

STATES OF JERSEY



DIVERSITY WORKING GROUP (P.118/2019): AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 3rd March 2020
by Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour

STATES GREFFE

DIVERSITY WORKING GROUP (P.118/2019): AMENDMENT

1 PAGE 2 –

Before the words “to request” insert the term “(a)” and for the words “to set up a working group of States Members (both Executive and Non-Executive) to consider the” substitute the words “to provide the necessary officer assistance to the Diversity Forum to consider the development and options for”.

2 PAGE 2 –

At the end insert the following new paragraph –

- “(b) to request the Council of Ministers to –
 - (i) examine the merits of creating associate board member positions on the boards of States’ arm’s-length bodies;
 - (ii) examine the merits of creating work shadowing opportunities at a senior level in States’ arm’s-length bodies; and
 - (iii) take the necessary steps within the next 6 months to give effect to proposals for such associate board member and work shadowing opportunities;”.

3 PAGE 2 –

At the end insert the following new paragraph –

- “(c) to request the Council of Ministers to mandate the creation of a central website, within one year of the adoption of this proposition, which contains relevant information for individuals seeking to serve on States-appointed boards, tribunals, panels and related bodies;”.

4 PAGE 2 –

At the end insert the following new paragraphs –

- “(d) to request the Privileges and Procedures Committee to make available a programme of unconscious bias training for States Members within the next 6 months;
- (e) to request the Chief Minister to examine within the next 6 months whether it should be mandatory for all Ministers and Assistant Ministers to undertake unconscious bias training.”.

DEPUTY J.M. MAÇON OF ST. SAVIOUR

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

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

- (a) to request the Council of Ministers to provide the necessary officer assistance to the Diversity Forum to consider the development and options for implementation of policies which proactively encourage greater diversity (in respect of, for example, sexual orientation; race/nationality; class; disability; age and gender) in applicants wishing to sit on various States-owned or funded Boards and arm's-length bodies;
- (b) to request the Council of Ministers to –
 - (i) examine the merits of creating associate board member positions on the boards of States' arm's-length bodies;
 - (ii) examine the merits of creating work shadowing opportunities at a senior level in States' arm's-length bodies; and
 - (iii) take the necessary steps within the next 6 months to give effect to proposals for such associate board member and work shadowing opportunities;
- (c) to request the Council of Ministers to mandate the creation of a central website, within one year of the adoption of this proposition, which contains relevant information for individuals seeking to serve on States-appointed boards, tribunals, panels and related bodies;
- (d) to request the Privileges and Procedures Committee to make available a programme of unconscious bias training for States Members within the next 6 months;
- (e) to request the Chief Minister to examine within the next 6 months whether it should be mandatory for all Ministers and Assistant Ministers to undertake unconscious bias training.

REPORT

Part 1

I am thankful for the time colleagues have given to help me refine my thoughts on this proposition, and given the [comments](#) of PPC and the Diversity Forum, I have amended [my proposition](#) to show the advice.

What I am asking for is officer support from the executive side to help develop further proposals from those who would be involved in the process, i.e. Human Resources, IT and Treasury.

The Diversity Forum has agreed that this is a workstream worth developing, which I would lead.

PPC Comments

“The Privileges and Procedures Committee (“PPC”) welcomes Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour’s initiative to examine ways of improving the diversity of States-owned and funded Boards and Arm’s-Length Bodies. However, the Committee questions the desirability of establishing a new working group at a time when many Members feel over-committed with existing Scrutiny Panels, Committees, Policy Development Boards and Political Oversight Groups. Earlier this year, PPC established the Diversity Forum as a Sub-Committee of PPC, and one of its aims is to “support the Government to achieve its aim of removing barriers and promoting inclusion and equal opportunity for all”. Deputy Maçon’s initiative lies within the remit of the Diversity Forum and the Forum would be happy to take on this work, reporting its conclusions directly to the Council of Ministers. Therefore, if this Proposition is adopted, PPC invites the Council of Ministers to commission the Diversity Forum to carry out the review.”

Diversity Forum Draft Minute

“Proposition: Diversity Working Group (P.118/2019): possible Diversity Forum response

Deputy Maçon said he was undertaking further work on his proposition and might seek to amend it. The key thing was to have government buy-in, including officer support, for the concept of greater diversity on States boards and related organisations. Issues he was considering including whether there could be a published pipeline so people could see future vacancies, clarity about the work involved with different appointments, and whether bodies should include a community representative, as a pathway into such positions. Deputy Maçon withdrew so that the Forum could discuss the matter further. Members broadly supported Deputy Maçon’s proposition and the further work he was now considering. The Forum agreed that it was content for PPC to comment on the proposition to the effect that the Forum should be the working party appointed to work on the matter, should this be the Council of Ministers’ preference.”

Part 2

In discussion with the Chair of the Appointments Commission, it was brought to my attention that other jurisdictions have established paid ‘Associate’ board members, these being effectively trainee or junior positions. This is a pathway that can allow more diverse candidates depending on how the criteria are designed, and can be more attractive than a full membership post, as they can have a shorter term whilst still gaining the experience and exposure.

This, along with shadowing schemes, should be considered.

As a backbencher, I can only go so far into designing exactly how this would work, and it does need to be thought through properly. I would hope that these positions would be promoted to attract a wider reflection of the community, in particular where technical qualifications are not required, without sacrificing the merit of any individual, which can be argued to be one of the weaknesses of a quota system.

I would expect these posts to be funded by the various arm’s-length bodies as part of their corporate social responsibility.

Part 3

Knowledge is power and, whilst the information for various positions is there, it is not easy to find, so what we need is a central point where all this information is held. This can be done on the gov.je website, provided that the existing templates are used.

I would suggest that this type of information should be included –

- The commencement of the appointment and its duration
- What skills and other requirements are needed for these posts
- The expected time commitment / how regularly they meet
- A summary from the body explaining the type of work to be undertaken
- The body’s terms of reference
- What remuneration is available.

Part 4

Unconscious (or implicit) biases are learned stereotypes that are automatic, unintentional, deeply ingrained, universal, and able to influence behaviour. Unconscious bias training programs are designed to expose people to their unconscious biases, provide tools to adjust automatic patterns of thinking, and ultimately eliminate discriminatory behaviours.

It seems to me that given the various roles that States Members fulfil, and as part of our continuous professional development, such training should be offered to Members.

I should comment that the Council of Ministers has adopted this in the Common Strategic Policy 2018–22 ([R.11/2019](#)), as on page 21 it is stated –

“We will nurture a diverse and inclusive society

We are a diverse community made up of different nationalities, ages and genders. Sometimes these differences act as barriers to participating in society. As a Government we will work to remove barriers and promote inclusion and equal opportunity for all. This includes supporting inclusive communities, encouraging greater diversity in boardrooms and in the Assembly, and ensuring people with disabilities and older people are able to better participate in society.”

Therefore, the States Assembly should begin with itself and demonstrate leadership in this area, and training is one way to do this.

Financial and manpower implications

In terms of the cost of unconscious bias training, I’m advised that one could do 3 workshops covering all States Members for £5,500. That would be a one-off cost, repeatable after each election.

IT have advised that, provided the established templates are used, costs can be met from within the department.

The Associate board member position would be met by the arm’s-length bodies as they do for the current boards that oversee them.

I am sure that given the commitment in the Common Strategic Policy 2018–22, resources can be made available within departmental budgets.