

STATES OF JERSEY



PROPOSED COMMON STRATEGIC POLICY 2018–22 (P.110/2018): TENTH AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 20th November 2018
by the Connétable of St. Helier

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSED COMMON STRATEGIC POLICY 2018–22 (P.110/2018):
TENTH AMENDMENT

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After the words “Appendix to this Proposition” insert the words “, except that on page 22 of the Appendix to the Proposed Common Strategic Policy 2018–22 (“**4 Ongoing initiatives**”), in the section headed “**A States Assembly and Council of Ministers that works together for the common good**”, after the words “consultation with the States Assembly”, to insert a new paragraph worded as follows: “We will work to achieve voter equity and the reform of Jersey’s legislature”.”.

CONNÉTABLE OF ST. HELIER

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

in accordance with Article 18(2)(e) of the States of Jersey Law 2005, to approve the statement of the Common Strategic Policy of the Council of Ministers as set out in the Appendix to this Proposition, except that on page 22 of the Appendix to the Proposed Common Strategic Policy 2018–22 (“**4 Ongoing initiatives**”), in the section headed “**A States Assembly and Council of Ministers that works together for the common good**”, after the words “consultation with the States Assembly”, to insert a new paragraph worded as follows: “We will work to achieve voter equity and the reform of Jersey’s legislature”.

REPORT

There is no reference in the Common Strategic Policy (“CSP”) to the longstanding issues surrounding the composition of the States Assembly, and I believe that there should be, as it is surely essential that the Island has a fully modern and democratic parliament by the end of the CSP period.

This subject has been extensively discussed, debated, consulted upon and ‘kicked into the long grass’, although there is every indication that the new Privileges and Procedures Committee will bring forward reforms that are achievable before the next General Election. Of particular concern to me, as Constable of the most populous parish, is voter equity. When I last questioned the Chief Minister about this, he was uncomfortable with the term I used to describe our electoral system as ‘gerrymandered’. Yet when the States have repeatedly refused to implement changes that will ensure every voter in Jersey has the same political power, regardless of the Parish in which they live, this situation is surely no different from the kind of electoral boundary changes that took place in bygone centuries. Put simply, a voter in St. Mary has more political influence at the ballot box when they vote for their Constable than does a voter in St. Helier; and there are other parts of the Island that are gerrymandered.

There are other reforms which are important, such as the separation of the legislature and judiciary, the introduction of electronic voting, the need for an electoral office to promote engagement in the democratic process, and so on; but I believe voter equity is a vital fairness that the States needs to be determined to achieve if our parliament is to be properly respected both at home and abroad.

Financial and manpower implications

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