

STATES OF JERSEY



MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT: ESTABLISHMENT OF MINISTERIAL BOARDS AND REVISED SYSTEM OF SCRUTINY (P.120/2010) – AMENDMENT

**Lodged au Greffe on 23rd September 2010
by Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire of St. Helier**

STATES GREFFE

MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT: ESTABLISHMENT OF MINISTERIAL
BOARDS AND REVISED SYSTEM OF SCRUTINY (P.120/2010) –
AMENDMENT

PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (a)(iv) –

After the words “with the Boards operating in accordance with the procedures set out in Annex 1 to Appendix 1” insert the words –

“except that in the said Annex 1, at the end of the third paragraph under the heading ‘Delegation of Functions’, after the sentence ending ‘individual schools.’ there shall be inserted the words ‘Board members exercising delegated functions shall be referred to as ‘Members with special responsibility for X.’ ”

DEPUTY P.V.F. LE CLAIRE OF ST. HELIER

REPORT

With the transition to a new form of government comes the opportunity, as set out by Senator Breckon, to change the way we are doing things to a way that is more inclusive. Inclusivity is spoken of throughout the report, and the working party acknowledge these sentiments in other bodies of work. In my opinion inclusivity, which is sorely needed, would be made better by including responsibility and accountability. I would like to see a time when elected members with an interest in a subject had real opportunities to take ownership of them in a way that would recognise their contributions to public life. This would also enable the public to hold individual politicians to account for failings or poor decisions taken by the member which would otherwise have to be borne by the Minister and the Board, perhaps heroically but as has been seen historically, something akin to a noble but futile gesture. It never has satisfied the public's desire for accountability as we see time and time again. I would like the Board member to be known as 'Member with special responsibility for: X, Y and Z'.

By way of example, the Minister for Health and Social Services might have a Board of 4 members. One might be given special lead on developing adoption issues. That member would be known as 'Member with special responsibility for adoption matters'.

I am sure that the Privileges and Procedures Committee, if it is in agreement, can consider the fine detail in the round.

In agreeing to this, it would become clear to the public what the individual was assigned to work on in addition to their other duties. I have been often asked what it was I was in charge of when away on States business or indeed at home. Working previously as a Committee member and now as a backbencher out of the Executive, I can say it is a challenging question to satisfy. Defining the role in this way, however, would not only make that much easier to answer, but it would go further than that. It would enable officers to work with members with the knowledge that there was a definite sanction by the States for them to do so with that member, without worrying about whether they should be doing so or not. It would allow the member to act upon issues or inform members of the Board about factors in their portfolios in a way that they could progress matters much faster than if they were left to drift, as things sometimes inevitably are. It would also, I hope, enable the media to address their concerns to a member who was not only authorised to speak on matters that they had been delegated, but also answer questions put to them in an authoritative, informative and accountable way.

Financial and manpower implications

There are no additional financial or manpower implications for the States arising from this amendment.