

PM/SC/267

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

(85th Meeting)

17th September 2014**PART A**

All members were present.

Senator I.J. Gorst, Chief Minister
 Senator P.F.C. Ozouf, Minister for Treasury and Resources (not present for item B1)
 Senator A.J.H. Maclean, Minister for Economic Development
 Senator B.I. Le Marquand, Minister for Home Affairs
 Senator F. du H. Le Gresley, M.B.E., Minister for Social Security
 Senator Sir P.M. Bailhache, Minister for External Relations
 Deputy R.C. Duhamel, Minister for Planning and Environment
 Deputy A.E. Pryke, Minister for Health and Social Services
 Deputy K.C. Lewis, Minister for Transport and Technical Services
 Deputy A.K.F. Green, M.B.E, Minister for Housing
 Deputy P.J.D. Ryan, Minister for Education, Sport and Culture (not present for item B1)

In attendance -

Senator P.F. Routier, M.B.E., Assistant to the Chief Minister
 Deputy E.J. Noel, Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources (for item B2)
 J.D. Richardson, Chief Executive, States of Jersey
 M.N. de la Haye, O.B.E., Greffier of the States
 T. J. Le Cocq, Q.C., H.M. Attorney General
 R. Jouault, Managing Director, Community and Social Services, Health and Social Services Department (for item B1)
 Advocate B. Lacey, Lacey Advocates, Historic Abuse Redress Scheme Lawyers (for item B1)
 R. Bell, Interim Treasurer of the States (for item B2)
 C. Haws, Head of Financial Planning, Treasury and Resources Department (for item B2)
 P. Eastwood, Deputy Director – Tax Policy, Treasury and Resources Department (for item B2)
 D. Peedle, Economic Adviser, Chief Minister's Department (for item B2)
 V. Page, Assistant to the Chief Minister
 C. Keir, Communications Manager
 P. Monamy, Clerk to the Council of Ministers

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

- Minutes. A1. The Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd September 2014 (Part A and Part B), having been previously circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed.
- Ministerial travel A2. The Council noted that a request had been received for the release of the amounts expended by Ministers in 2012 and 2013 on travel (including

(including accommodation) and entertainment expenses for 2012 and 2013: report. 1448(13)

‘Purdah’ or pre-election period: policy on Ministerial publicity. 1444/4(42)

accommodation) and entertainment expenses.

The Council accordingly approved, subject to final verification of the figures produced, a Report on the matter for presentation to the States for their information.

A3. The Council received and noted a paper outlining the policy relating to Ministerial publicity in the period leading-up to elections, which it was recalled were to be held on 15th October 2014.

It was noted that during ‘purdah’ or pre-election period – which in Jersey specifically related to the time between the end of the week after the final sitting of the States Assembly (expected to be on Wednesday 24th September 2014) and the election of the last Minister into office, which was the point in time at which the new Council of Ministers was formally established (likely to be either on 6th or 7th November 2014).

The Council accepted that during this period, the Council and individual Ministers retained executive responsibilities, and that the essential business of government had to be carried out. However, it was recognised that it was customary for Ministers and Assistant Ministers to observe discretion in initiating any new action of a continuing or long-term character; and that there were restrictions on the nature of publicity in which Ministers might engage in relation to their Ministerial role.

It was accepted that decisions on matters of policy on which a new Council of Ministers or a Minister might be expected to want the opportunity to take a different view should be postponed where possible, provided that such postponement would not be particularly detrimental to the Island’s interest or wasteful of resources.

The Council agreed that during purdah –

1. No publicity would be given to matters which were politically controversial;
2. The general presumption would be that no reference would be made to individual Ministers in news releases (except where there was a valid emergency);
3. Great caution would be exercised before undertaking any significant media exercise unless it could be demonstrated that this had been included in the forward diary before the election had been called;
4. No photographs of candidates in the election would be issued;
5. Before any request for photographs of a Minister and other material was considered, enquiries would be made regarding the use to which they were intended to be put and an appropriate restriction on their use imposed if supplied;
6. The position of Chief Minister as the figurehead of the authority was different and material would be issued, providing it was not of a political nature.

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The Council also noted that the Standing Orders of the States of Jersey included a provision which prevented the lodging of any proposition during the 21 days immediately preceding an ordinary election. It was recognised that this meant that no propositions could be lodged 'au Greffe' between 25th September and 15th October 2014 (both dates inclusive). Propositions lodged on 24th September could be debated by the new States Assembly on the first available date for Public Business, namely 25th November 2014; and any lodged on 16th October could be debated on 9th December 2014.

States
Business:
'Freedom For
Life
Ministries:
grant from
C.O.C.F.'
(P.123/2014).
407/3/1(25)

A4. The Council, with reference to its Minute No. A4 of 3rd September 2014, discussed with the Minister for Home Affairs an item of public business scheduled for consideration by the States Assembly on 22nd September 2014, namely "Freedom For Life Ministries: grant from Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund" (P.123/2014, lodged 'au Greffe' on 25th June 2014 by Deputy M.R. Higgins).

Senators Gorst and Le Marquand declared a conflict of interest.

It was noted that the Deputy proposed that a grant of £200,000 be made from the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund (COCF) to cover the one-off cost of refurbishing a Life Centre drop-in facility for ex-prisoners and other ex-offenders.

The Minister for Home Affairs indicated his broad support for the proposal, given that resettlement of prisoners was an important aspect in both the Criminal Justice Policy and the 'Building a Safer Society' strategy by helping to reduce re-offending. It was therefore considered that the provision of funding via the COCF through Deputy Higgins' proposition would provide an ideal opportunity to work with the Freedom for Life Ministries in a closer partnership.

The Council, having noted the current status of the COCF, recognised that the Minister for Home Affairs would in due course present a comment on the projet to the States.