

STATES OF JERSEY



WATERFRONT ENTERPRISE BOARD: RENEWAL OF TEN-YEAR WORKING LIMIT (P.114/2005) – AMENDMENT (P.114/2005 AMD.)– COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 6th September 2005
by the Policy and Resources Committee**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The Policy and Resources Committee strongly opposes the amendment and believes that a decision by the States to extend the appointment of the Waterfront Enterprise Board for just 2 years could have serious repercussions for the development of the St. Helier Waterfront.

Members will recall that the decision was taken in 1995 by the States to establish the Waterfront Enterprise Board as a separate legal entity because it was recognised that the successful development of the Waterfront would require –

- (a) effective coordination of the many Committee interests involved;
- (b) a single point of contact for private developers;
- (c) a body capable of ‘making things happen’;
- (d) entrepreneurial expertise to assist in promoting private development and to ensure that the States obtain a ‘fair deal’ (paragraph 3.5 of report accompanying P.156/95).

The Waterfront Enterprise Board was formally appointed in order to provide this service and, in the Committee’s view, it should be given sufficient time in which to complete the task that it has been given by the States.

It must be pointed out that the Waterfront Enterprise Board, in carrying out its remit, has already entered into a number of development projects and partnerships with private investors which will extend beyond the 2-year limit proposed in the amendment. These developments could be called into question if WEB’s appointment is to expire after only 2 years. In addition, it would be very difficult for WEB to enter into any long-term partnerships of more than 2 years, and this could place future developments in jeopardy. Members will already be aware of the very significant levels of public and private investment that have been made in the Waterfront, with further significant private investment planned.

In the report accompanying his amendment, Senator Le Claire asks whether the current composition of the Waterfront Enterprise Board is appropriate. It should be noted that all 3 States Directors and 3 non-States Directors are appointed by the States Assembly. These individuals bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their work, and are widely-respected in the Island community.

The Waterfront Enterprise Board is not, of course, working in a vacuum, and there are a number of key safeguards that will remain in place if the Committee’s proposition is adopted. These include the following –

- all planning powers will remain with the Environment and Public Services Committee;
- all property transactions will have to be approved by the Finance and Economics Committee;
- all ongoing operational and management duties will remain with the appropriate States committees;
- the States, on the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee, will continue to have the power to appoint and remove Board members;
- the Waterfront Enterprise Board will continue to be wholly owned by the States.

In conclusion, therefore, the Committee recommends that the amendment be rejected.