertaken by
Professor C.
Pich.

A6. The Sub-Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A3 of 20th June 2024, received and noted a letter, dated 6th September 2024, addressed to Professor C. Pich from Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central, Chair, in connexion with his recent report entitled ‘Exploring the Voter Journey in the Context of Jersey: Engagement, Barriers and Recommendations’.

The Chair had informed Professor Pich that the report had provided evidence to reinforce the work of the Sub-Committee, with particular regard to the introduction of the Education Manager and Outreach Manager roles within the Digital and Public Engagement team, and that feedback from Islanders on the recommendations to improve voter engagement would be gathered via the Jersey Opinions and Lifestyle Survey 2024.

The Chair advised that Professor Pich would possibly engage in further research on the Island, and it was acknowledged that this research would not be commissioned by the Sub-Committee in order to allow it to be considered as independent material.

Staffing and
Structure.

A7. The Sub-Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A9 of 20th June 2024, received an update from Ms. J. O’Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement (DPE), in connexion with staffing updates in the DPE team.

It was noted that Ms. J. Le Cornu had been appointed to the role of Outreach Manager and was conducting community and corporate tours in the States Chamber which had received positive feedback from staff and members of the public. Ms. O’Brien added that Ms. M. Gladwin would be returning to the team as Education Manager.

Access to the
Electoral Roll.

A8. The Sub-Committee discussed the matter of access to the electoral roll, which had been raised by Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade.

Deputy Tadier had proposed that a letter be written to H.M. Attorney General in order to clarify the access existing States Members or candidates standing for election have to the electoral roll outside of the election period. The Sub-Committee agreed that legitimate use of the electoral roll would be useful for constituency work and to those wishing to pursue a career in politics, which would enhance wider democracy by facilitating engagement with constituents. It was proposed that this access could be linked to the AVR project and the centralised voter register, which would enable constituents to register an interest in hearing from candidates outside of the election period.

It was agreed that Ms. J. O’Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement, would write to the Attorney General in this connexion.

Date of Next
Meeting.

A9. The Sub-Committee noted that its next meeting would be held on 17th October 2024 at 2.00 pm in the Blampied Room.