

STATES OF JERSEY



REPORTING ON MINISTERIAL ACTIVITIES (P.71/2024): AMENDMENT (P.71/2024 AMD.) – COMMENTS

Presented to the States on 31st January 2025
by the Privileges and Procedures Committee

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The Privileges and Procedures Committee (PPC) has considered the proposition from Deputy Moore ([P.71/2024](#)) ‘Reporting on Ministerial Activities’, and the amendment ([P.71/2024 Amd.](#)), and has received feedback from the PPC Machinery of Government Sub-Committee (MOG).

The Committee and Sub-Committee both agree with the principles of openness and transparency and support the general intentions of the proposition. However, the Committee believes the proposition lacks detail and has a number of questions relating to what is proposed.

Jersey is a small jurisdiction, with a tradition of its population directly influencing local politics. Individuals within the Island, including States Members, often wear different hats and undertake various professional, personal and charitable roles and responsibilities within the community. Ministers and Assistant Ministers (Ministers) may have both personal and professional relationships with citizens. An informal meeting with a friend, neighbour, or constituent can change to becoming a more formal discussion between a business owner, or charity trustee, and a Minister responsible for a particular Government function. It’s unclear how these potential challenges will be overcome within any updated Codes of Conduct.

Similar to other territories Jersey has a strong presence of lobbyists, including established professional bodies and organisations, groups and individuals, all of whom have relatively easy access to Ministers. The practice of lobbying in order to influence political decisions is a legitimate part of the democratic process that should be undertaken in a fair and transparent manner. Some lobbyists have easier access to decision makers and publishing details of Minister meeting could help identify any imbalances. However, Jersey has no lobbying legislation or register, and without further clarity and guidance the proposition could have a direct and negative impact on lobbying in Jersey.

Whilst the amendment has removed the word “all” from part (a) of the proposition, the inclusion of “regarding Government matters” is too broad and undefined. This could include all aspects of Island life, from laws, policies and taxes, to everyday items.

It is unclear what meeting details are to be published, how the proposition might impact on individuals coming forward to meet Ministers, how confidentiality will be dealt with, and what Data Protection matters need to be considered.

In relation to off-Island travel, the proposition does not differentiate between Government related or personal journeys, or when Ministers may pay for travel themselves and include Government business during the visit overseas. Ministers will also attend private and confidential meetings. These matters need to be clarified.

This proposition focusses on Ministers and consideration should be given to meetings and activities attended by Scrutiny Panel and Committee Chairs or other States Members, when these relate to States Assembly business, and how these might be published.

The Chair of MOG wrote to Deputy Moore on the 17th January 2025, suggesting that the proposition debate be delayed, to allow the opportunity for MOG to discuss the

proposition with the Deputy, and to explore the desired intentions and to better understand the possible resource implications. Whilst the letter was written before Deputy Moore lodged her amendment, the MOG concerns remain, and the Sub-Committee would welcome the opportunity to explore this matter further with the Deputy.

Whilst the Committee and Sub-Committee remain committed to openness and transparency within Government, they do not believe the current proposition provides sufficient detail or clarity. Further work is needed to ensure that changes are fair and appropriate, and the proposition does not result in unintended consequences, such as meetings becoming less transparent. The Committee does not support the proposition.