

**STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY THE CHIEF MINISTER
ON TUESDAY 12th MARCH 2019**

**Update on cooperation between the Government of Jersey and the
Crown Dependencies of Guernsey and the Isle of Man**

As the Assembly will be aware, on Monday 4 March several amendments to the U.K.'s Financial Services (Implementation of Legislation) Bill were due for debate in the House of Commons.

Those amendments, if passed, would have attempted to legislate directly for Jersey and the other Crown Dependencies, in an area of domestic competence and contrary to our centuries-old constitutional relationship with the United Kingdom.

In response, I and the Chief Ministers of Guernsey and the Isle of Man, met in our Jersey London office to engage with U.K. Ministers and parliamentarians on the progress of the Bill and to challenge those amendments.

Whilst I am aware that the Minister for External Relations will be addressing the Assembly separately on this matter, I want to emphasise the value I saw in working with our Crown Dependency colleagues when facing this threat to our domestic autonomy.

When the representatives of the Crown Dependencies met on Monday in London, we had already agreed a common position and developed a clear strategy, and were then able to issue a joint statement.

Our arguments were made stronger and our reasons clearer by speaking with one voice.

We were able to cover more ground than we would have as one Island; meeting with senior U.K. Ministers and representatives of parties across the political spectrum.

And we were able to make our constitutional position clear. We are not represented in the U.K. Parliament, and it is a constitutional rule that the U.K. does not legislate for the Crown Dependencies on domestic matters without our consent.

Equally, we were able to demonstrate that all the Crown Dependencies are committed to the highest standards of financial services regulation and transparency.

Our jurisdictions are parties to the Exchange of Notes for Beneficial Ownership with the U.K. and are committed to the aim of exchanging adequate, accurate and current information on beneficial ownership to help combat tax evasion, money laundering and corruption.

This collaborative approach between our three Islands reflects a position that has developed exponentially in the last five years.

Whilst all three Crown Dependencies are represented in the British-Irish Council, and have worked collaboratively on discrete projects, our cooperation has deepened and broadened as we have faced common external threats.

The value of that cooperation has been demonstrated when dealing with the E.U. Code of Conduct Group on Business Taxation, in Brexit preparations, and in facing calls for public registers on beneficial ownership.

As we develop our international identity, I see increased value and greater structure to that cooperation.

With Guernsey, it began with the establishment of the Channel Islands Brussels Office and the Bureau des Iles Anglo-Normandes.

We now have in place a clear pathway to pan-Channel Island cooperation, following the establishment of the Channel Islands Political Oversight Board in June 2018.

That Board was established under the joint chairmanship of both Islands' Chief Ministers, to support ongoing cooperation between our public administrations, and to find and support new partnership opportunities to improve our public services and reduce costs to taxpayers.

It would be naïve to deny that our two islands have not always worked effectively towards a common goal in the past. This is because we haven't put political weight behind our partnership and officials have defaulted to their respective silos.

This new initiative is different, as it will set specific targets against both Islands' government business plans, financial plans and transformation programmes.

It is not only championed by both myself and Deputy St Pier, but also has the full commitment of our Ministerial colleagues and public service leaders. We're determined to work together to deliver better services at better value for money for our Islanders.

We acknowledged early in the process that a silo mentality has existed across, and within, both islands on issues such as procurement, IT and policy development.

We also acknowledged that a change in mind-set is needed so that both Jersey and Guernsey can look to cooperate rather than pursue an insular approach.

We are already exploring joint working on policy development, including through joint commissioning of external experts, secondments of policy officials between islands, joint teams, joint island community engagement, joint performance measures and the potential for a joint graduate programme with placements in both islands.

We are exploring a formal partnership for public sector procurement, including contract and supplier management, to improve value for money and reduce costs.

We have made a commitment to sharing data and analytics.

And, we are seeing meaningful progress towards our goals.

In December 2018, Jersey's Department of Health and Community Services and Guernsey's Committee for Health & Social Care signed a Memorandum of Understanding which formalises the Islands' agreement to work together on health issues.

A Channel Islands Strategic Partnership Board for Health and Care is being established to maximise opportunities to support common aims and ambitions.

Our two health authorities are already working together on procurement & resource management, regulation and professional liaison & mutual support. This has involved visits from the Chief Nurses, Medical Directors, safeguarding teams, digital teams, procurement teams, hospital modernisation teams, and public health teams.

Also in December, a Channel Islands Joint Working Group for law enforcement, emergency services and criminal justice was established so that representatives from Jersey and Guernsey can identify areas in which the Islands can collaborate.

I know that our Islands cannot change entrenched ways of working overnight. Nor can we expect to change the public view of joint working without clear evidence that it is effective and producing the efficiencies promised. This can only come with time.

Looking forward, all three Crown Dependencies face significant international challenges – whether from Brexit, cybercrime, or threats to our financial services industries.

As a key piece of Brexit legislation, the U.K. Financial Services Bill will return to the House of Commons. The Speaker has made clear that he will allow the amendments already tabled to be debated.

The Crown Dependencies can face all of these challenges separately, and rely on the relative strength of our individual representations. Or we can speak with one voice and one message: consistent and clear.

I believe the choice is obvious.

I make a commitment to the Assembly that I will continue to engage proactively with our colleagues in the Crown Dependencies to meet the collective challenges we face, and to pursue further cooperation between our Islands.