

Diversity Forum #10 and #11

04 February 2021

11:13

Privileges and Procedures Committee: Diversity Forum

Meeting 10: 26 January 2021

Members present: Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chair), Senator K.L. Moore, Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville, Deputy K. F. Morel of St. Lawrence, Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier, Deputy J.H. Perchard of St. Saviour, Deputy K. Pamplin of St. Saviour and Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier.

Senator I.J. Gorst and Senator S.Y. Mézec gave apologies.

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 8 December 2020 were approved.

The Chair noted that, although the Dean and the Bailiff had been receptive to the concept of a non-religious ceremony to mark the start of the States year, nothing had been organised before the meeting on 19 January because of Covid-19 restrictions. It was hoped to return to this matter at the start of 2022.

2. Achieving candidate diversity: communications campaign

The Forum welcomed Jenny O'Brien, Head of Digital and Public Engagement, States Greffe, to discuss her paper on a campaign to encourage a more diverse range of candidates to stand at the 2022 election.

The paper proposed that the objectives of the campaign would be to generate interest from a diverse range of Islanders in standing for election in 2022, giving thought to:

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Socioeconomic
- Profession/qualifications

In addition it would seek to increase the diversity of candidates standing for election in 2022 and beyond.

The Forum agreed to add "religion" and "carer status" to the list of factors listed above and to amend "ethnicity" to "ethnic origin/nationality". It noted that care would need to be taken to ensure that any work to encourage people to stand for election took account of the law on who could stand, which currently stipulated that candidates must be British nationals.

The Forum agreed the campaign's key messages:

- Why diversity in the States Assembly is so important for the Island
- YOU could be an effective States Member and make a difference to the lives of Islanders

- A programme of support is available to help you on your journey to standing

Ms O'Brien said that the Greffe would develop a broad-based campaign to encourage people to stand and to assist candidates, but would retain a neutral stance. These messages would come from the Forum, adding some political elements, around encouraging particular types of people to come forward as candidates, which would not be appropriate for the Greffe to articulate.

In terms of the proposed 'calls to action' the Forum's attention was drawn to the proposal that potential candidates register their interest online with the Greffe, so that they could be targeted with information and respond to requests for feedback. This would involve adding new functionality to the vote.je website as well as updating the site ready for the election.

The paper set out a number of potential groups comprising the audience for the campaign. Ms O'Brien said that employees of the States of Jersey were particularly important as the States was such a large employer and staff were relatively easy to reach.

Partnership working would be important in order to maximise the reach of campaign messages. The following partners were proposed:

- Jersey Community Relations Trust
- Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, e.g. CI Pride
- The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP)
- Parishes
- PPC Educational Awareness Sub-Committee

The Greffe would develop a toolkit of resources which could be used by partners. This would include digital, video and paper-based resources. Videos would be hosted on the Assembly's YouTube channel and would be subtitled in those languages other than English spoken in the Island. Consideration would be given to how to manage negative reaction on social media from 'trolls'. The paper proposed the creation of videos of States Members, talking about what motivated them to stand and what they had achieved. Forum Members expressed concerns about any video content which might be regarded as promoting particular Members. A better option might be to film constituents talking about how they had been assisted by a States Member, without saying which Member has assisted. Ms O'Brien agreed to consider this sensitivity in planning for the creation of video content.

In response to questions about the policies of the States Employment board, or other employers, on employees standing for election, Ms O'Brien suggested that this could be covered in FAQ resources or webinars with prospective candidates.

The paper also covered a framework for evaluation and costs. The latter could be mitigated by involving students in filming videos, which could benefit them and the Assembly in terms of reputational impact. However, this would be difficult at present because of Covid restrictions.

Subject to its various amendments and comments, the Forum endorsed the campaign, thanked Ms O'Brien for her work, and agreed that the work should commence immediately with the preparation of a public launch for the campaign during February.

3. Achieving candidate diversity: follow-up to briefing from Professors Childs and Dittmar

Forum Members expressed their thanks to Professors Childs and Dittmar for their seminar with States Members earlier in the month. The Greffier undertook to make the recording available to all Members on Teams. Members expressed a desire for more briefings and seminars of this sort, taking advantage of video technology to hear from experts from across the world and utilising programmes organised by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

4. Forum membership and election of vice-chair

The Chair said she would be contacting the Constables to ask if one would join the Forum. She also asked for expressions of interest in the role of vice-chair, with a view to the role being filled at the next meeting.

5. Schedule of future meetings

The Forum agreed to the Chair's proposal to meet every two months in 2021. The Greffier undertook to circulate dates.

6. Any other business

Deputy Gardiner withdrew in order for the Forum to discuss whether to propose comments for PPC to present to the Assembly on her proposition, P.2/2021 "'Life in Jersey' Test and Eligibility for Election". The Forum agreed to propose comments drawing attention to the results of the 2018 Comres opinion poll, which showed that there are a significant number of people from Portuguese and some other European backgrounds who are interested in politics in Jersey but do not vote. The Greffier was asked to prepare a draft comment for the Forum to consider.

Privileges and Procedures Committee: Diversity Forum

Meeting 11: 1 February 2021

Members present: Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chair), Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville, Deputy K. F. Morel of St. Lawrence, Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier, and Deputy K. Pamplin of St. Saviour.

1. "'Life in Jersey' Test and Eligibility for Election" (P.2/2021)

With reference to its minute item 6 of meeting 10 (16 January 2021), the Forum agreed a draft comments paper on P.2/2021, for transmission to PPC with a request for the comments to be presented to the States. The Deputy of Grouville dissented from this decision.