

# **STATES OF JERSEY**

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## **COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY: JERSEY OPERA HOUSE**

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**Lodged au Greffe on 22nd March 2005  
by Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier of St. Saviour**

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**STATES GREFFE**

## **PROPOSITION**

**THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –**

in accordance with Article 36B of the States of Jersey Law 1966, as amended, to approve the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry to –

- (a) investigate the circumstances surrounding the closure of the Jersey Opera House; and
- (b) make recommendations with regard to the future operation of the Jersey Opera House.

**DEPUTY R.G. LE HERISSIER OF ST. SAVIOUR**

## **REPORT**

Members are very aware of the controversy which currently surrounds the Jersey Opera House. To the public, it has the appearance of a mixture of a personality conflict and one where there is a history of misunderstanding and possibly even more serious allegations.

The longer this situation persists, the more deleterious it will be to the future of the Jersey Opera House.

This is aside of the damage being caused, yet again, to the credibility of the States.

### **Remit of proposed Committee**

It is already clear, from the information already in the public domain, that there are serious issues in terms of how the various bodies have acted in relation to this sorry saga.

It is not clear at this point if the problems have arisen from defects in the structure, from incompetence on the part of some bodies, or from a mixture of both. There is a pressing need to analyse the roles of the various bodies and the sequence of events. I would expect this analysis, together with other relevant evidence, to lead to recommendations for the future management and operation of the Jersey Opera House.

### **Modus operandi**

There is a question of whether the best way forward to untangle and then resolve this issue, is best dealt with by, e.g. mediation, scrutiny or a Committee of Inquiry.

While a Committee of Inquiry may appear ponderous and unnecessarily complex, it is my favoured way forward.

There is the ability to call for witnesses and papers (not currently available to Scrutiny in its current 'voluntary' phase).

I also think an Inquiry would be beneficial because of the opportunity to appoint outside members.

Lastly, in order to speed up the process, I would suggest it be a one-person Inquiry.

### **Cost**

It will be necessary to provide administrative support to the Inquiry and funds for matters such as the transcription of evidence. Experience with recent Committees of Inquiry has shown that the total that would need to be made available would probably be approximately £30,000 providing that no specialist legal or financial advice was needed in which case the amount might be greater.

The Inquiry would be expected to report within 3 months of commencing its work.