

KS/MH/294

PRIVILEGES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

(16th Meeting)

13th October 2015**PART A (Non-exempt)**

All members were present.

Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement, Chairman
 Senator P.F.C. Ozouf (not present for item B5)
 Connétable D.W. Mezbourian of St. Lawrence
 Connétable C.H. Taylor of St. John
 Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier
 Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier
 Deputy S.M. Brée of St. Clement

In attendance -

W.J. Bailhache, QC, Bailiff of Jersey (for items A2, B1 and B2)
 T.J. Le Cocq, QC, Deputy Bailiff of Jersey (for items A2, B1 and B2)
 L.M. Hart, Deputy Greffier of the States
 A.C. Goodyear, Assistant Greffier of the States (for item A4)
 P. Monamy, Clerk to the Privileges and Procedures Committee
 K.L. Slack, States Greffe

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

Minutes

A1. The Minutes of the meeting of 15th September 2015 (Part A and Part B), having been previously circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed.

Jersey Youth
 Parliament: use
 of Chamber for
 proceedings
 1240(260)

A2. The Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A6 of 15th September 2015, and with the Bailiff and Deputy Bailiff in attendance, considered a request from representatives of the Jersey Youth Parliament (JYP) in relation to the future venue of its meetings.

The Committee recalled that the JYP intended to hold approximately 4 plenary meetings each year and had requested that it be granted permission to use the States Chamber.

The Committee recalled that it had met the representatives of the JYP at its meeting of 15th September 2015 and, having been impressed by their enthusiasm, had agreed to consult the Bailiff on the proposal to use the States Chamber before taking the matter further.

It was noted that whilst the States Greffe had offered to provide some support to the JYP, the JYP had indicated that it wished to act independently and intended to establish its own youth civil service, with a young person acting as Greffier. This notwithstanding, it was recognised that at least one member of staff from the States Greffe and an usher would need to be in attendance, were the JYP to use the States Chamber, to observe the proceedings and for security reasons, mindful that once inside the States Chamber, people had free access to the whole Royal Court building. There would, understandably, be costs associated with this.

The Bailiff advised the Committee that the States Chamber was occasionally called upon to function as a Court, often at short notice, when the Royal Court was already occupied, so this would preclude its use on weekdays. Moreover, he was of the opinion that the use of the States Chamber in this way by external parties could, potentially, diminish the standing of the Chamber.

It was noted that other venues, such as the Town Hall or other Parish Halls, could be used by the JYP, particularly as the Town Hall had successfully been used earlier in the year for a States meeting when the States Chamber had been evacuated due to a fire alarm.

The Committee reiterated its support for the aims of the JYP but did not feel that the States Chamber was, at this current time, the appropriate venue for them to hold their plenary meetings. However, the Committee was keen to support the venture and agreed that funding should be made available to assist the JYP in establishing an alternative venue for their meetings, and that the Committee would review progress in a further twelve months. It agreed that the JYP should be written to in these terms.

Deputy J.A. Martin considered that the JYP should be able to hold their meetings in the States Chamber and expressed concern that the Committee's decision, in this regard, could extinguish their enthusiasm. She requested that her dissent from the Committee's decision be recorded.

Composition
and election of
the States
Assembly
465/1(201)

A3. The Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A2 of 15th September 2015, received an oral update from the Deputy Greffier of the States on the activities of the Sub-Committee on the Composition and Election of the States Assembly.

The Committee noted that the Sub-Committee had held its third open-forum workshop on 22nd September 2015, which had concentrated on the basis for calculating equity. The Committee recalled that, in advance of the workshop, a simple explanatory note on the subject had been published on the States Assembly website for information.

The Deputy Greffier reported that a further meeting of the Sub-Committee was due to take place towards the end of November 2015. The next session with all States Members would take place during the lunchtime adjournment on 1st December 2015 by which time it was anticipated that reform proposals, based on the responses to date, would be drafted and available for consideration prior to lodging for debate in the new year.

The Committee noted the position.

Web-streaming
of meetings of
the States
465/4(13)

A4. The Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A3 of 15th September 2015, received an oral update from the Assistant Greffier of the States in connexion with the web-streaming of meetings of the States.

The Committee recalled that a formal tender process had commenced to identify a supplier to manage the web-streaming and archiving of the filming of the Assembly and that 12 companies had initially expressed an interest in tendering as the supplier. Of these, 4 were progressing to formal tender. It was anticipated that a supplier would be selected in November 2015 and that the web-streaming facility would be in place by March 2016.

The Committee noted the position.

16 Meeting
13.10.15

Common-
wealth
Parliamentary
Association:
benchmarks
self-
assessment
1275(468)
465/1(207)

A5. The Committee noted correspondence, dated 24th September 2015, from the Acting Secretary-General and Director of Finance and Administration from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), relating to Commonwealth Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures.

The Committee noted that the correspondence indicated that, in 2006, the CPA had developed Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures to assist Parliaments to find ways to strengthen their performance, or assess whether they had kept up to date with advances in parliamentary practices and procedures. Soon after the Benchmarks had been developed, Parliaments had been invited to undergo an assessment, using a Commonwealth standard specifically designed to assist Parliaments to function as effectively as possible. It was queried, in the correspondence, whether the States Assembly had applied the CPA Benchmarks since 2006 and proposed that, if not, a Benchmarks self-assessment should be conducted to determine whether the States Assembly and Legislature was able to comply with each of the 87 standards, set out in the Benchmark document, which was appended to the correspondence.

It was suggested, in the correspondence, that an assessment panel could be established to conduct the self-assessment and that the panel should comprise presiding officers, government and opposition Members (i.e. members of the Council of Ministers or Assistant Ministers and other States members) and other officials. It further suggested that respected and knowledgeable external assessors, such as judges, senior civil servants, academics or former Members, should be invited to join the panel.

The Committee felt that this would be a worthwhile and important exercise and that it should be undertaken. Deputy S.M. Brée volunteered to work with the Deputy Greffier of the States in order to progress this matter and report back to the Committee in due course.

Commissioner
for Standards
(Jersey) Law
201-
1497/99(1)

A6. The Committee, with reference to its Minute No. B4 of 15th September 2015, considered the draft Commissioner for Standards (Jersey) Law 201-.

The Committee recalled that it had deferred the decision to lodge the Law 'au Greffe' in order that all Members of the Committee could be given further opportunity to review its contents and resolve any matters arising.

The Committee further recalled that it had endeavoured to arrange a telephone meeting after the previous meeting, but had been unable to achieve a quorum.

Having subsequently had the opportunity to review the draft Law, the Committee approved it. The Chairman signed the Human Rights compliance statement in respect thereof and requested that the draft Law be lodged 'au Greffe' for consideration by the States in due course.