

SWEARING IN OF STATES MEMBERS

Monday 27 June 2022

1. Mesdames et Messieurs les Connétables et Mesdames et Messieurs les Députés. May I, on behalf of His Excellency, the Deputy Bailiff, the Jurats and the Crown Officers and for myself, congratulate you all most warmly to your election to office.
2. In the oaths of office that you have all just taken, you have promised loyalty to the Queen, our Sovereign, and of course our relationship with the United Kingdom is built upon the loyalty of the island over the centuries to the Crown as successor to the Dukes of Normandy. It is therefore an honour for all members that Your Excellency, as personal representative of Her Majesty the Queen, is able to be here today to witness this important occasion.
3. You do not need me to tell you that this was in many ways a ground breaking election. It is the first time that we have not elected Senators and Deputies have been elected to constituencies which are very different from those that existed on the last occasion. This has imposed its own stresses and strains on the electoral administration system and, although each of the autorisés I am sure when announcing the results, pay tribute to the hard work undertaken by all of the parish staff, this is really the first opportunity to pay tribute to the autorisés themselves, for the most

part Jurats and retired Jurats of this Court. It was they who had to take ultimate responsibility for all that occurred at the various polling stations and they had to supervise the process from before the polls opened to the conclusion of the count. They also underwent further and enhanced training to deal with the new system and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them publicly for undertaking this vital role so as to ensure that the true verdict of the public is ascertained by the election.

4. The oath you have just sworn refers to upholding the privileges of the island and opposing whosoever may wish to infringe them. Privilege is a legal term and in this context it means simply our right to self-government in domestic matters. That autonomy has been achieved by the endeavours of our ancestors and, as our elected representatives, it is entrusted to you for safe keeping during your term of office. It is a duty that I share. Politicians and officials of the United Kingdom have no democratic mandate to speak for the inhabitants of the island and it is to you that islanders look for the government of the island and for the upholding of those ancient privileges.
5. In the days to come you will be choosing a Chief Minister, ministers and members of scrutiny panels and other offices. It remains an important aspect of our system that each member can exercise his vote as he or she thinks fit. Although we have seen a

growth in party politics in Jersey, although the extent of that remains to be seen in the light of the results, it is still the case that the bringer of any proposition, whether a minister or an individual member, has to persuade a majority of members to support him or her and no party holds a majority in this assembly. The speech of any member may count and may change the course of debate and the ultimate result and accordingly each of you has a vital part to play and a very considerable responsibility which the electorate has entrusted to you. You can all influence the direction the island takes.

6. You do not need me to tell you that you come into office at a challenging time. Firstly, at this moment, we have no clear idea how the new constitution of the assembly will work in fact and how effective political parties will be. But however that pans out, there are material challenges to be addressed in the area of housing, the cost of living and other significant issues. Jersey cannot hope to remain unaffected by difficulties in the wider world and it is you who have been elected by the public to offer solutions and to steer the island securely in the years to come. There is no doubt that you will all be faced with difficult political and sometimes personal decisions within the assembly and the island looks to you for wisdom and leadership in the coming years. I have no doubt that you will not let the island down.

7. As presiding officer for the States Assembly, I very much look forward to working with all of you in your various capacities to ensure the efficient and orderly running of the assembly under the standing orders that it has created for itself. For those who are new to the assembly, you will come quickly to realise how enormous a service the States Greffe provides to members and to the assembly generally.

8. But, as I say, I am very much looking forward to working with you and on behalf of all of the members of the Court I congratulate you once again and wish you every success during your terms of office.