

Privileges and Procedures Committee

Political Awareness and Education Sub-Committee

(11th Meeting)

29th January 2025

Part A (Non-Exempt)

All members were present, with the exception of Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade and Connétable M.A. Labey of Grouville, from whom apologies had been received.

Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central, Chair
 Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John
 Deputy R.S. Kovacs of St. Saviour
 Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North (for a time)
 Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville and St. Martin (for a time)

In attendance -

C. Pich, Associate Professor in Marketing, Nottingham University Business School (present for item No. A3 only)
 J. O' Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement
 M. Gladwin, Education Manager, Digital and Public Engagement
 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.

Minutes.	A1. The Minutes of the meeting held on 18th November 2024, having previously been circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed.
Privileges and Procedures Committee: Minutes.	A2. The Sub-Committee noted the Minutes (Part A only) of meetings of the Privileges Committee held on 11th November 2024, 9th December 2024 and 17th December 2024.

Upcoming
research by Dr.
C. Pich.

A3. The Sub-Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A6 of 16th September 2024, received and noted a presentation entitled ‘Voter Engagement Curriculum Framework – The Jersey Curriculum Council’ and welcomed Dr. C. Pich, Associate Professor in Marketing, Nottingham University Business School, in connexion with upcoming research on Jersey’s voter engagement.

Dr. Pich apprised the Sub-Committee of previous research he had undertaken in November 2022 with the States Greffe, which had identified barriers for political engagement in Jersey and recommended targeted outreach programmes alongside longitudinal research to monitor how targeted outreach altered political perceptions. Dr. Pich advised that he intended to carry out further research to ascertain the current provisions for political engagement in Jersey and to uncover gaps within the system. It was noted that Dr. Pich and his research partner, Ms. G. Armannsdottir, Senior Lecturer, Nottingham Business School, had received ethical approval from the University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University to undertake this research and had acquired funding in the sum of £7,000 from Research England.

Dr. Pich outlined the intended approach for this research and the preliminary timeline as follows –

- to conduct interviews in January and February 2025 with industry specialists and to assess the current provision of voter engagement outreach programmes;
- to conduct focus groups with voters in February and March 2025 to assess the current provision of voter engagement and to identify desired strategy tactics;
- to work with project partners in March and April 2025 to co-design targeted educational outreach programmes;
- to trial and pilot the targeted educational outreach programmes in May 2025; and
- to facilitate and appraise the targeted educational outreach programmes in Jersey throughout June and July 2025, ahead of the 2026 Election.

Dr. Pich apprised the Sub-Committee of the 5 demographics which would be targeted through the focus groups, which included young voters, newly qualified voters, first time registered voters, disengaged voters and engaged voters. It was also noted that a significant proportion of the £7,000 budget was reserved for incentivising prospective participants to partake in the research.

Ms. J. O’ Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement (DPE) expressed concerns regarding possible focus group fatigue and duplication of the findings of the focus groups conducted in November 2022. Furthermore, Ms. O’ Brien also encouraged an open dialogue between the DPE Team and Dr. Pich in relation to discussing outreach work with stakeholders, to negate instances of resource repetition.

On a related matter, Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central, Chair, requested a timeline of DPE’s outreach and education endeavours throughout the current political term, which could be a useful addition to the Sub-Committee’s Legacy Report, and Ms. O’ Brien undertook to provide this timeline ahead the 2026 Election.

The Sub-Committee thanked Dr. Pich and he withdrew from the meeting.

Coming-of-

A4. The Sub-Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A3 of 18th November

Age events. 2024, received an oral update from Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John in connexion with the 'Coming-of-Age' events due to be held by Parishes to increase political engagement.

It was recalled that the events sought to encourage young Islanders who were nearing the eligible voting age, or constituents who had recently joined the Parish, to engage with the democratic process. The Connétable of St. John had apprised the Sub-Committee of recent discussions amongst the Comité des Connétables with regard to this matter and was hopeful that events could be progressed from January 2025, notwithstanding any delays.

The Sub-Committee were informed that whilst this matter was progressing, it was envisaged that the events were unlikely to commence until March 2025.

Automatic
Voter
Registration. A5. The Sub-Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A6 of 18th November 2024, received a presentation entitled 'Automatic Voter Registration Communications Plan' from Ms. J. O'Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement (DPE), in connexion with the ongoing 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; 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 an AVR Communications Plan had been developed to inform Islanders of the project and to enable voters to confirm that the electoral registration data was correct ahead of the 2026 Election. Subsequently, the annual 'Register to Vote' letter sent to all households prior to the election would no longer be required, and it was instead envisaged that a final letter would be sent to households informing them of the project one year ahead of the election. This letter would also advise that additional information was available on the 'Vote.je' website. Consequently, the projected budget for campaign activity in 2026 of £17,215 was considerably lower than that of 2025 (£57,420). To provide further assistance to voters, it was proposed that a helpline be established, which would run from June to July 2025 and again 2 months prior to the 2026 Election. The possibility to include subsidiary information regarding the scheme in the Parish magazines was also acknowledged.

Whilst it was expected that AVR would increase the numbers of eligible voters on the electoral roll by *circa* 20,000, the Sub-Committee was cautioned that, due to relative figures, voter turnout percentages would decrease by approximately a third. In view of this, centralised communications would be established ahead of the results to include equivalent data from previous elections to ensure that media messages were clear. Inconsistent messaging from frontline colleagues would also be mitigated via comprehensive training on the benefits of the project.

On a related matter, it was recalled that it was hoped the implementation of AVR would facilitate Islanders to vote outside of their home Parishes in future elections. Whilst it was acknowledged that this provision was unlikely to be established prior to the 2026 Election, the progression of the work was noted. Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John further advised that the Comité des Connétables had expressed its endorsement of such a project and welcomed the prospect of modernising the voting process.

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

Education
Manager –
update.

A6. The Sub-Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A9 of 18th November 2024, received and noted a report entitled 'Jersey Youth Parliament' and heard from Ms. M. Gladwin, Education Manager, Digital and Public Engagement (DPE), in connexion with the ongoing work of the Education team.

The Sub-Committee recalled that Ms. Gladwin had been appointed to the role of Education Manager in September 2024, and her priorities had focused on the development of an education strategy and the establishment of the Jersey Youth Parliament (JYP) in its new format under the States Greffe.

Following initial discussions held in September 2022, the Sub-Committee was advised that the JYP had faced significant recruitment challenges due to the departures of the JYP Officer and Lead Officer in 2023 and 2024 respectively. Throughout 2024, comprehensive research had been undertaken to inform the future direction of the JYP. This included consultations with pertinent stakeholders, such as past participants, parents, and officials from the Policy, Scrutiny and Ministerial Support Unit. Data from a survey of 130 young people in May 2024 and foundational documents were also examined to align the JYP with broader strategic objectives.

With consideration to this research, the following recommendations had been proposed –

- to establish a closer relationship with the Assembly to enhance visibility;
- to combine the work of the Youth Parliament and Youth Assembly;
- to rename the JYP initiative as the 'Jersey Youth Assembly' (JYA), to reflect its renewed focus and closer working relationships; and
- to adjust the age range for participants from 12-18 to 14-19 years old.

The Sub-Committee was advised that the DPE team sought to recruit 2 Education and Outreach Officers to support the expansion of the work of the JYA. It was noted that the funding of these roles would be secured via the transfer of budget from the Youth Service to the States Greffe for the delivery of the JYA.

The Sub-Committee concurred that this new clear and cohesive approach would increase the number of opportunities for young people in Jersey to engage with democracy. Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central, Chair, further advised that she had been invited to partake in an event hosted by World Teen Parliament, a globally elected parliament of teenagers. The collaborative and educational opportunities associated with this forum were noted and Ms. Gladwin undertook to research this topic further. Concerns were also raised regarding the JYA's access to the States Chamber, as it was acknowledged that diary conflicts with the Royal Court had resulted in restrictions for the previous JYP. Whilst it was noted that the use of the shared calendar now ensured that the JYA's access to the Chamber took precedence, consideration was given towards a proposal to formalise this arrangement in writing.

Considering the recommendations and further recruitment opportunities, it was envisaged that the revised JYA programme would subsequently be launched in September 2025.

On a related matter, Ms. Gladwin provided the Sub-Committee with additional updates regarding the ongoing work of the DPE Education team, which included -

- the development of a wider range of resources for teachers in the Island to aid with the dissemination of information;
- the collaboration between the team and Mr. A. Willis, Senior Advisor, Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department (CYPES) to establish Key Stage 3 touchpoints for Year 8 students in the Island. This would include events such as an annual Island-wide public speaking competition with a political theme;
- the inclusion of additional information for teachers and parents on the new States Assembly website;
- the provision of Continuing Professional Development programmes for teachers to increase their knowledge and confidence of Jersey politics;
- the circulation of political education updates via the newly established termly 'Curriculum Update' newsletter, sent to all school leaders by the School Improvement and Advisory Service, CYPES;
- the continued delivery of Year 5 school visits to the States Chamber, and the increased delivery of outbound and inbound school visits; and
- the opportunity to support Plat Douet primary school with their first Pupil Parliament.

The Sub-Committee thanked Ms. Gladwin for the updates and commended the continuing hard work of the DPE team.

University
College
London
research.

A7. The Sub-Committee received an oral update from Ms. J. O'Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement (DPE), in connexion with upcoming voter research projects conducted by University College London (UCL).

Ms. O'Brien advised that she had been apprised of the research during a meeting with Mr. F. Sicard, Assistant Professor, UCL during the Franco-British Young Leaders Programme. It was noted that this programme sought to build a generation of new leaders to deepen collaboration between France and the United Kingdom. The research consisted of students conducting 2 focus groups of young people aged 18-25 and the co-creation of a survey to gather thoughts on political engagement. It was noted that the survey would be circulated in February 2025, and the data gathered would inform the 2026 election campaign.

The Sub-Committee noted the update and agreed that further communications should be developed to ensure that all young people in Jersey were aware of the programme and their eligibility to apply.

Media
monitoring.

A8. The Sub-Committee received and noted a presentation from Ms. J. O'Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement (DPE), in connexion with the quantity of media articles published from the States Assembly social media accounts in 2024, compared against previous years.

The Sub-Committee was apprised of the following key statistics –

- 587 States Assembly media articles (print and online) had been published in

2024, as opposed to 274 in 2023 and 184 in 2022;

- 78 press releases were issued in 2024, which was a notable decrease from 106 in 2023 and 109 in 2022. This represented an intentional decrease in an attempt to issue less press releases, whilst reaching a wider audience and gaining greater coverage, which had been successful;
- 189 Scrutiny media articles (print and online) had been published in 2024, which represented an increase from 125 in 2023 and 42 in 2022;
- the number of petitions issued had remained consistent, with 47 in 2024 and 48 in 2023; and
- the publication of media articles relating to petitions (print and online) had increased, with 27 issued in 2024, compared to 2 in 2022.

The Sub-Committee noted the position.

E-Petitions.

A9. The Sub-Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A7 of 18th November 2024, received and noted a report entitled ‘E-Petitions’ and a presentation entitled ‘Petition Consultation Plan’, and heard from Ms. J. O’ Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement (DPE), in this connexion.

It was recalled that the Privileges and Procedures Committee (PPC) had commissioned a review into the thresholds of the petitions process and its comparison to other jurisdictions. Restrictions within the process were noted, such as the fact that a threshold of 5,000 petition signatures was in place to activate an in-Committee debate. It was acknowledged that 5,000 signatures could be deemed excessive and that this type of debate did not guarantee a meaningful outcome for petitioners, which had generated a negative public perception of the process. In this regard, the Sub-Committee agreed that whilst the process provided an accessible channel for Islanders to raise awareness of pertinent issues, further improvements were required. The Consultation Plan to advise on potential improvements sought to achieve the following -

- to gather feedback from 1,000 Islanders;
- to measure awareness of the 2 petition systems available in the Island;
- to note the experiences and views of Islanders who have lodged or signed a petition; and
- to evaluate public opinion on the effectiveness of the current systems as a vehicle for change in Jersey.

Ms. O’ Brien advised the Sub-Committee that the Consultation Plan would utilise anonymised surveys (online and paper) to seek the opinion of all Islanders, with particular consideration to be given to non-English speakers, young Islanders, previous petitioners, non-digital users, charities, industry bodies, community groups and local media outlets. Further options for free campaign activity were also considered, which included media releases, use of the States intranet, digital screens in libraries and a live question and answers session with members of PPC and PPC Sub-Committees. It was acknowledged that a budget of £1,495 had been approved by PPC, which would contribute to paid campaign activity, such as online and print advertising, advertisements in local newspapers, and translations. It was noted that, following PPC’s agreement to these objectives, work had begun on formulating

survey questions for approval by PPC, and it was envisaged that the implementation of any new systems would be in place by quarter 3 of 2025.

Having discussed the matter, confusion remained with regard to the current e-petition process. Subsequently, it was suggested that a live walkthrough of this process would be beneficial to gain greater insight into the shortcomings of the current system. Ms. O' Brien undertook to present a live walkthrough at the next Sub-Committee meeting.

Next meeting. A10. The Sub-Committee noted that the next scheduled meeting would be held on 27th March from 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm in the Blampied Room.