



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

STATES OF THE

ISLAND OF ALDERNEY

HANSARD

The Court House, Alderney, Wednesday, 24th August 2022

*All published Official Reports can be found on the
official States of Alderney website www.alderney.gov.gg*

Volume 10, No. 7

Present:

Mr William Tate, President

Members

Ms Annie Burgess

Mr Ian Carter

Mr Kevin Gentle

Mr Christian Harris

Mr Boyd Kelly

Mr Graham McKinley OBE

Mr Steve Roberts

Mr Alexander Snowdon

The Greffier of the Court

Mr David Knight

Business transacted

| | |
|---|----|
| Welcome to Deputy Mark Helyar | 3 |
| Convenor's Report of the People's Meeting held on 24th August 2022 | 3 |
| I. By-Election 2022 – Approved | 4 |
| II. Elections 2022 – Approved | 6 |
| III. Questions and Reports – Five questions and no reports..... | 7 |
| Biodiversity public consultation – Update..... | 8 |
| Cost-of-living crisis – Updates and impacts | 10 |
| Alderney Week – Thank you to the team; importance of strong transport links | 13 |
| Bird flu – Current position regarding bird stocks | 14 |
| Alderney Breakwater – Update on current condition..... | 15 |
| <i>The Assembly adjourned at 3.09 p.m.</i> | 17 |

States of Alderney

The States met at 2.30 p.m.

[THE PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]

PRAYERS

The Greffier

ROLL CALL

The Greffier

The Greffier: Mr President, the Members are assembled. We are quorate for the purposes of today's business.

Welcome to Deputy Mark Helyar

The President: Thank you very much indeed.

5 Before we move to today's business, I would like to welcome Mark Helyar to our meeting this afternoon, who I am sure you will all know is the Treasury lead on the Policy & Resources Committee in Guernsey and he is also the liaison officer, or the liaison member with whom our Members work very closely. And it is the tradition, and I did not know this until I attended the States of Deliberation in Guernsey, that we always give a round of applause to visiting
10 parliamentarians. *(Applause)* I suspect that is the only round of applause you have ever had from your son. *(Laughter)* So, let us move on.

Convenor's Report of the People's Meeting held on 24th August 2022

The President: Mr Carter, the People's Meeting, which we have just had? **(Mr Carter:** We have.) I do not know whether we know the numbers of attendees. If not, we can count them, I think,
15 now.

Mr Carter: I do not, I am afraid. I believe that is a Civil Service ability to do that, politicians cannot count! *(Interjections)*

The President: Well, I think probably 11 will suffice, because I know that Mr Baron has just
20 attended.

Would you like to give your report, please, of the People's Meeting?

Mr Carter: Yes. On Item I, there were no questions; on Item II, there were no questions; and on the questions that are on the Billet, there was one question with regard to the way in which
25 feedback to the biodiversity policy document consultation is taking place, how that will be undertaken.

The President: Thank you very much indeed.

**I. By-Election 2022 –
Approved**

Item I.

The States of Alderney is asked to approve of the arrangements for the By-Election 2022 to be held on Saturday, 15th October, 2022.

The President: So now we can move to Item I, please, Mr Greffier.

30

The Greffier: Item I, Mr President, is the by-election in 2022. The States of Alderney is asked to approve of the arrangements for the by-election of 2022 to be held on Saturday 15th October this year. The Item is proposed by Mr Carter and seconded by Mr Snowdon.

35

The President: Mr Carter.

Mr Carter: Thank you.

40

Well, really, first of all a formal thank you to Mr Jenkins for his work as a States Member over the last 18 months or so, and I hope he found that experience fulfilling and one that perhaps, when pressures of life are different, he might consider again. As a result of that casual vacancy, we now have amongst the Members of the States ... that needs to be filled and that needs to be filled through a by-election, with the proposed date of 15th October, nominations being received by 30th September, four o'clock. That successful candidate will then serve for the remainder of Mr Jenkins' term, until 31st December 2024.

45

I would obviously urge all members of the community who are eligible to stand to consider standing for public office to the Island for the coming two years and suggest that, if interested, they do in fact talk to existing and former States Members, or the Returning Officer, the Chief Executive, about the role of a States Member and what it involves – the time commitment, and the qualities that are useful in fulfilling that role.

50

I think it is vital for good governance that we have contested elections, so that people, the community, have a choice with regard to who represents them and that in that diversity of thinking, we have the ability to get differing views, and so come to good decisions.

So I would urge all Members to support the Proposition regarding the arrangements for the by-election in 2022 to be held on Saturday 15th October.

55

Thank you.

The President: Thank you.

60

Just for the purposes of clarification, Mr Carter, the law in fact provides that the election has to take place within three months of the date of resignation, because I think some questions have been asked as to why we could not have run them both together.

Mr Carter: Correct, Mr President. I was going to bring that up in Item II, as to differentiating and giving clarity as to why there have to be two elections but you have encapsulated it perfectly. Thank you.

65 **The President:** Thank you very much indeed.
Mr Gentle, do you have anything to add? Sorry, it is Mr Snowdon.

Mr Snowdon: Can I reserve my right to speak, happy to second, sir –

70 **The President:** Thank you very much indeed.
Would anybody wish to speak on this Item? That being the case –

Mr Snowdon: Could I use my right to speak, if that is all right, if nobody else is speaking?

75 **The President:** Yes. Sorry, (**Mr Snowdon:** Thank you.) I did not notice you, Mr Snowdon.

Mr Snowdon: I just wanted to say thank you to Mr Carter for highlighting this matter, it is very important, and thank you to Mr Jenkins for all the time he did serve in the States of Alderney. But I just wanted to know, are we working towards about how we actually get people to stand? Obviously, in Guernsey, there is a whole booklet that goes out with support for candidates, and trying to get them to engage in how they are going to potentially be in those roles, and I believe there was a booklet done about two years ago or so by the former CEO. I just wondered are we going to use that booklet or a new version of the booklet to try and get people to stand?

80
85
90 What worries me is that we may have people, nothing against people, but people who are retiring, but we need to try and get that younger demographic to try and stand as well. So how do we try and tap into them to try and encourage them to stand for this election and potentially the next election as well? I just wondered what thoughts were in there, because as you rightly identified, we do not want to be in a situation where we do not have enough people coming forward, and not really having a public mandate. I am sure this is being looked into, but if you could provide any clarification, it would be much appreciated.

Thank you.

The President: Before you do, Mr Carter, does anybody else wish to speak on this Item? Then would you like to exercise your right of reply, Mr Carter?

95
100 **Mr Carter:** Certainly, yes. That booklet you referred to, prepared I think two years ago by the previous CEO, with a foreword by the previous President, is one that we can use again. I believe that it will have a slightly different foreword, in terms of a different President and a different CEO, but the guts of the document are certainly very helpful and obviously one is trying, I would urge anyone, all of us, to seek out through whatever networks we have, people who you think would add to the diversity of thinking that is necessary for a States Member, so as to come to, as I said, those good decisions which, over the coming four years, or two years in this particular by-election case, there will be lots to decide.

105 So yes, in short, that booklet is in place, and there is a whole series of actions that the CEO, or the Returning Officer has to try and promote engagement.

Thank you.

The President: Thank you very much indeed.
I think, unless anybody indicates to the contrary, we can say that that resolution is approved.
110 Thank you.

The Greffier: That just carried, Mr President.

**II. Elections 2022 –
Approved**

*The States of Alderney is asked to approve that the elections for the year 2022 are as follows:
(a) The Ordinary Election to be held on Saturday 26th November 2022; and
(b) The Plebiscite Election to be held on Saturday 10th December 2022.*

115 **The Greffier:** Item II, Elections 2022. The States of Alderney is asked to approve that the
elections in the year 2022 are as follows: (a) the Ordinary Election to be held on Saturday 26th
November this year, and (b) the Plebiscite Election to be held on Saturday 10th December this
year. Proposed by Mr Carter, seconded by Mr Snowdon.

The President: Thank you.
Mr Carter.

120

Mr Carter: Thank you.

As I said, the rationale for having to have a separate by-election followed by an Ordinary
Election is simply that of timing and the States of Alderney Law, 2004 with the three-month period
from resignation date that a by-election does have to be then held. Hence the dates that we have
in place and that are proposed.

125

Really, in terms of repeating what I have just said, the vitality of any legislature is necessary, is
only brought about by the vitality of those who are Members, and so the actual need for a range
of people, with differing views, differing thoughts, differing backgrounds, is absolutely vital. So
just as I said regarding the by-election, I would urge as many members of the community who are
eligible to stand to consider committing to public service, and that public service is a service that
everybody takes on in a way for reasons that are always personal to them, but the underlying
rationale must always be doing the very best one can for the Island of Alderney, and for the people
of Alderney and its community.

130

So as I said, I would ask that those States Members here, those perhaps in the Gallery, will also
consider how they can promote good governance through people standing for election, so that
those who are then elected do then make those good decisions.

135

Thank you.

The President: Thank you.
I think time it is you, Mr Gentle.

140

Mr Gentle: Thank you, sir.

Colleagues, I have nothing more to add to Mr Carter's very succinct submission, and I am more
than happy to second this.

145

Thank you.

The President: Thank you very much indeed.
Mr Snowdon, I think you would like to speak.

150 **Mr Snowdon:** Yes. Of course, I full support this Item. Just a point of clarification, because I think
it has been released by the Good Governance, recently, that we will be moving to, potentially, a
new proposal for our governance system. Obviously this is a four-year term if these people are
successful at the end, that we are voting through at the moment. So how does that work with
your new system that you are proposing, when membership drops and the whole thing is
reworked, when these people are elected for a four-year term? You cannot take it away once they

155

are elected; they are duly elected to a four-year term. So I would just like some clarification about the proposals put out by the Good Governance; how they marry with this.

Thank you.

160 **The President:** Thank you.

Does anybody else wish to speak on this Item, before Mr Carter exercises his right of reply?

Then please, Mr Carter.

165 **Mr Carter:** Given the hypothetical nature of the question, it is very much we are governed by the States of Alderney Law, 2004, and so anybody elected this coming December is elected for four years.

And if I can just make one last point, it would be obviously to urge all Members to vote for this particular Proposition, i.e. the Ordinary Election will be held on Saturday 26th November, and the Plebiscite will be on Saturday 10th December.

170

The President: I am guessing that meets the approval of all the Members? Yes, thank you, Mr Greffier.

The Greffier: Marked as such, Mr President.

III. Questions and Reports – Five questions and no reports

Item III.

Three questions from Mr Snowdon for the Chairman of Policy and Finance Committee:

(1) Could the P&F Chairman update on the biodiversity public consultation currently taking place?

(2) Do we have any updates and impacts on the cost of living crisis, particularly energy costs for the island in the coming months?

(3) With the States of Alderney support for the event, would the Chairman like to express our thanks and praise to the new Alderney Week team for putting together the 'Greatest Show' theme which was a tribute to the late Ray Parkin (former States member) and agree strong transport links are critical for events like this?

Two questions from Mr Snowdon for the Chairman of General Services Committee:

(1) Can the GSC Chairman outline the current position with Bird Flu affecting bird stocks?

(2) Would the Chairman like to express his appreciation for the engineering involved in building the Alderney Breakwater as we mark the 175th Anniversary. Does his committee have any updates about the current conditions of the breakwater from Guernsey's Committee for the Environment & Infrastructure?

175 **The Greffier:** Item III is Questions and Reports, and we have received questions from Mr Snowdon, for the Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee.

**Biodiversity public consultation –
Update**

The President: Thank you. Mr Snowdon, would you like to put your first question, please?

180 **Mr Snowdon:** Thank you, President.
Could the P&F Chairman update on the biodiversity public consultation currently taking place?
Thank you, sir.

The President: Thank you. Mr Carter.

185 **Mr Carter:** Yes, the Biodiversity Strategy paper was presented to GSC at its July meeting, having
been served in advance to all Members, four Members attended that meeting and unanimously
agreed for its publication. The consultation started on 12th August, and it finishes on 23rd
190 September. There is a public drop-in session tomorrow, in the Anne French Room, from one till
six, and I hope as many people will contribute their thoughts to this strategy document as are
able.

And to reiterate, it is a strategy document, not a blueprint for law-making.

The President: Thank you.

195 Do you have a supplementary question, Mr Snowdon?

Mr Snowdon: I do, thank you, sir. Yes, thank you to Mr Carter for answering that question.

The Supplementary question is, would you agree that I do feel that we are losing some trust
and confidence in our community with a public consultation at the moment, and could you outline
200 what the changes would be that you are proposing, and the resources needed for those changes
if they are implemented? Thank you, sir.

The President: It was, in fact, two questions. (**Mr Snowdon:** wo questions, yes.) But you only
have to answer one, Mr Carter.

205

Mr Carter: No, I cannot, I am afraid, with regard to the first of your questions because obviously
I was not part of this, I cannot answer that, I am afraid.

The President: Does anybody else have a question for Mr Carter arising out of his reply to Mr
210 Snowdon?

Mr Roberts: Yes please, sir.

The President: Mr Roberts.

215

Mr Roberts: Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

Does the Chairman feel it is right to have an independent body, namely the Wildlife Trust
charity, registered in Guernsey, of whom he was still a director when last updated on 25th
October, in 2021, after the Island Plan was written, containing priority biodiversity plans within,
220 written by the Chairman before that date, now allowing that same charity to write Government
policy?

Mr Carter: I do not think I was a director in October 2021, but if you say I was, I was.

225 **Mr Roberts:** Point of order, sir. Point of correction, sir.

I have the Guernsey Register of Directors, sir. If you read that, the Guernsey Directors actually states that you are a director, in October 25th 2021, after you wrote the Island Plan, and that is –

The President: We have got the clarification.

230

Mr Roberts: Thank you, sir.

Mr Carter: No, I would not. That is why I have had nothing whatsoever to do with anything with regard to how it has been consulted on.

235

The President: Does anybody else have a question? Only one, unfortunately, Mr –

Mr Roberts: Sorry, sir. Point of correction. I believe you have sat around meetings, and we know you have.

240

Thank you, sir.

Mr Carter: I am sorry, sir, but I missed that question or comment, could it be repeated, please?

The President: I do not think so, no, because it is not another question.

245

Just for the avoidance of doubt – and it is not me being difficult here – the rule provides that a supplementary question can be asked by a Member to the person to whom the original question was put. So I do try and be as accommodating as I can, in order that we can get to the bottom of these issues. But I am still bound by the Rules of Procedure, and if there is to be a change to that arrangement, then as I have been saying for the last three years, that is within the gift of the elected Members.

250

So I simply apply the Rules of Procedure that have been fixed by the Policy and Finance Committee, and subsequently approved by the States. So that is, I hope, fairly clear. I know it is frustrating, but that is the rule.

255

Mr Snowdon?: Would you like the next question, sir?

The President: Yes, please.

Mr Snowdon: Again, to the Chairman of P&F, thank you, sir.

260

Mr Kelly: Excuse me, sir.

Ms Burgess: He had a question.

265

Mr Kelly: I thought we were still asking questions of Mr Carter, in relation to biodiversity.

The President: I did not realise anybody else wanted to ask him one.

Ms Burgess: He had his hand up.

270

Mr Kelly: I did indicate.

The President: Sorry, I did not see you. Please.

275

Mr Kelly: Thank you, sir.

Does Mr Carter accept the Biodiversity Draft Strategy submitted to all Members, discussed by four of the five General Services Members, because one was absent because he forgot to attend the meeting?

280 **Mr Roberts:** Point of correction, sir.

In July, I was very ill. And I was hospitalised, so I resent Mr Boyd's description of that.

The President: Well, I am sure in those circumstances, Mr Kelly might consider his position in making that.

285

Mr Kelly: Mr Kelly remembers the conversation the following day, sir, when Mr Roberts said to me, 'Why didn't you remind me?' That is my memory, that is confirmed –

Mr Roberts: I would have come but I was –

290

The President: Mr Roberts, please. I understand that these are important issues, but we have to maintain the decorum of the States of Alderney's Legislative Body. So if there are any further matters you want to take up with each other, by all means, do. But please do it outside this forum.

295 **Mr Kelly:** Very good, sir. Can I go back to my question, please?

The President: Yes, please.

Mr Kelly: Does Mr Carter agree that the Draft Strategy submitted to all Members, is purely a draft strategy, and following consultation, will be decided by the General Services Committee, not by any other organisation?

300

Mr Carter: Yes. *(Laughter)*

305 **Mr Kelly:** Thank you, sir.

Cost-of-living crisis – Updates and impacts

The President: Mr Snowdon.

Mr Snowdon: Would you like to go to the next one, sir?

310

The President: Next question, please.

Mr Snowdon: Thank you, sir. This is to the Chairman, thank you.

315 Do we have any updates and impacts on the cost-of-living crisis, particularly energy costs for the Island in the coming months? Thank you, and thank you to Mr Carter.

The President: Thank you. Mr Carter.

320 **Mr Carter:** Yes, this is obviously a very challenging area, as we watch the news every night, and we see issues that affect the UK in terms of the war in Ukraine, supply chain issues post-COVID, and manufacturing issues, and now an eight-day strike at Felixstowe, the biggest container port

in the UK. Now all of those factors will no doubt contribute to some degree to inflation, and as a result, increases in food costs and energy costs. And those two areas, specifically energy and food, weigh very heavily in the Alderney shopping basket, more so than in some areas of the UK. And a further variable that needs to be taken to account is obviously the lack of leadership in the UK at the moment, and what a new Prime Minister, on 6th September, will do.

Think tanks, the Bank of England and Citibank have all come up with effectively differing forecasts for the future with regard to inflation. The Bank of England, 13% in the first quarter of 2023. American Citibank, 21%. All very frightening.

But then again, predictions by economists are just that. They are predictions. And one would hope, though, that those predictions maybe are not as true as some. They also perhaps become self-fulfilling prophecies if said many times.

What I do see, though, is certainly what appears to be a change from what was viewed initially as a transitory spike, to one where we have inflation and perhaps the pressures on cost of living being somewhat longer. One positive piece of news is that food prices on the global stage, though they spiked and surged in February, according to the economists now, are back to those pre-Russian invasion levels. So that is some reassurance with regard to basic foods. However, we must be aware that every piece, practically every food item that comes into this Island comes in through transport, by sea, and hence the fuel has a pricing impact.

And however much we like to say that we are not connected to the issues that are being raised, we are. We are at the very end of the supply chain, we have no influence on the global issues that are actually causing these changes.

Now regarding energy, you will be aware that AEL have given relief regarding electricity pricing over the summer, with regard to the fuel cost relief component on bills, and they will continue to do so. What I can say is that P&F are in close contact with AEL, and has a commitment to work together to mitigate the challenges of increased energy costs.

One positive, though it may sound strange, is that because the Island's need and requirement for fuel oil is somewhat aperiodic, the worst of the energy spike costs was actually missed. We did not have that, so rather than potentially a 20p per litre increase in kerosene oil costs over the norm, ours was just a 2p increase, between the pre-Ukraine and the last shipment. So there is some smoothing there, which is very helpful. We cannot depend on that, though, I certainly see that.

Further meetings with AEL have been calendared to consider the fuel costs and how better to support those who may be in need regarding support for fuel oil this winter. As firm figures with regard to shipments can then be assessed. So there is a very clear need for the P&F Committee to work with AEL in terms of fuel prices and addressing fuel poverty, which could develop for some.

My personal view is that targeted relief is the way forward. That is always difficult, in terms of its mechanism, but it should be something that we do not shy away from, however difficult it is to do, with those underlying principles of compassion, fairness, and support for people. Now regarding support for increasing the cost of living, the fiscal union with Guernsey obviously has an influence, in that we are dependent, to some extent, on Guernsey initiatives in that area. Regarding mitigation of costs, I am sure that both Mr Roberts and Mr Snowdon, that you can put forward ideas and strategies to the States of Deliberation in Guernsey, to help us, as a Bailiwick and those people in need of support, across the Bailiwick, to face those challenges.

And those challenges are perhaps magnified here in Alderney, simply because, as I say, energy and food make up a much larger proportion of the buying power, or the needs, of the average Alderney citizen. We equally need to be quite careful with regard to Alderney centric initiatives, that we do not interfere with regard to any eligibility for public assistance. Because otherwise, that would obviously be deleterious to people. Likewise, we need to be sensitive in how we support people with regard to issues of confidentiality.

Hence, at this moment, I cannot give you accurate information on the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis, particularly energy costs over the coming months, as the number of variables is so

great. The effects on a micro-community like Alderney would not necessarily mirror the effects of a macroeconomic forecasting in the UK nor even, dare I say it, in Guernsey. There will be different pressures on individuals, depending on what energy source they use, and how they use their energy in their home. I would certainly commit to inform the public when those discussions have taken place in September, with AEL, as the best way forward.

And I am also assured that AEL will also be communicating directly with the public as to the way they see themselves helping support the public with this particular issue. This *is* a difficult time. It also perhaps illustrates the need for the Energy Group to continue its work in terms of trying to take the amount of renewable energy that contributes to our energy sources to a higher level than we currently have, as that would no doubt help in the future. That is my answer to your question.

Thank you.

The President: Thank you very much.
Supplementary question, Mr Snowdon?

Mr Snowdon: Yes, thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr Carter, for answering a very detailed question. Just to get to the punch of it a little bit, regarding AEL, I think Mr Carter agreed that we owe thanks to AEL, for the hard work they have done, but also that we do potentially know where we are at the current situation with the recent vote coming in, until November, and then November is when we will have to see where things go. But initial signs: bad situation but a positive situation for us at the moment. Would you not agree that, and hopefully a press release will be released soon to update our community on the current situation, and then ... the Member who will have to look into it.

Thank you.

Mr Carter: As I said, AEL will certainly be releasing information as to how they are addressing this issue, as soon as possible.

The President: Thank you. Does anybody else have a question?

The President: Mr Roberts.

Mr Roberts: Yes please, sir.

Energy and food bills continue to rise. Should Alderney stop wasting vast sums on pet projects, like constitutional change, unnecessary gun laws and now our biodiversity ordinance, and ring-fence this money for spends on people who are about to struggle within the community, and work towards reducing our deficit with Guernsey?

The President: Thank you. Mr Carter.

Mr Carter: Always an interesting debating point, as to what sort of laws you want to take forward, and one that I am very happy to engage with in debate. I will not say one way or the other.

The President: Does anybody else have a supplementary question? Then your next question, please, for Mr Carter.

**Alderney Week –
Thank you to the team; importance of strong transport links**

420 **Mr Snowdon:** Thank you, sir.

With the States of Alderney support for the event, would the Chairman like to express our thanks and praise to the new Alderney Week team for putting together the ‘Greatest Show’ theme, which was a tribute to the late Ray Parkin, former States Member, and agree strong transport links are crucial for events like this?

425 Thank you, sir.

The President: Mr Carter.

Mr Carter: Yes, delighted to. It is an absolutely excellent week and backing up the formal thanks
430 I sent to the team last week, for what was a tremendous week, and I think it was a real tonic to the Island, post-COVID. It really was the greatest show on Earth.

I hope that the team were encouraged by the response they had from both Islanders and visitors, in terms of the responses to each event, and the new innovations that they have brought in, which allow an annual event to evolve and make it something that people want to come back
435 to.

I am sure that Ray Parkin would have been proud of the week and seen it as very much a fitting tribute to himself, as Mr Alderney Week for those 27 years that he ran that week. And obviously, the States will continue to support the week, in terms of grant funding, and public works departments using the resources to support the setting up of differing activities for that week. I
440 know just how important it is to the economy, in terms of shops, restaurants, the hotels, tourism, the harbour, it really does make the year go well, and if we have had a good Alderney Week, then I think that successful positivity then rubs off, and it takes it through the Island for the rest of what will be, as we said in the previous question, not the greatest of winters.

You highlight the need for strong transport links, to enable those events to take place, and I
445 obviously would support that; the stronger, the better. Aurigny did support the week through increasing the number of rotations, and they have already been made aware of next year’s dates, so that they are, I hope, ready to plan to give extra rotations to bring more people in from both Guernsey and from the UK. And likewise, I would also like to say a big thank you to all those boat operators, who through their tremendous efforts have managed to bring many people across to
450 the Island, and equally, took them away again. But, like I say, the longer they were here, the more they spent. And I hope that, perhaps next year, the Economic Development Committee will look further at perhaps how, for the higher seasons, specifically Alderney Week, and the week beforehand that that capacity for sea transport may be increased further, to give just more opportunity for people to come to the Island, to enjoy what is, and I am sure will be, a tremendous
455 week in 2023.

Thank you.

The President: Thank you.

Anything to add to that, Mr Snowdon? By way of a question.

460

Mr Snowdon: Yes, of course, thank you sir.

Yes, thank you to Mr Carter for answering it. But would he agree that it is absolutely essential that we move to new sort of air transport links, because we do only have two planes? I do thank Aurigny, but would he agree it is absolutely crucial, now more than ever, that we do look at
465 probably the runway extension, and how important that is for futureproofing the Island?

I am sure you would agree, sir.

470 **Mr Carter:** Yes, I would agree that we need to continue to work with Guernsey, with Aurigny, to ensure that we have the best possible connectivity with both the UK and with Guernsey, and other places that will, I hope, want to come here or provide a place that they can come to.
Thank you.

The President: Anybody else have a question? Mr Roberts.

475 **Mr Roberts:** That was a wonderful Alderney Week, and I would love to take the opportunity to thank everybody for what they did, and everybody that was involved. I have got some friends that were involved in Alderney Week, and they are around here today. But the Alderney Blowers failed to come to Alderney this year because of lack of accommodation. Would he not agree that if the Old Connaught had been properly maintained it could have been used for events like Alderney
480 Week, to put people up and also urgently needed housing?
Thank you, sir.

The President: Thank you. Mr Carter.

485 **Mr Carter:** I am sure it could be used for lots of different things, and that is still being debated.
Thank you.

The President: Anybody else have a question for Mr Carter? In that case, I think, we are now moving on to your questions to Mr Kelly.

**Bird flu –
Current position regarding bird stocks**

490 **Mr Snowdon:** Thank you, sir. Ready?

The President: Yes please.

495 **Mr Snowdon:** Thank you. Can the GSC Chairman outline the current position with bird flu affecting bird stocks? Thank you, sir.

The President: Mr Kelly.

500 **Mr Kelly:** Thank you, sir, colleagues.

On Monday, acting on the advice of the States Veterinary Officer, the General Services Committee held an emergency meeting, at which we invoked legal notices to declare the Island an avian influenza infected area; effectively, closing down the community to the movement of domestic birds, on- or off-Island. This is the latest in a series of meetings I have chaired since the disease was first suspected, involving Ms Burgess, representatives of the Wildlife Trust, the Bird
505 Observatory, the States Vet and his assistant, and public works, and Mrs Kathy Kissick, a veterinary nurse who has provided both theoretical and practical assistance over the last few weeks. We also issued a notice of serious threat to animal health, under a 2002 Ordinance, following a case of bird flu that was discovered in a backyard flock on the Island. Unfortunately, in this case, the whole flock had to be culled.

510 The notice has been issued to protect other poultry flocks, the commercial poultry, wild birds, birds of prey, and to mitigate the risk to Alderney's local gannet colonies, which make up 2% of the world's population of such gannets. Gannets and gulls are already being affected in large

numbers; in Alderney, we are particularly concerned for the future of the northern gannet colonies, situated at Ortac and Les Etacs. And we are already seeing impacts of this deadly disease.

515 And by invoking the Animal Health Order, 2022, no poultry or other birds can be imported or exported from Alderney, including those who book shipping in advance. We have issued an update and guidance to all poultry owners, which emphasises that all poultry must be contained in an area that prevents them from coming in contact with other poultry, and the action we have taken is important, but it does play second fiddle to the helpful cooperation we have received from
520 poultry owners and the general public. I am equally grateful to the invaluable assistance given to the States and General Services Committee by the people and organisations I mentioned at the start of my answers.

The President: Thank you. Mr Snowdon.

525

Mr Snowdon: Thank you to Mr Kelly for the very detailed answer, I really appreciated it.

Just one query I had, really was regarding to other domestic birds. If they are affected and they get the bird flu stuff, is there a compensation scheme for those affected owners, and is that from Alderney, or is that from Guernsey, for the people that may be trying for compensation for sadly
530 losing their birds?

Thank you.

Mr Kelly: If we need to cull any live birds, then there is a compensation scheme, and that will come from the States of Alderney.

535

The President: Anybody else have a supplementary question?

Mr Roberts: A small one, sir.

540

The President: Yes, Mr Roberts, please.

Mr Roberts: Just a friendly one, Mr Kelly. Could the Chairman update on what the bird flu symptoms are? Because a lot of people do not have the internet, they cannot go on the States website, to ask these sort of questions. And they would not know if they found a bird in a bad
545 condition or anything. What are those symptoms, and how do they manifest themselves?

Thank you.

Mr Kelly: Forgive me, sir, forgive me, colleagues, not being a veterinary person I can only go by the guidance given to me by the States Vet yesterday, and he said it is fairly obvious, because they
550 will be having respiratory problems.

I cannot go deeper than that, sir. If they are having trouble breathing, then call the number provided on the website, sir.

The President: Thank you.

555

Anybody else have a question? No? Then your second question, please, Mr Snowdon.

**Alderney Breakwater –
Update on current condition**

Mr Snowdon: Thank you, sir.

560 Would the Chairman like to express his thanks and appreciation for the engineering involved in building the Alderney Breakwater as we mark the 175th anniversary. Does his Committee have any updates about the current condition of the Breakwater, from Guernsey's Committee for Environment & Infrastructure?

Thank you, sir.

Mr Kelly: Thank you, sir.

565 The then 1,430-metre-long breakwater, which is part of the proposed New Bray Harbour, was built by an engineer called Thomas Jackson, who previously built for railways and canals. Its completion date, which I believe is usually the date that celebrations are made, was in fact 1864, making this its 158th year. However, I do accept that it started in 1847 and therefore this would be the 175th anniversary of when it commenced, rather than when it was completed. It is indeed
570 an iconic structure, and Alderney Breakwater has contributed to engineers' knowledge of how these structures can be laid, or behave.

It has been the subject of many studies, including papers presented to the Institute of Chartered Engineers, and is a testimony to the hard work and indeed, lives lost, in the building of the Breakwater. And we should be grateful to those who put the work in, and indeed lost their
575 lives.

Unfortunately, in relation to the question itself, I am unable to answer it, regarding any updates about the current conditions from the Committee for Environment and Infrastructure, as I am awaiting a reply, as I believe, is Mr Carter, who prior to Mr Snowdon's question, also asked for an update. I have spoken to our Chief Executive, who will take up the cudgel for me, and try and get
580 an answer and I will report it back to Members.

The President: Thank you. Mr Snowdon, supplementary question?

Mr Snowdon: Yes sir, thank you sir. Just thanking Mr Kelly for answering that one.

585 I think Mrs Paris, when she was GSC Chairman, was looking at some sort of report with Guernsey, but I just wondered where that got to. The question I wanted to ask is that you have got this marine plan, or whatever it is from General Services, going out at the moment, and would you agree that whatever happens with that plan, the Breakwater is absolutely key, basically, to any ideas or infrastructure marina projects, and that Breakwater is absolutely crucial for any
590 developments that *may* take place in the future and I cannot see any developments happening without guarantee of that Breakwater is at that length. Would you agree?

Thank you, sir.

Mr Kelly: I think the simple answer is, sir, yes, I would agree.

595

The President: I suspected as much.

Mr Kelly: Thank you, sir.

600 **The President:** Does anybody else ---

Mr Roberts: Just one little one, sir.

The President: Yes.

605

Mr Roberts: If you do not mind, sir.

The President: Mr Roberts.

610 **Mr Roberts:** Thank you.

It is another friendly question. A little while ago, there was a hole in the back of the Breakwater, towards the end, about three-quarters of the way along. Do you know, Mr Kelly, if this has been repaired?

615 Guernsey have done a fantastic job, but do you know if that fissure that goes along the side there, if that has been repaired, or is it still in existence?

Mr Kelly: Again, a succinct answer is no, I do not know. As Members will be aware, the Breakwater is the responsibility of the States of Guernsey, as exhibited by the lack of response I have had from them, in relation to its current condition. But as soon as I get a reply, or Mr Carter gets a reply, courtesy of Ms Jones, we will let Members know.

620

The President: Does anybody else have a supplementary question for Mr Kelly? Well, that being the case, I think that concludes the business for this afternoon. So, Mr Greffier, would you please close the Meeting.

PRAYERS

The Greffier

The Assembly adjourned at 3.09 p.m.