

## **5.1 Deputy S.C. Ferguson (Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee) regarding the sale of land at Howard Davis Farm:**

P.68 of 2006 was lodged on 6th of June 2006 and referred to the Public Accounts Committee for a report. The Public Accounts Committee (P.A.C.) intended that the report would have been made available to States' Members prior to today - 18th July 2006 - in time for the proposed debate. However, this has not been possible within the time-scale allowed. The draft report has only recently been sent to Property Holdings for their comment. P.A.C. wishes to ensure that there are no errors of fact or interpretation and that these must be addressed prior to publication. The P.A.C. has also recently forwarded the report to the Comptroller and Auditor General seeking his views on the subject. It may be of assistance to the Assembly to note that Property Holdings have indicated that there is an error in the penultimate paragraph of the report on P.68 of 2006. The report states that the purchase is: "At a fair but fully commercial open market value." However, it has been suggested that this should read: "At a fair and proper price." I should emphasise that the P.A.C. supports the dairy industry and recognises that it is essential to Jersey's cultural heritage. It also recognises the need for the dairy to become more efficient and that significant efficiencies have already been made in the industry. The P.A.C. considers that if additional assistance needs to be provided to the dairy industry, it should be in a regulated transparent format. It should not be in the form of what could be construed as preferential site provision. The P.A.C. apologises to the Assembly for this delay and asks for its forbearance in order that this report will be of real assistance to Members in the forthcoming debate. Thank you, Sir.