

AG/SC/140

PRIVILEGES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

(32nd Meeting)

8th May 2014PART A

All members were present.

Deputy J.M. Maçon, Chairman

Senator S.C. Ferguson (not present for Item Nos. A1, A2, B3, B4, B5 and B6; not present for part of Item Nos. B1 and B2)

Senator B.I. Le Marquand (not present for part of Item Nos. A2 and B1)

Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement (not present for Item No. B1)

Deputy J.A. Martin

Deputy M. Tadier (not present for part of Item No. B1)

Deputy J.H. Young

In attendance -

M.N. de la Haye, Greffier of the States (not present for Item No. B1)

A.C. Goodyear, Clerk to the Privileges and Procedures Committee

Note: The Minutes of this meeting comprise Part A and Part B.

## Minutes

A1. The Minutes of the meetings of 19th March (Part A only), 31st March (Part A only), 10th April (Part A and Part B), 16th April (Part A and Part B), 25th April (Part A only), 27th April (Part A only) and 28th April 2014 (Part A only), having been previously circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed.

Use of States  
members'  
facilities.  
1240/9/1(137)

A2. The Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A9 of 10th April 2014, gave further consideration to a report in connexion with the use of States members' facilities by external parties.

The Committee recalled that the Connétable of St. Mary had queried the use of States members' facilities for meetings of the Jersey Human Rights Group and it was noted that this matter had since also been raised by the Connétable of St. Lawrence. The Committee recalled that R.112/2007 "States members' facilities in the States Building: conditions of use" specified the conditions of use for members' areas and facilities in the States Building. The report stated that: "the facilities must only be used for purposes directly related to members' individual political duties. They must not be used at any time for meetings of outside organisations such as interest groups, charities or political lobbying groups/parties where it would be inappropriate for public money to be used to support the activities".

It was recalled that consideration of this matter had previously been deferred in order to enable Deputy M. Tadier to make a representation to the Committee.

The Committee heard from Deputy Tadier, who advised that the meeting room was used by the group on a long-standing basis. The Chief Usher was advised when meetings would be held and non-States members were never left unaccompanied

whilst in the building. It was noted that the group discussed issues that were germane to the business of the States and that members were unpaid volunteers who lobbied on human rights grounds.

Deputy Tadier expressed that view that a wider issue was required to be addressed regarding access by States members to meeting rooms for meetings with constituents. The Deputy advised that the group 'Business Connect' also used rooms in the States Building to host meetings for States members. Meetings of the Jersey Human Rights Group were always chaired by a States member and consideration had not been given to using premises elsewhere. Holding meetings in the States Building provided an opportunity for members of the public to use the publically-owned building. The Deputy considered that it may be appropriate for the group to consider whether an alternative venue should be identified for holding meetings that were due to be attended by speakers. The group did not wish to be required to charge people to attend in order to cover the cost of room hire and the Deputy was of the view that the group had not caused any problems through its use of the States Building.

Having been thanked for his contribution, Deputy Tadier withdrew from the meeting.

Deputy J.H. Young advised that he had previously attended one meeting of the Jersey Human Rights Group and States members had supervised those present to ensure that there would not be a security issue. The view was expressed by Deputy Young and Deputy J.A. Martin that the facilities in the States Building should be available to be used by interest groups and that the guidelines should be revised to enable greater use of the building as a public facility. Charging should be considered and security considerations would be required to be taken into account. In this regard, it was noted that there was no disabled access to that part of the building. The counter view was also expressed by the Chairman and Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement in that, while the group had not caused any difficulties to date, it was a lobby group and in accordance with the Code it should not be permitted to use the States Building for its meetings. The view was expressed that the Code should be equally applied to all organisations who sought to use the building.

The Committee was divided as to whether or not the Code should be revised in order to permit the continued use of the States Building by groups such as the Jersey Human Rights Group. The Committee accordingly agreed that those members who favoured a review of the Code should consider the matter and submit recommendations for consideration at a future meeting.