

THE STATES OF DELIBERATION
of the
ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

STATES' ASSEMBLY & CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

DATES OF STATES' MEETINGS – 1st SEPTEMBER 2020 to 31st AUGUST 2021

The States are asked to decide whether, after consideration of the policy letter entitled "Dates of States' Meetings – 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021" dated 12th August 2019, they are of the opinion:-

1. To agree:

- (a) that the dates on which States' Meetings shall be convened in the period from the 1st September, 2020 to the 31st August, 2021 shall be as follows, and to update Schedule 1 of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees accordingly:

2020	
2 nd September	
30 th September	
21 st October	
3 rd November	Budget Meeting & Policy Letter of the Committee for Employment & Social Security on uprating of non-contributory benefits
25 th November	
15 th December	P&R Plan Meeting
16 th December	
2021	
27 th January	
24 th February	
24 th March	
28 th April	
26 th May	
15 th June	P&R Plan (Phase 2) & Accounts
7 th July	

- (b) in respect of the period beginning on the 1st July 2020 until 31st August 2021, that statements under the provisions of Rules 10(4) and (5) shall be made by the

Presidents and, in the case of the States of Alderney, the nominated Alderney Representative according to the following rota, and to update Schedule 1a of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees accordingly:

States' Meeting 2020	Committee/s/States of Alderney to make Statement
22 nd July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & Resources Committee
2 nd September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for</i> Economic Development
30 th September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development & Planning Authority • Committee <i>for</i> Education, Sport & Culture
21 st October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for</i> Home Affairs • Overseas Aid & Development Commission
3 rd November	N/A Special Meeting
25 th November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for the</i> Environment & Infrastructure • Committee <i>for</i> Health & Social Care
15 th December	N/A Special Meeting
16 th December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for</i> Employment & Social Security • The States of Alderney
States' Meeting 2021	
27 th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Management Committee • States' Assembly & Constitution Committee
24 th February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & Resources Committee
24 th March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for</i> Economic Development • Committee <i>for</i> Education, Sport & Culture
28 th April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for the</i> Environment & Infrastructure • States' Trading Supervisory Board
26 th May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for</i> Employment & Social Security • Transport Licensing Authority
15 th June	N/A Special Meeting
7 th July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for</i> Health & Social Care • Committee <i>for</i> Home Affairs

2. To agree that the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture will determine and publish the calendar for the period from September 2021 to July 2024 for all States Schools (including voluntary schools) by the end of January 2020.

3. To agree that Rule 1.(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees should be amended with immediate effect to read as follows:

1. (1) The States' Assembly & Constitution Committee shall submit, in the six months prior to a General Election, a policy letter setting out the dates on which it proposes that States' Meetings should be convened during the States' term immediately following that General Election, having first taken into account the dates of school terms and any other information which it considers relevant. The policy letter referred to above shall also include proposals setting out the Committee or Committees whose President or Presidents will be obliged to make statements, and for the States of Alderney statement to be made by one of the Alderney Representatives, under the provisions of Rules 10(4) and (5) at each ordinary Meeting during the said period.

The above Propositions have been submitted to Her Majesty's Procureur for advice on any legal or constitutional implications.

THE STATES OF DELIBERATION
of the
ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

STATES' ASSEMBLY & CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

DATES OF STATES' MEETINGS – 1st SEPTEMBER 2020 to 31st AUGUST 2021

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

12th August, 2019

Dear Sir,

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 As required by Rule 1.(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees (“the Rules”), the States’ Assembly & Constitution Committee is obliged in September each year to bring a policy letter to the States setting out the dates on which it recommends that States’ Meetings should be convened in the period from the 1st September in the following year to the 31st August of the year after that.
- 1.2 It is also required to include proposals setting out the Committee or Committees whose President or Presidents will be obliged to make statements, and for the States of Alderney statement to be made by one of the Alderney Representatives, under the provisions of Rules 10(4) and (5) at each ordinary Meeting during the said period.
- 1.3 The proposed dates for States’ Meeting in the period from 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021, and the proposed rota of statements under the provisions of Rules 10(4) and (5), are set out in section three of this policy letter.
- 1.4 This policy letter also proposes changes to the Rules to enable the 2020 to 2024 political term’s Meeting dates to be set in advance of the next term of office. It also proposes the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture should set the school term dates for 2021 to 2024 to enable these to be taken into account in the schedule. The reasoning for this is set out in section four of this policy letter.

2 Background to the convening of Meetings

- 2.1 For many years, the States generally sat on the last Wednesday of each month, apart from August (no Meeting) and December (brought forward to avoid clashing with the Christmas period). On occasion, in order to deal with the volume of business the

States Meeting was convened for the Tuesday immediately before the last Wednesday of the month.

- 2.2 In November 2015, the States considered a policy letter from the Committee entitled ‘Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees – Proposed new rules’¹ which proposed that States’ Meetings would be scheduled for set days throughout the year rather than according to the pre-2016 pattern. It suggested that a sensible frequency would be for the States to meet approximately every three weeks.
- 2.3 The reasoning for that proposal was set out in paragraphs 3 – 11 of that policy letter. The States subsequently agreed the proposed schedule of States’ Meetings in accordance with the Committee’s recommendations and the Rules were amended to require that:

Each year in September the States’ Assembly & Constitution Committee shall submit a policy letter setting out the dates on which it proposes that States’ Meetings should be convened in the period from the 1st of September of the following year to the 31st of August of the year after that, having first taken into account the dates of school terms and any other information which it considers relevant.

- 2.4 In September 2017, the policy letter entitled ‘Dates of States’ Meetings – 2018 – 2019’² recommended maintaining the three-weekly cycle of Meetings. However, it was subject to a successful amendment which sought to return States’ Meetings to be scheduled to the end of each month. From September 2019, the States will revert to meeting on a 3-weekly cycle as agreed on 26th September 2018.

3. The proposed Meeting dates

- 3.1 Rule 1.(1) requires the Committee to take into account the dates of school terms and any other information which it considers relevant. There are no Meetings scheduled to start in any States’ school holidays or other more general holidays.
- 3.2 The school term dates from September 2020 to July 2021 is as follows:

Term	Date	Event
Autumn	1 st September	Term starts (Staff)
	2 nd September	Term starts (Students)
	26 th to 30 th October	Half Term
Spring	22 nd December	Term Ends
	4 th January	Term Starts (Staff)
	5 th January	Term Starts (Students)
	8 th to 12 th February	Half Term

¹ Billet d’État XXII, <https://gov.gg/article/150853/States-Meeting-on-24th-November-2015-Billets-XX-XXI-and-XXII>

² Billet XVII, Article 10, <https://gov.gg/article/160644/States-Meeting-on-27-September-2017-Billet-XVIII>

Term	Date	Event
	1 st April	Term Ends
Summer	19 th April	Term Starts (Staff)
	20 th April	Term Starts (Students)
	3 rd May	May Day Holiday
	9 th May	Liberation Day
	31 st May to 4 th June	Half Term
	16 th July	Term Ends

- 3.3 The Committee is proposing the following schedule for States' Meetings for 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021. Please note the fourth column shows the length of time between 'normal' meetings:

Month	Date	Notes	
2020			
September	02.09.20		6 weeks
September	30.09.20		4 weeks
October	21.10.20	<i>Half Term from 26th to 30th October</i>	3 weeks
November	03.11.20	Budget Meeting & Policy Letter of the Committee for Employment & Social Security on uprating of non-contributory benefits	2 weeks
November	25.11.20		5 weeks
December	15.12.20	P&R Plan Meeting	3 weeks
December	16.12.20		3 weeks
2021			
January	27.01.21		6 weeks
February	24.02.21		4 weeks
March	24.03.21		4 weeks
April	28.04.21		5 weeks
May	26.05.21		4 weeks
June	15.06.21	P&R Plan (Phase 2) Accounts	3 weeks
July	07.07.21		6 weeks
August	Recess		

- 3.4 In determining the schedule, the Committee considered the number and length of meetings held during the first year of the political term from 2008/9, 2012/13 and 2016/17 (from the General Election to the 2nd summer recess). It is important to note

that the 2020 to 2021 schedule is two months shorter than previous years, given the General Election will be held in June 2020, rather than April. Please also note that in the absence of Hansard in 2008 – 2009 and knowing the time when meetings concluded, the ‘number of days used’ is the maximum number of meeting days that were used and not the total time spent in the Assembly.

Year	Number of meetings convened	Number of days used
2016 – 2017	25	34
2012 – 2013	17	30.5
2008 – 2009	19	36 (<i>maximum</i>)

- 3.5 The table above shows that that from 2012 to 2016 the number of meetings scheduled increased by eight whereas the number of days used only increased by 3.5 days. The Committee concluded that – given the reduced volume of work in the first year of a States’ term – meeting every three weeks cannot be justified and has therefore suggested a schedule of meetings largely based upon an ‘end of the month’ timetable.
- 3.6 The States Meeting dates proposed for the second half of 2020 are affected by the October half-term and Christmas, as well as the need to accommodate special meetings for the Budget and P&R Plan. This means that, in late 2020, as towards the end of most calendar years, it's not possible to strictly follow the 'end-of-month' pattern preferred by many States Members. However, this pattern can be clearly seen in the dates proposed from January 2021 onwards.
- 3.7 The States has agreed the dates of six States’ Meetings prior to the summer recess in 2020 (four meetings covering elections, one special meeting to consider the States of Guernsey Accounts and one ‘normal’ meeting). It is proposing 14 meeting dates between 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021, bringing the number of proposed meetings to 20. The Committee believes this is a sufficient number of meetings in the first year of the political term.
- 3.8 The Committee has consulted with the Policy & Resources Committee in respect of the dates of the Special States’ Meetings and it has confirmed it is content with the proposed dates.
- 3.9 The Committee proposes the following rota of statements, following on from the patterns in previous years. This rota commences with the first ‘normal’ States’ Meeting of the political term, on 22nd July, 2020:

Month	Date	Rota
July	22.07.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & Resources Committee
September	02.09.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for</i> Economic Development
September	30.09.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development & Planning Authority • Committee <i>for</i> Education, Sport & Culture

Month	Date	Rota
October	21.10.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for</i> Home Affairs • Overseas Aid & Development Commission
November	03.11.20	N/A Special Meeting
November	25.11.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for the</i> Environment & Infrastructure • Committee <i>for</i> Health & Social Care
December	15.12.20	N/A Special Meeting
December	16.12.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for</i> Employment & Social Security • The States of Alderney
January	27.01.21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Management Committee • States' Assembly & Constitution Committee
February	24.02.21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & Resources Committee
March	24.03.21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for</i> Economic Development • Committee <i>for</i> Education, Sport & Culture
April	28.04.21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for the</i> Environment & Infrastructure • States' Trading Supervisory Board
May	26.05.21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for</i> Employment & Social Security • Transport Licensing Authority
June	15.06.21	N/A Special Meeting
July	07.07.21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee <i>for</i> Health & Social Care • Committee <i>for</i> Home Affairs
August	Recess	N/A

4. Proposed change to Rule 1.(1)

- 4.1 Rule 1.(1) of the Rules obliges the Committee to bring a policy letter to the States in September each year setting out the dates on which it recommends that States' Meetings should be convened in the period from the 1st September in the following year to the 31st August of the year after that.
- 4.2 The Committee believes there would be benefit in amending Rule 1.(1) of the Rules to enable the Committee to propose dates for the following political term prior to a General Election.
- 4.3 As the Committee is required to take into account the dates of school terms and any other information which it considers relevant, it wrote to the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture to ask whether it would be willing to determine and publish the dates for the school terms from September 2021 to July 2024.
- 4.4 The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture agreed to provide the school dates up to 2024 however it needs to liaise with other stakeholders regarding the planning of school term dates. Unfortunately it has not been possible for this to take place before the submission of this policy letter.

4.5 The Committee is therefore proposing the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture provide the dates of school terms from 2021 to 2024 by January 2020. It believes this proposal would be beneficial to the public and the States of Guernsey for a number of reasons:

- Teachers and parents would have the benefit of being able to plan ahead – in regard to school holidays - with more confidence.
- Prospective candidates for People’s Deputies will know the dates of States’ Meetings in advance of the political term.
- States’ Committees will be able to schedule meetings for the whole term rather than annually.
- Elected Members will be able to plan ahead with more confidence (e.g. conference attendance etc.).
- The Douzaines will have advance notification of all the meeting dates.
- It will reduce the number of policy letters that will need to be debated each term on this subject.

4.6 The Committee proposes that Rule 1.(1) is amended as follows (Proposition 3) (changes shown with bold and strikethroughs):

Dates of Meetings

*1. (1) ~~Each year in September~~ The States’ Assembly & Constitution Committee shall submit, **in the six months prior to a General Election**, a policy letter setting out the dates on which it proposes that States’ Meetings should be convened **during the States’ term immediately following that General Election**, ~~in the period from the 1st of September of the following year to the 31st of August of the year after that~~ having first taken into account the dates of school terms and any other information which it considers relevant. ~~With effect from the 1st September, 2018~~ The policy letter referred to above shall also include proposals setting out the Committee or Committees whose President or Presidents will be obliged to make statements, and for the States of Alderney statement to be made by one of the Alderney Representatives, under the provisions of Rules 10(4) and (5) at each ordinary Meeting during the said period.*

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, it is confirmed that the propositions above have the unanimous support of the Committee.
- 5.4 In accordance with the provisions of Rule 4.(5) of the Rules, the Committee informs the States that its duties and powers include advising the States on "the practical functioning of the States of Deliberation". As set out above, the Rules require the Committee to bring forward this policy letter at this time to fulfil its responsibilities. If the States approve the Propositions, a further policy letter will follow in early 2020, setting out the remainder of the proposed States' Meeting dates for the 2020-2024 States' term. The Committee has consulted with the Policy & Resources Committee in respect of the dates of the Special States' Meetings.

Yours faithfully

N. R. Inder
President

J S Merrett
Vice-President

P T R Ferbrache
J P Le Tocq
E A Yerby

THE STATES OF DELIBERATION
of the
ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

STATES' ASSEMBLY & CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

DATES OF STATES' MEETINGS – 1st SEPTEMBER 2020 to 31st AUGUST 2021

The President
Policy & Resources Committee
Sir Charles Frossard House
La Charroterie
St Peter Port

12th August, 2019

Dear Deputy St Pier,

Preferred date for consideration by the States of Deliberation

In accordance with Rule 4(2) of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees, the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee requests that the Propositions be considered at the States' Meeting to be held on 25th September, 2019.

Under Rule 1.(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the States of Deliberation and their Committees, the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee is obliged in September each year to bring a policy letter to the States setting out the dates on which it recommends that States' Meetings should be convened in the period from the 1st September in the following year to the 31st August of the year after that.

Yours sincerely,

Yours faithfully

N. R. Inder
President

J S Merrett
Vice-President

P T R Ferbrache
J P Le Tocq
E A Yerby