

THE STATES OF DELIBERATION
of the
ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN MAY 2020

The States are asked to decide:-

Whether, after consideration of the policy letter entitled "Public Holidays in May 2020", dated 5th July 2019, they are of the opinion:-

1. To approve that Monday 4th May 2020 shall not be a public holiday.
2. To approve that Friday 8th May 2020 shall be a public holiday.
3. To direct the preparation of such legislation as may be necessary to give effect to the above Propositions.

The above Propositions have been submitted to Her Majesty's Procureur for advice on any legal or constitutional implications in accordance with Rule 4(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees.

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ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN MAY 2020

The Presiding Officer
States of Guernsey
Royal Court House
St Peter Port

5th July 2019

Dear Sir

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Committee *for* Economic Development is proposing a change to the public holidays in Guernsey in May 2020 to designate Friday 8th May as a public holiday in place of Monday 4th May.
- 1.2 This change is being proposed to enable Guernsey to align itself with the United Kingdom (UK), which has recently made this change to its public holidays to mark the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day. This change would also provide Guernsey with the opportunity to extend the celebrations for the 75th anniversary of Guernsey's Liberation Day, by creating a long weekend of commemoration.
- 1.3 This matter has been brought to the States of Deliberation as an urgent proposition, following very recent notification of the UK's decision.

2 Change to Public Holidays in May 2020

- 2.1 The early May public holiday in England, Wales and Northern Ireland will be changed in May 2020 to mark the 75th Anniversary of VE Day. For that year alone, the early May public holiday will be moved from Monday 4th May to Friday 8th May.
- 2.2 The States of Deliberation is asked to determine whether Guernsey should make the same change to its public holidays. For the avoidance of doubt, this would mean that:
 - The first Monday in May – Monday 4th May, originally designated as a public holiday

would no longer be a public holiday;

- Friday 8th May would be designated as a substitute public holiday for the early May public holiday.

2.3 This matter has been brought to the States of Deliberation as a matter of urgency, as it is recognised that any change to public holidays less than a year before the event could have an impact on business, community groups, and events arranged for around this time. The Committee therefore wishes to ensure that sufficient notice is given to any change.

3 Liberation Day 2020

3.1 As a general principle, the Committee considers that changes to public holidays should only be made in exceptional circumstances, where there is strong public interest and where there is good reason for doing so. Additional holidays have an impact on business costs in the Island, and this is something that the Committee needs to consider carefully before recommending any changes. The Committee also appreciates that changes to public holidays may cause some inconvenience for those planning events, travel or family occasions.

3.2 In 2020, Guernsey will celebrate the 75th anniversary of its liberation from occupying forces, which will fall on Saturday 9th May 2020. It will also commemorate the 80th anniversary of the evacuation of Islanders.

3.3 On some previous occasions when Liberation Day has occurred on a Saturday or a Sunday, the view has been expressed that the Monday following Liberation Day should be specified as a public holiday.

3.4 This was the case in 2010, for the 65th anniversary of Guernsey's liberation, when Monday 10th May was designated as a public holiday in place of 9th May 2010, which fell on a Sunday. It should however be noted that on the 70th anniversary, when Liberation Day fell on a Saturday, the States Assembly took the decision not to designate an alternative holiday and Saturday 9th May 2015 remained a public holiday.

3.5 It is understood that if Friday 8th May was designated as a public holiday this could in fact add further significance to the 75th anniversary of Liberation Day. The Committee has been advised that this change would allow the opportunity to hold additional commemorative events on 8th May, in addition to 9th May (Liberation Day), therefore extending the Liberation celebrations for this special anniversary. It will also enable Islanders to share the important celebrations which will take place in the UK on 8th May to mark the 75th Anniversary of VE Day. The occasion will remember the contribution of

British, Commonwealth and Allied armed forces personnel; those who contributed to the war effort and safeguarded the Home Front. As well as marking the Allies' victory in 1945, the public holiday will serve as an opportunity to pay tribute to those who have served and continue to serve in the UK Armed Forces and their families.

- 3.6 With this in mind the Committee has resolved to recommend to the States that the early May public holiday is moved to 8th May. It considers that this will enable a long weekend of commemorations on the Island whilst minimising costs and disruption to businesses.

4 Consultation

- 4.1 Earlier this year the Committee undertook a thorough consultation with employer and employee groups, as well as States of Guernsey Committees, to seek feedback on the option to designate Monday 11th May as a public holiday in place of Saturday 9th May.
- 4.2 The Committee received a wide range of views in response to the consultation, with the majority of respondents against moving a public holiday. A frequent point made was that the liberation celebrations should be celebrated on Liberation Day itself regardless of the day of the week on which it falls, and therefore taking the public holiday away from Liberation Day would likely affect the significance of the day. Another argument against this change was that it was likely to have a negative net effect on business operation and staff productivity if there was no purpose for this holiday, and subsequently creating another day that does not align with the UK. Based on this feedback, the Committee resolved that Saturday 9th May 2020 should remain as a public holiday, and Monday 11th May as a normal working day.
- 4.3 The Committee did not consider that designating Monday 11th May 2020 as an additional public holiday was a viable alternative approach, as creating an additional paid non-working day would have significant cost implications for many employers. The Committee also understands that creating an additional public holiday on 11th May would be problematic for the education sector as GCSE exams commence on that day.
- 4.4 The Committee undertook this consultation before the UK announced its intention to change its public holidays for 2020. Should the decision be made to designate Friday 8th May as a public holiday to align with the UK, then Liberation Day (9th May) would remain as a public holiday. This would therefore avoid the concern raised through the consultation whereby a change in the Liberation Day public holiday would take some significance away from Liberation Day.
- 4.5 During the consultation, the Committee did not raise the possibility of moving the early May public holiday from Monday 4th May to Friday 8th May, as at that time there was no proposal or intention from the UK to make this change and the Committee considered that it would be undesirable to fall out of step with the UK.

- 4.6 The Committee has been unable to further consult on the proposal to designate Friday 8th May as an alternative public holiday to Monday 4th May, as it was essential to bring this item to the States of Deliberation as soon as possible. It was recognised that undertaking a further consultation would only delay this matter further.

5 Compliance with Rule 4

- 5.1 Rule 4 of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees sets out the information which must be included in, or appended to, motions laid before the States.
- 5.2 In accordance with Rule 4(1), the Propositions have been submitted to Her Majesty's Procureur for advice on any legal or constitutional implications.
- 5.3 In accordance with Rule 4(4) of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees, it is confirmed that the propositions above have the unanimous support of the Committee.
- 5.4 In accordance with Rule 4(5), the Propositions relate to the duties of the Committee on advising the States on matters with regards to public holidays pursuant to the Bills of Exchange (Guernsey) Law, 1958, as amended.

Yours faithfully

C N K Parkinson
President

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Vice-President

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5th July 2019

Sir

Additional Billet d'État

I write to request the preparation of an additional Billet d'État for the meeting of the States of Deliberation on 17th July 2019. The purpose of the additional Billet is to ask the States to consider a change to the public holidays in May 2020 to designate Friday 8th May as a public holiday in place of Monday 4th May. This change would enable Guernsey to align itself with the United Kingdom, which has only very recently confirmed this change. It is understood that it would also provide the opportunity to extend the commemorations for the 75th anniversary of Guernsey's Liberation Day

A copy of the policy letter and propositions on this matter are enclosed with my letter. The Committee recognises that any change to public holidays less than a year before the event could have an impact on business, community groups, and events arranged for around this time, and therefore sufficient notice should be given to any change. Any delay in confirming the public holidays is likely to cause confusion and inconvenience for businesses and the community and postpone planning of Liberation Day events for around this time.

Given these reasons, it is hoped that this matter can be considered by the States as soon as possible. I hope that you will therefore agree to the Committee's request for an additional Billet to the States under Rule 2(4) of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees.

If you have any queries regarding my letter please contact Gareth Jones at this office.

Yours faithfully

Deputy Charles Parkinson
President
Committee *for* Economic Development