

THE STATES OF DELIBERATION
of the
ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

28th June, 2022

Proposition No. P.2022/41

Policy & Resources Committee

Government Work Plan 2022

AMENDMENT

Proposed by: Deputy M A J Helyar

Seconded by: Deputy R G Prow

To insert the following Proposition:

- “18. To direct the Policy & Resources Committee to amend, as follows, its process in leading policy planning for the preparation of the Government Work Plan (GWP) to be considered by the States of Deliberation at their Special Meeting on 20th June 2023:
- a) Continuing to require each Committee of the States to review the priority to be afforded to its current commitments and deadlines for established actions as directed by the Assembly in the GWP 2022;
 - b) Having established its baseline programme of work, each Committee of the States should also identify any new work that engages its mandate that it determines should be a priority for government in the coming year giving due regard to the States’ overall policy objectives, which for the avoidance of doubt should include consideration of the extant Resolutions of the States that have already established new matters that engage its mandate having evaluated their current priority in the context of the strategic direction established by the Assembly;
 - c) Having received all new requests for prioritisation, every States’ Member shall be provided by the Policy & Resources Committee, for their individual completion and return, a method of indicating, by means of an arithmetical, hierarchical scoring system, how each Member voluntarily wishes each of the individual items submitted by Committees of the States to be prioritized, in order

from top (i.e. first) to bottom, so that such priorities can be collated into a combined, representative priority 'List'; and

- d) Having received all responses, the Policy & Resources Committee will evaluate the resource requirements to service this List with due regard to the established GWP framework already in delivery in order to lay before the States of Deliberation an affordable and achievable phased programme of priorities. The Policy & Resources Committee will publish the scores of each States' Member (or if none, any null response) shall be published such that the media and public have ready and transparent access to openly observe the priorities of individual States' Members and Committees prior to any debate on the GWP; and
- e) Having invested in this highly consultative further round of prioritisation, the Policy & Resources Committee should seek views of the Committees of the States on establishing the GWP 2023 as the programme of work to conclude the current political term, notwithstanding the publication of monitoring reports and a final handover to the next Assembly in mid-2025, and bring necessary proposals to amend the States' meeting schedule for the remainder of this term for consideration by the States of Deliberation at their Special Meeting on 20th June 2023.

Rule 4(1) Information

- a) The Proposition contributes to the States' objectives and policy plans by providing an additional element of policy development prioritisation through publishing the views of each elected representative on recommendations from advising Committees of the States to inform the Government Work Plan.
- b) In preparing the Proposition, consultation has been undertaken with the Policy & Resources Committee.
- c) The Proposition has been submitted to Her Majesty's Procureur for advice on any legal or constitutional implications.
- d) There are no financial implications to the States of carrying the proposal into effect.

Explanatory note

1. The GWP, whatever its faults, is a positive way of seeking consensus and placing boundaries around an enormous programme of both service and capital development. The civil servants and politicians working on its preparation have invested a huge amount of time and work towards its preparation to their great

credit. However, it cannot represent the consensus view of the Assembly because of the limited means by which it has been reviewed.

2. When first created after the 2020 election, having asked Committees for their priorities, all States' Members were asked to attend workshops or to vote to indicate their priorities. This scoring was never published. Nor did, for many States' Members, the subsequent listing of priorities, represent their views.
3. The enormity of the GWP, the debate, and process around it necessarily makes it difficult for those Members who feel the prioritisation process is flawed in some respect, or wrong, to be able to amend the entire priorities of the GWP.
4. The resulting priorities in this year's GWP may not represent the priority consensus scoring by States' Members had Members been able to conduct such a process.
5. This Amendment is an attempt to ensure a democratic and transparent prioritisation process going forward, and most importantly, that the public understands who, amongst their representatives, has the same priorities which they may share.
6. The electorate has a legitimate expectation to know the views and objectives of each of those States' Members who represent them in order for government to be both accountable and properly representative.
7. To prepare the GWP, it cannot be acceptable in a modern society that only 17 Members of the Assembly responded to the GWP 2022 deputies' survey and therefore informed the prioritisation process. Preparation and maintenance of the Plan involves months of staff and political time – it is very important in order to plan financial provision and to prevent “mission creep” where individual Committees decide to commit to expenditure outside the new priorities set out in the plan. Amongst an Assembly of 40 paid Members, it cannot be acceptable to fellow Members, or the public, that so few Members have contributed to priorities, and that the prioritisation process (representing hundreds of millions of expenditure) happens behind closed doors – the public is entitled to know politicians' views and what they stand for.
8. Given the central and growing importance of the GWP to government planning, the public should be entitled to see which politicians have pushed or prioritised which items and more importantly be entitled to find out why and to decide on their voting at the next election accordingly.
9. The GWP process is new and evolving. It is certainly better than the last process, but it is not perfect. Resources are hugely stretched and the public has a right to know who may be pushing expensive and perhaps unnecessary minority issues,

and why, and it has a right to know what are the values and objectives of each of its elected representatives. An open and transparent scoring system for concluding priorities must be an obvious democratic improvement in our system of government.