

# Diversity Forum #6

28 January 2020

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## Privileges and Procedures Committee: Diversity Forum

*Meeting 6: 28 January 2020*

Members present: Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chair), Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour, Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier, Deputy J.H. Perchard of St. Saviour and Deputy K. Pamplin of St. Saviour.

Apologies were received from Senator S.Y. Mézec, Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville and Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier.

### 1. Minutes of previous meetings and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting of 16 December 2019 were approved.

The Greffier said that Mark Grimley, the States' HR Director, had agreed that the Axa contract for occupational health support could be utilised by States Members. Members could also make use of a financial health helpline available to States staff. Details would be circulated to States Members shortly, once new promotional material was available. It had also been suggested that a mental health first aider workshop could be organised for States Members. Deputy Pamplin agreed to be the contact point for this work and the Greffier said he would arrange an appropriate slot, probably on a States Thursday.

The Chair and Deputy Alves said they would follow up a separate point about access by staff in schools to occupational health support, because school staff did not have access to the central government intranet.

The Forum noted that Deputy Maçon's proposition on diversity on boards was now due to be debated on 10 March.

Work on branding and communications had been held up because of staff changes in the Greffe but there was now a new communications officer in place and the Chair said she would meet her. Deputy Alves said she would also like to be involved.

### 2. Visit to Guernsey for launch of the Women in Public Life network, 22 January 2020

The Chair and Deputy Alves reported back on their visit to Guernsey for the launch of the Women in Public Life network and a number of other diversity-themed meetings. Members of the public had bought tickets for the event, the cost of which was refunded on arrival. People circulated around different tables to meet different politicians and people involved in politics. There was scope to organise something similar in Jersey, involving States Members, people in parish roles, and people in campaign groups and civic society roles. It was agreed that the Forum should host such an event, tentatively scheduled for Thursday 21 May at 5.30pm.

### 3. Visit to Jersey by Professor Sarah Childs, author of the *Good Parliament* report, 30-31 March 2020

The Greffier said that he had arranged for Professor Sarah Childs, author of the *Good Parliament* report, to return to Jersey on 30-31 March to see how the Assembly had taken forward its own diversity agenda. She was visiting at her expense as part of her follow up to her report. She would address an iWill event on 30 March which the Greffe would fund and be available for meetings, including with ministers and government officers. A programme would be drawn up. The Greffier said he had invited Shellaine Green, who led the Guernsey Women in Public Life network, to Jersey to meet Professor Childs.

#### 4. Possible alternative to annual Church service

Deputy Gardiner had raised concerns about the inclusivity of the Church service held each January to mark the start of the States' year. The Forum discussed a number of possibilities, such as holding the Church service at a different time and holding an alternative secular commemoration. It was agreed to return to this matter when Deputy Gardiner was present.

#### 5. Update on workstreams

- encourage more women to engage in the democratic process

The Chair said that the Women in Politics group was planning to organise a public survey for International Women's Day, which the Forum should promote. The Forum also noted that Deputy Perchard was standing for election as regional Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians chair, which would be decided in March. Co-ordination between different bodies and initiatives would be essential.

- produce and gain agreement to a policy on maternity, paternity, parental, adoption and caring leave for States Members and to consider policies on working conditions for Members to encourage diversity and inclusion, dealing, for example, with disability and mental health)

The Chair said that the Standing Order change to enable Members to be absent for parental responsibilities without their reason for absence being challenged in the Assembly had not been lodged because the Chair of the Privileges and Procedures Committee had raised concerns about scope, in particular arguing that the new rule should also cover broader caring responsibilities. The Forum had previously agreed to undertake further work on this with a view to introducing a Standing Order change later, but this approach was not supported by Deputy Labey. It was agreed that Deputy Labey's concerns should be circulated to Forum members and that the matter should be discussed again to decide how best to make progress.

- complete an Inter-Parliamentary Union Gender Sensitive audit of the States Assembly and to promote implementation of recommendations

It was agreed to set up an additional meeting to focus on how to implement the recommendations of the gender audit.

The Forum considered that there was a risk of it taking on too many projects and not delivering. It requested the Greffier to prepare a delivery strategy for the period to the 2022 election, identifying those projects which could be delivered during that period.

#### 6. Communications (website etc)

This item had been covered under 'matters arising'.

## 7. 2020 meeting dates

The following dates for meetings (other than the additional meeting to discuss gender audit recommendations) had been proposed and would now be scheduled:

3 March  
7 April  
19 May  
23 June  
21 July  
29 September  
27 October  
24 November  
15 December

All meetings would take place at 2pm.

## **Privileges and Procedures Committee: Diversity Forum**

*Meeting 8: 29 September 2020*

Members present: Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chair), Senator K.L. Moore (left during item 2), Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville, Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour (via Teams), Deputy K. F. Morel of St. Lawrence (left during item 2), Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier (via Teams), Deputy K. Pamplin of St. Saviour (via Teams) and Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier (left during item 2).

Senator S.Y. Mézec gave his apologies.

### 1. Minutes of previous meetings and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting of 23 June were approved.

The Greffier said that PPC had agreed to the Forum's recommendations to name two rooms in the States Building after Ivy Forster and Caroline Trachy and to exhibit pieces by women artists in the building. The PPC Clerk, Katherine de Carteret, was leading implementation of these recommendations.

No progress had been made on organising mental health first aid training for Members as opportunities appeared to be limited at present. The Greffier said he would maintain a watching brief.

The Chair she was working on proposals for a secular alternative to the annual Church Services before the first States meeting of the year. In relation to parental responsibilities she had now discussed the matter with the Chair of PPC and, with his agreement, she intended to bring the Standing Order change herself which Deputy Labey or the Committee could seek to amend if they wished. She also noted that it was currently not possible to bring Professor Childs back to the Island, as had been hoped, but this might be possible in Spring or Summer 2021.

### 2. Achieving candidate diversity

The Chair introduced a paper drafted by the Greffier on improving the diversity of election candidates in Jersey. It made reference to experience in a number of other jurisdictions informed by advice received from Professor Sarah Childs and Professor Kelly Ditmar of Camden-Rutgers University in the USA. The paper set out seven separate initiatives would could be organised, which the Forum was invited to consider.

The Forum had previously agreed to hold an event based on the Women in Public Life event hosted earlier in the year in Guernsey, aimed at improving the diversity of people involved in civic life in Jersey. This had been provisionally pencilled in for September but earlier deferred until January 2021. Members agreed that this was an important event to help attract a broader range of people to States and parish roles. It was agreed that this should go ahead, ticketed if necessary to comply with social distancing regulations. If demand exceeded supply a second event could be considered.

Consideration was also given to holding events on a smaller scale in each of the parishes, in which videos showing the work of Members could be shown and Members could meet with the public to discuss civic participation. It was agreed that the Forum would write to the Comité des Connétables to propose this.

Members discussed how to ensure more States Members get involved in work to make the Assembly more diverse, given their crucial role in encouraging people to stand. It was agreed that Professors Child and Dittmar would be invited to give a Teams briefing on candidate diversity and practical ways of encouraging participation and that this would be done in mid-January, ahead of the participation in public life event. Discussing with the academics how to measure the success of different diversity initiatives so effort could be focused on the most effective was also proposed.

One of the initiatives in the paper was a series of workshops and seminars to help prospective candidates prepare to stand. It was agreed that the Greffe should organise these and details should be available by the time of the January participation in public life event. It was also agreed that the Bailiff should be approached to endorse this work as it was crucial that efforts to encourage candidates to stand were seen as coming from the Assembly and its neutral president and chief officer, rather than current politicians.

There was support for the concept of a mentoring scheme for potential candidates and that, ideally, it should be ready in time for the public participation event. The Greffier undertook to discuss this with potentially interested parties such as the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians and the Jersey Community Relations Trust.

One of the ideas in the paper was the creation of video content to tell stories about Members' working lives. The Greffier explained that PPC was already working on such a proposal. The Chair said it would be important for videos to include diversity themes, such as showing Members working flexibly, in order to attract a broad range of candidates. There were also questions about how to ensure the videos were not perceived as promoting particular politicians, unless it was possible to focus on States Members intending not to stand in 2022. Deputy Maçon emphasised the importance of building up a library of content for use in future.

An important proposal in the paper was "a public campaign to draw attention to under-representation (in all forms) and to explain why it matters". The Chair said she would ask the Jersey Community Relations Trust if they could lead this work.

Finally, Members discussed the suggestion that diversity could be encouraged by providing financial support to candidates. It was noted that all candidates in Guernsey this year were entitled to reclaim £500 of election expenditure from the States. Various ideas were expressed about how this might work in Jersey, including linking repayment to the achievement of a certain level of vote share or by the States providing additional practical support, such as posting election leaflets, rather than a cash reimbursement.

In addition to the proposals which the Forum had agreed to prioritise it was agreed to discuss this paper again at the Forum's next meeting.

### 3. Inclusive States sittings

The Chair drew attention to her correspondence with the Bailiff on the steps which the presiding officers could take to assist the Assembly in managing its time better to avoid unexpected late sittings. She said that the Bailiff's response had not been particularly encouraging, explaining that he was constrained by the terms of Standing Orders and that decisions on these matters were in the hands of Members. She had discussed a range of procedural options for dealing with the problem with the Greffier but none had been without drawbacks. In recent sittings, various Members had raised the question of late sittings before lunchtime and this had seemed to help with time

management. The Chair's view was that it would be best to continue with these informal ways of managing the problem rather than to seek procedural solutions at this stage.

Deputy Pamplin noted that sittings using Teams were harder to manage as Members could not see each other easily and time was lost because of technical problems and the additional time taken for voting. The Deputy of Grouville said that the extended periods of Questions Without Notice had also compounded the problem of late sittings, although question periods would return to normal at the next sitting. Deputy Alves argued that the presiding officer could be stricter on Members who candidly begin speeches by saying that previous speakers have said what they want to say, as technically this was against Standing Orders. The Chair proposed that she meet the Bailiff to discuss these matters to see if the presiding officers could use standing orders more effectively to ensure good time management in the Assembly.

#### 4. Diversity of States-funded Boards and Arm's Length Organisations

The Greffier said that good progress was being made with this project, to improve the diversity of membership of States-funded Boards and Arm's Length Organisations, which had arisen from a proposition lodged by Deputy Maçon. Monique Magalhaes in the Greffe and Elsa Sousa in HR were now working on the project. A considerable amount of work into best practice in other jurisdictions had been undertaken and the Boards and ALOs would shortly be contacted. A series of meetings with diversity specialists in Jersey had also been set up. The Greffier said he hoped to bring preliminary findings and recommendations to Deputy Maçon before Christmas so that the work could be finalised in the first quarter of 2021, as planned.

Next meeting: 2pm, Tuesday 27 October.

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