

STATES OF JERSEY



PENSION SCHEME FOR STATES MEMBERS

Lodged au Greffe on 6th July 2010
by Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire of St. Helier

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to request the Privileges and Procedures Committee to request the States Members Remuneration Review Body to finalise its proposals for a pension scheme for States members as soon as possible to enable the Committee to lodge the proposals for consideration by the States within 6 months.

DEPUTY P.V.F. LE CLAIRE OF ST. HELIER

REPORT

Having waited for some considerable time now, in fact several years, and with many questions to the President of PPC about pension provision for States members, I feel it unfortunately necessary to table this proposition asking for one to be presented for consideration at least. The Remuneration Review Body has awarded States members £800 a year, with no increase to expenses in its latest review. Given the dramatic rise in workloads and constant exposure to the public, with new codes of conduct, etc., I believe we have fallen behind. It is embarrassing that our Scrutiny Officers and Clerks have pensions, and with limited pay-rises it could be argued that we are not keeping level with what we enjoyed before. Without a pension provision though, we certainly are not, in my view. We have lost car parking in the main and lunches also, so there has been a reduction in our provision.

I certainly have a 24/7 availability in terms of where and when the public feel comfortable to speak to me.

Anywhere, any time, about anything.

They also have a good, long, hard look at what it is I am driving, wearing and shopping for in the Co-op supermarket when they pass by.

The public level of exposure is quite extraordinary and adds to stress levels.

I have made the point before that a mature pension provision provides for death in service and ill-health retirement; all of the admitted bodies to the States scheme – including parish workers, JFSC, Family Nursing and Home Care, JHT and others – all benefit from this provision, even the Scrutiny Officers and ushers.

I do agree that there should be less States members though, perhaps 12 less.

If we had 12 less we would have some money to commit to a fair scheme for the remainder.

An £800 a year increase is a lot if you earn a small amount of money, but with the responsibilities we carry it is pitiful.

I think it is laughable that given these responsibilities we are offered a pay-rise that equates to £2.19 a day.

If one looks at every other increase in this Island, not to mention house prices, it seems ridiculous.

We will certainly put off people of younger age and ability to do this work unless they are of considerable means or, as I said, are retired.

It might not be palatable to members who themselves have final salary States pensions to accept a new pension, but at least I hope they will agree to the debate in principle.

I am very disappointed with the PPC Chairman, Connétable Gallichan of St. Mary, who had indicated that these matters were in hand in several conversations over the years under her stewardship. She has maintained a veil of secrecy over this issue and accused me of being the only one interested in the matter.

It is embarrassing to have to bring this forward, but as PPC have failed to protect members' rights and privileges by not insisting there be a scheme based on the acknowledgment that one should be provided, I am forced to. No doubt the public will think ill of me for it. I am not doing it for me now though, as 10 years have passed me by in service. It is for the younger States members and those that would be, that I lodge this proposal.

We can at least all debate it, which is what PPC should have secured at the least. They did so when they brought a single election day in, saying we have done what we have been asked to do.

Well, I am asking them to bring forward issues pertaining to the rights and privileges of members and do what you have been mandated to do.

These issues are not coming up as she told me.

In fact the proposals are not coming forward as the Connétable said, they are as they were before, in the very long grass.

Financial and manpower implications

I would ask that the Review Body recommends a scheme and provides the costs; it should have done that much already, but again it seems that this Body has no appetite for it. It would be interesting to know what they are paid or were paid when they worked and what, if any, pension provision they enjoyed, perhaps even at the cost of the taxpayer? In the meantime, to comply with Standing Orders I submit it will cost nothing to conduct this part of the work at this stage, and the Review Body and existing resources can manage.