

PRIVILEGES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

(38th Meeting)

22nd October 2009PART A

All members were present, with the exception of Deputy M.R. Higgins and Senator B.I. Le Marquand, from whom apologies had been received.

Connétable J. Gallichan of St. Mary, Chairman
 Deputy J.B. Fox
 Deputy J.A. Martin
 Deputy C.H. Egré
 Deputy M. Tadier

In attendance -

M.N. de la Haye, Greffier of the States
 Miss A-C. Heuston, Clerk to the Privileges and Procedures Committee

Note: The Minutes of this meeting comprise Part A only.

Information
 technology
 provision for
 States members.
 1240/9/1(137)

A1. The Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A2 of 17th July 2009, received a report, dated 12th August 2009 and prepared by the Deputy Greffier of the States, in connexion with the use of computers, laptops and Blackberries in the States Chamber.

The Committee noted the use of computers and laptops in other jurisdictions, and considered that it could be useful to have access to the Official Report (“Hansard”) during States sittings. The Committee discussed whether members should be permitted to bring in their own laptop computers, or whether computers should be installed at each desk in the Chamber. With regard to Standing Order 99, Behaviour of members during meeting, the view was expressed that the noise of laptop computers could cause some disturbance.

The Committee was minded to introduce a trial period during which members would be permitted to use laptop computers in the States Chamber. It was agreed that the Bailiff should be consulted prior to the introduction of such a trial.

The Committee also requested the Greffier of the States to contact the Information Services Director, Mr. N. Wells, in respect of the availability of Blackberries at a corporate rate for States members.

Structure of
 reports and
 propositions:
 Public Accounts
 Committee

A2. The Committee received a report in connexion with a recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee in respect of the structure of reports and propositions.

The Committee considered paragraphs 5.1 to 5.4, and recommendation 2.26, of the report of the Public Accounts Committee: Review of the report of the Comptroller

recommendation.
465/1(134)

and Auditor General entitled: "Energy from waste plant: management of foreign currency exchange risks" (P.A.C.1/2009 refers).

The Committee noted that recommendation 2.26 requested the Privileges and Procedures Committee and the Council of Ministers to ensure that, going forward, reports and propositions would be structured so that key undertakings were clearly stated and binding. The Committee considered the options in respect of revising the structure of reports and propositions, and agreed that the current process was correct. The Committee did agree, however, that if undertakings were made within a report, these should be cross-referenced in the proposition, and, if necessary, a list of key undertakings should be set out in the proposition for approval by the States.

The Chairman was requested to write to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee to advise him of the Committee's decision in respect of the above.

The Committee Clerk was directed to take the necessary action.

Referendum:
position of the
Connétables in
the States.
(P.146/2009)
1240/22/1(51)

A3. The Committee considered the proposition: Referendum: position of the Connétables in the States, lodged "au Greffe" by Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade on 10th September 2009 (P.146/2009 refers).

The Committee noted that the proposition asked the States to agree to hold a referendum to seek the views of the electorate on the position of the Connétables as members of the States, and to request the Privileges and Procedures Committee to take the necessary steps to implement the referendum.

The Committee discussed Deputy Tadier's proposition and expressed reservations as to whether the cost estimate it set out was accurate. The Committee noted that the £15,000 to £20,000 estimate had been based upon the amount spent on senatorial elections; however, the Committee recognised that a great number of volunteers gave their time during senatorial elections, and this would not necessarily be the case during a referendum.

The Chairman was therefore requested to write to the Vice Chairman of the Comité des Connétables, Connétable J. Le Sueur Gallichan of Trinity, to request the views of the Comité in respect of whether sufficient volunteers would be available to assist with a referendum, or whether further costs would be likely to be incurred.

The Committee Clerk was directed to take the necessary action.

Provision of
States members'
lunches at certain
meetings and car
parking.
(P.171/2009)
1240/9/1(89)

A4. The Committee considered the proposition: Provision of States members' lunches at certain meetings and car parking, lodged "au Greffe" by Senator S.C. Ferguson on 7th October 2009 (P.171/2009 refers).

The Committee noted that part (a) of the proposition asked the States to reinstate the provision of free lunches for scrutiny panels, the Public Accounts Committee and the Privileges and Procedures Committee from 1st January 2010. Part (b) of the proposition requested members to agree to cease the provision of free parking for States members from the same date.

The Committee agreed that it would support part (a) of the proposition as the cost would be met from existing resources, and it was often more efficient not to disrupt a meeting in order to break for lunch. The Committee discussed part (b) of the

proposition, and agreed that this matter should be referred to the States Members' Remuneration Review Body for consideration as part of the remuneration package at its next review.

The Committee agreed that a comment, outlining its views as detailed above, should be presented to the States at the earliest opportunity.

The Committee Clerk was directed to take the necessary action.

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

A5. The Committee considered the following matters arising in respect of States members' facilities:

- (a) in the light of the fact that the communications room, common room and interview rooms were for the use of all States members, concern was expressed that members had left papers and belongings in the interview rooms whilst they attended to other business or returned to the States Chamber, thereby preventing others from making use of the facilities; and
- (b) members continued to use the "reply to all" option when responding to e-mails, when the response was not of relevance to all recipients. It was noted that there was often a cost to processing and retrieving such e-mails when recipients were outside of the Island.

The Chairman was requested to send a memorandum to all States members requesting that the shared facilities in the States Building be left clear when not actively in use, and asking that the "reply to all" option only be used where necessary.