



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

OF CHIEF PLEAS

OF THE

ISLAND OF SARK

HANSARD

Sark, Thursday, 7th May 2020

*All published Official Reports can be found on the
official Island of Sark Chief Pleas website www.sarkgov.co.uk*

Volume 6, No. 6

*Published by The Greffier of Sark, La Chasse Marette,
Sark, GY10 1SF. © Chief Pleas of Sark, 2020*

Present:

Seigneur

Maj. C M Beaumont Esq.

Speaker of Chief Pleas

Lt. Col. R J Guille, MBE Esq.*

Greffier

Mr T J Hamon*

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor

Vice Admiral Sir Ian Corder KBE, CB

Conseillers:

Alan Blythe
Peter La Trobe-Bateman
Christopher Nightingale
Anthony Ventress*
Paul Williams
Sandra Williams
Helen Plummer

Philip Long
John Guille
Christopher Drillot
William Raymond
Amanda de Carteret
Simon Couldridge
Frank Makepeace

*Note: All those other than officers/members whose names are marked with an * attended the Easter Meeting remotely, due to the Covid-19 pandemic precautions.*

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Extraordinary Meeting of Chief Pleas

Chief Pleas met at 7.04 p.m.

[THE SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

PRAYER

The Greffier

ROLL CALL

The Greffier

The Greffier: There are 14 Conseillers, the Seigneur and the Speaker of Chief Pleas present.

Welcome to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor

The Speaker: Thank you. Welcome to this very short-notice Meeting. At least we have not got far to go, so you are a captive audience, really, for very short-notice Chief Pleas. I would like to welcome the Lieutenant Governor to this remote Meeting, who is listening in to us. Welcome sir.

There are no apologies.

Tribute to retiring Bailiff of Guernsey – Statement by the Speaker

The Speaker: I would like to make a statement with regard to the retiring Bailiff. The current Bailiff of Guernsey, Sir Richard Collas, retires as Bailiff on Monday, 11th May, with his successor Richard McMahon, being sworn into office at 2.30 p.m. on the same day. The new Deputy Bailiff, Jessica Roland, is the first female appointed to that role and she will be sworn in on Monday also.

Richard Collas was appointed as Deputy Bailiff, straight from private practice, in 2005 and was then appointed Bailiff in 2012. He was knighted in June 2014. Sir Richard has always been a good friend to Sark and has taken a keen interest in the Seneschal's Court and has been of great assistance to the current Seneschal and to me in that role previously.

He has always been available to the Speaker and Seneschal when they have technical issues to resolve. He has also been a great supporter of our Liberation Day activities and has joined in with the Chelsea Pensioners and Gurkhas at every occasion that he could manage. He considered our 70th Anniversary celebrations to have been exceptional and is most disappointed that he cannot attend this year due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, which has meant the cancellation of most of the activities both in Guernsey and Sark.

I am sure that we will see Sir Richard on Sark many times in the future, after the lockdown ends. On behalf of Chief Pleas, I would like to wish Sir Richard well in his future endeavours.

Procedural

- 25 **The Speaker:** I will be making a statement at the next time we meet, a eulogy for Lawrence 'Bunter' Roberts, who died a very short time ago, who was many things in Sark and he finished his term in Government as a Deputy Seneschal and I shall be making a eulogy at the next Meeting.

Business of the Day

1. Matters arising from the Extraordinary Meeting on 19th March 2020

- 30 **The Speaker:** We will now move onto the matters arising from the Extraordinary Meeting held on 19th March 2020? If anybody wishes to ask anything on those could they speak up?

Questions not related to the Business of the Day – None

The Speaker: No. In that case we will move to agenda item 2, questions not related to the Business of the Day and there are none.

2. Isle of Sark Shipping Company – Policy & Finance Committee Report considered – Propositions carried

To consider a Report with Propositions from the Policy & Finance Committee entitled 'The Isle of Sark Shipping Company Limited – Funding Requirement'.

Proposition 1:

That Chief Pleas authorise the Policy & Finance Committee to provide funds not exceeding £30,000 (Thirty Thousand Pounds Only) to the Isle of Sark Shipping Company Limited, this amount to be added to the existing loan and under the same terms and conditions. If the total wages and salaries paid on behalf of the company prior to 31st May 2020 is less than £30k then the balance will be paid over.

Proposition 2:

That Chief Pleas agree retrospectively to the payment provided to Isle of Sark Shipping for the payment of wages and salaries.

Proposition 3:

That Chief Pleas authorise the Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee to execute a guarantee to the lending bank to Isle of Sark Shipping Company Limited by way of an extension to the agreed overdraft facility in the amount of £70,000 (Seventy Thousand Pounds only).

Proposition 4:

That Chief Pleas authorise the Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee to execute a guarantee to the lending bank to Isle of Sark Shipping Company Limited to support secure lending in the amount of £350,000 (Three hundred and Fifty Thousand Pounds Only), such funds to be released in five tranches of at least £50,000 (Fifty Thousand Pounds only) as authorised by the Treasurer of the Island of Sark and one Director of Isle of Sark Shipping.

The Speaker: Agenda Item 3, to consider a Report with Propositions from the Policy & Finance Committee, entitled Isle of Sark Shipping Company Limited – Funding Requirement. I would ask Conseiller Raymond to introduce the Report, please.

Conseiller Raymond: Thank you, sir.

Thank you to everybody for gathering at such short notice and I apologise for the shortness of the notice, but you will see from the paper that it has actually been necessary to call a Meeting on a very urgent basis. At previous Chief Pleas, Conseiller Bateman explained that the vessel, the *Corsaire des Iles*, purchased by Isle of Sark Shipping, was presently lying in France and that they had actually bought the ship without recourse to an agreed bank loan, which Sark had agreed to guarantee. The amount of that guarantee was £300,000 and the loan was to be secured on the vessel.

The bank asked us, this is just to remind you, to sign a letter of comfort, which said that because they had used all of their funds to purchase the vessel and had also been granted additional overdraft facilities, that Chief Pleas would allow the guarantee to be set off against ongoing expenditure.

As this was going to be expenditure which was in no way secured on an asset and not related to an asset, Policy & Finance decided that this was not appropriate; that the guarantees to Isle of Sark Shipping, on an unsecured basis, would have been £450,000 in aggregate and that represents a considerable portion of our liquid reserves, which we will need this year at this difficult time.

Then the intervention of the pandemic has entailed a wholesale review of the financial forecast for the shipping company and Policy & Finance have had considerable input into those forecasts. It produces a borrowing requirement which, on the face of it, looks very unattractive. Because the company had not received the loan, it had exhausted and exceeded its agreed finance limits with the bank and had even used the funds that had been deducted from the employees, which it should have been paying over to the States.

It has a need, therefore, to pay liabilities, has not got the funds and, for the last two weeks, Chief Pleas have been funding the wages and salaries and these funds will be added to the existing loan, which the Isle of Sark Shipping Company owes Chief Pleas. The amount involved is £14,265 for the wages and salaries which have been paid.

We were not proposing to pay any creditors but matters reached a head on Sunday morning, when the Managing Director wrote to two Committee Chairmen saying that if certain conditions were not met, the board would put the company into administration. This is a form of insolvency and would be extremely (a) inconvenient and (b) expensive.

Urgent discussions have taken place with the company bankers since Monday and a suggested solution has been reached, which Policy & Finance are recommending and are happy to recommend to Chief Pleas. The suggestion is as follows and it is complex and I do want everybody to understand what is proposed, so if there are any questions, any reservations, please ask and I will give you the explanation to the extent that I can.

At present the overdraft is expected, because of previous arrangements, to reduce to £200,000 and the board have requested that it is fixed instead at £220,000. The bank are receptive to this but they only hold a guarantee from Chief Pleas for £150,000 and that guarantee has been in existence for probably decades.

They require a further guarantee for the difference of £70,000. This, Policy & Finance understand, they are happy that this should be given. It will be short-term in its effect, as I will go on to explain.

Therefore you are being asked today to authorise this increase in the guaranteed liability by £70,000. The bank also requires a cash injection by Chief Pleas of up to £30,000 by way of loan to the company. This amount could take the form of payments of further wages and salaries. The logic behind this is that the forecasts show a finance requirement by the end of this month of £250,000 and if the bank have put £220,000 the company will still need a further £30,000, which is where that figure comes from.

The projections for the company are now as realistic as they can be and are based upon virtually no passengers being carried during the remainder of the visitor season. But they show a requirement for a borrowing of about £600,000 by this time next year and that is an increase of £350,000 over the existing level.

The bank are proposing to advance a loan of £350,000 to be drawn in five tranches of at least £50,000 but those withdrawals should be on the signature of a company director of Isle of Sark Shipping and the Sark Treasurer. That loan – and this has been difficult to achieve – will be secured on those vessels which the company owns, which are in Guernsey waters and on the British register, which means they will be able to take a charge over those boats.

It will be unlimited as to amount and Chief Pleas will guarantee the loan. The importance here is that we are guaranteeing a loan, which is secured on the vessels. When the *Corsaire des Iles* is unlocked from France and arrives in Guernsey, once it is on the British register, then that vessel too will be available to back the guarantee because it will be part of the charge that will be given by the company to the bank.

So we feel, as a Committee, much safer because we are guaranteeing an asset-backed loan. The new loan will be for a five-year period and will be with interest-only payments for the first 12 months. It will be capital interest repayments after that date. We are happy, as a Committee, to recommend these proposals to Chief Pleas in order to ensure that our lifeline service is maintained, even if it is only for cargo at the moment.

The matter of the vessel in France, which is owned by the company, is still to be resolved, and I want to make it clear that the compromise has been reached without recourse, at this point, to the value inherent in that vessel. But that it will provide additional comfort to both the bank and to Chief Pleas when it is released and registered properly in the UK.

That is the summary of the proposals sir and, when we come to the Propositions, I think it would be helpful if we took them one at a time in view of the complexity. I am happy to answer questions.

The Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Raymond. I will now go through the roll call list and ask if any Conseiller wishes to speak in debate.

Conseiller Raymond: Mr Speaker, I could not hear you then.

The Speaker: That is because I had my microphone switched off. Thank you, Conseiller Raymond. I will now ask Conseillers in roll call order if they wish to speak in debate. Alan Blythe?

Conseiller Blythe: Yes please, sir.

The Speaker: Peter La Trobe-Bateman?

Conseiller La Trobe-Bateman: Yes please.

The Speaker: Christopher Nightingale?

130 **Conseiller Nightingale:** Yes please, sir.

The Speaker: Anthony Ventress?

Conseiller Ventress: No comment.

135

The Speaker: Paul Williams?

Conseiller Paul Williams: Nothing, thank you, sir.

140

The Speaker: Sandra Williams?

Conseiller Sandra Williams: No thank you.

The Speaker: Helen Plummer?

145

Conseiller Plummer: No thank you.

The Speaker: Philip Long?

150

Conseiller Long: Yes please, sir.

The Speaker: John Guille?

Conseiller Guille: Yes please, sir.

155

The Speaker: Christopher Drillot?

Conseiller Drillot: No comment, thank you.

160

The Speaker: Amanda de Carteret?

Conseiller de Carteret: No thank you, sir.

The Speaker: Simon Couldridge?

165

Conseiller Couldridge: No thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Frank Makepeace?

170

Conseiller Makepeace: Yes please, sir.

The Speaker: Thank you.

I therefore ask Conseiller Blythe to open debate.

175

Conseiller Blythe: Thank you, sir.

I have actually got three questions: one directly related to the Report and two slightly related. If I could just ask the questions. As usual, Conseiller Raymond has answered most of the questions anyway because of his excellent Report. Firstly, could P&F explain in layman's terms, really, prior to the Covid-19 crisis there was a healthy bank balance of around £800,000 and now it appears to stand at minus £200,000. That is the first question, I would just like some explanation as to how we have got to that.

180

185 Secondly, it is more for the Shipping Committee, but I will throw them in anyway because they have touched on them. What is the current situation with the *Sark Venture* and, thirdly, with the new boat, why is it still in France? Is that directly due to Covid restrictions; because they are obviously paying mooring fees in France whereas I do know that Isle of Sark Shipping do not pay mooring fees in Guernsey.

That is my three questions. Thank you very much, sir.

190 **The Speaker:** Thank you. I will hold all those questions for answer at the end by Conseiller Raymond.

Conseiller Blythe: Thank you sir.

195 **The Speaker:** Conseiller Peter La Trobe-Bateman.

Conseiller La Trobe-Bateman: Thank you, sir.

I was going to ask the question and I just wanted it voiced by Conseiller Williams, who was going to do it, and Conseiller Blythe had asked that question of why we find ourselves in this position and I just wanted it recorded on *Hansard*.

200 Thank you.

The Speaker: Conseiller Nightingale.

205 **Conseiller Nightingale:** Thank you, sir. I suppose we all expected that something like this would happen, but I am sorry we were kept in the dark until the eleventh hour. I have got three questions please. I understand that the Isle of Sark Shipping Company is a registered Guernsey company so is it not allowed to apply for assistance from the Guernsey Government? Have all other forms of avenue been explored?

210 My second question is whenever I visit Sark Shipping there always seems to be more than enough personnel catering for the passengers, particularly in the office. Should we not be looking at drastically slimming down the operation?

My third question is should we look at moving the office to Sark to save expense and get jobs for Sark people?

215 Thank you.

The Speaker: Conseiller Philip Long.

Conseiller Long: Thank you, sir.

220 As always I have been beaten to the post. Everybody has asked the questions I would like answered, so I look forward to Conseiller Raymond's answers at the end.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Conseiller John Guille.

225 **Conseiller Guille:** Likewise sir, I think just the format of the questions and the answers as they are at the moment, I would like to give Conseiller Raymond the chance to answer the questions that have been put so far.

The Speaker: Thank you. Conseiller Frank Makepeace.

230

Conseiller Makepeace: Yes sir. I would just like to say two things. I am very concerned that Sark taxpayers are being asked to approve loans to pay the wages and salaries of Sark Shipping

crew and staff, when many of those taxpayers are currently facing the humiliation of being means tested for handouts ...

235 There has been a lot of talk now for many ... that the local ... will be set by everything to date which suggests they have not ... Could I ask if it can be equally so generous with taxpayers' problems and ex-Sark ... *[Audio interference]*

My second point is ... that the Isle of Sark Shipping are ... *[Inaudible]* Can someone confirm or deny that for me? Thank you.

240

The Speaker: Conseiller Raymond, Conseiller Makepeace was breaking up, did you get the gist of what he was asking?

Conseiller Raymond: No sir, I am afraid I did not. Could I ask if he can have another go?

245

Conseiller Makepeace: Yes, I can do that.

The Speaker: Can you make sure you are speaking into the microphone? It looked as if you were fading in and out.

250

Conseiller Makepeace: Okay then. I am very concerned that the Sark taxpayers are being asked to approve funds to pay wages and salaries of Sark Shipping group staff, when many of those same taxpayers are ... humiliation of being means tested for handouts from the Procureur.

255 There has been a lot of talk now for many weeks about a local ... scheme, which was going to be set up by the P&T Committee, but to date not one ... has been created.

Could I ask if ... taxpayers' money and ...? *[Inaudible]*

My second point –

260 **Conseiller Sandra Williams:** Sorry sir, I still cannot hear anything that is being said. There is a terrible echo on there.

The Speaker: It is very difficult, Conseiller Makepeace, to make out the questions you are putting.

265 **Conseiller Makepeace:** Try again?

Conseiller Blythe: Sir, can I just say I think maybe someone's microphone is still on because it is very echo-ey. If everyone can just make sure their microphones are off.

270 **Conseiller Guille:** That probably includes the Speaker as well.

The Speaker: I will turn mine off now, while Conseiller Makepeace is speaking. Conseiller Makepeace try again.

275 **Conseiller Makepeace:** Okay. I am very concerned that the Sark taxpayers are being asked to approve loans to pay wages and salaries of Sark Shipping crew and staff, when many of those same taxpayers are currently facing the humiliation of being means-tested for handouts from the Procureur.

280 There has been a lot of talk now for many weeks about a local job scheme, which was I understand being set up by the PEC Committee. To date not one single job has been created. Could I ask if we can be equally as generous with taxpayers' money and kickstart this work programme for local people into action?

Secondly I would like to ask, really, if it is true that the Sark Shipping crew and staff are being paid 30 hours a week? Thank you sir. I hope everyone heard me.

285 **The Speaker:** That was much better that time. Obviously, my microphone may have been interfering with you. However your first question is not, I believe, related to the issue in hand, which is a funding requirement for Isle of Sark Shipping and unless Policy & Finance wish to comment on that question, it is not strictly in accordance with the Report that we are looking at today.

290 But I will ask Conseiller Raymond to answer the questions that are being posed and, if necessary, hand over to Conseiller Sandra Williams, from the Shipping Committee, for anything which they might wish to reply to. Conseiller Raymond.

Conseiller Raymond: Thank you, sir.

295 First of all, dealing with the monetary aspect that Conseiller Blythe raised, they did have a very healthy balance and I think that they may have been slightly deluded by it. The simple fact is that they trade at a loss throughout the winter and that is quite common, every winter they do make a considerable loss. In addition to that, they paid out over £100,000 in re-engining and doing other work with the *Sark Venture* and then they bought the *Corsaire des Iles* and they have paid something close to £700,000 for it. So I think you will find, if you add it up, that that gets you pretty close to the present problem level of overdraft.

300 On the question of the *Sark Venture*, I am going to pause in a moment and ask Conseiller Guille to comment on that, because he has actually seen the boat. Why is the boat in France? The boat is in France because it was bought in St Malo and it was bought some time around – and it is difficult to date it – but I am worried by the concept that France closed its borders and until France opens its borders the boat will remain there, but I would like Conseiller Guille, please, to answer questions on the *Sark Venture*.

305 Then going on to Conseiller Nightingale, it is indeed a Guernsey company and they have been asking for assistance from Guernsey. They have got a payroll co-funding scheme in operation, so they have a subsidy from the States of Guernsey for their staff. They have deferred the rent of the premises and they have other deferrals, including for the ETI, which is the Social Security deductions from wages, which they used to purchase the boat.

310 The question of the States of Guernsey Disaster Recovery Loan Scheme, that has to be done through the bank and it depends upon the projections that the company produces. I do not think the bank particularly liked the projections presented, because normally a bank would look to see a loan which is serviced by a ticket income and of course without any visitors there are not going to be any ticket sales. They are solely reliant on freight receipts.

315 Is the company overhead heavy? Yes, it is at the moment, because it does not have enough income. How long should it go on like that? That is a matter for us to have further discussions. Too many staff in the office – the numbers are being slimmed down, we have made sure that that happens. As for the office moving to Sark, there is a need for a presence in Guernsey but with improved electronic access it may be possible to move it to Sark. It is something, which needs to be looked into, and we will ensure that the company does just that.

320 Conseiller Makepeace, we did not pay the wages and salaries lightly, but the company was not in a position to pay them and we need the crews to operate the boats. In order to make sure that we have crews which are going to be able to bring the cargo over, it is not enough to have one crew, we have to have two, because if one member or one crew tests positive, it takes that crew out. So we always have to have reserve crew. When I say we, I mean the company has to.

325 So we did not make those payments lightly and they have been making the payments because of the payroll co-funding scheme they have subsequently been able to make the payments themselves.

330 I know nothing about the PEC proposals for a job creation scheme so, really, I cannot comment on that, I am afraid.

335 Sark Shipping are paying their staff that they are retaining on the basis that they have reduced them to 30 hours per week and they are reviewing them further. That is down from 38.

That is the best I can do. May I hand over please to Conseiller Guille because he has actually seen the *Sark Venture*?

The Speaker: Conseiller Guille.

340

Conseiller Guille: Thank you, Conseiller Raymond.

In specific answer to Conseiller Blythe's questions about the *Sark Venture*, Policy & Finance and the Harbours & Shipping were told before Christmas, when the proposed re-engining of the *Venture* was planned, that the vessel would only be out of operation for January.

345

The vessel was taken out of operation in January and then this subsequently became January and February and then that slipped into March as well. I saw the vessel myself just before we entered lockdown, probably 20th March, and it is still about four weeks away from being completed.

350

Rather disappointingly, next door to the *Sark Venture* one of the Herm Travel Tridents is parked up, and the staff from Trident have applied to the Guernsey States, they have been completing maintenance on that vessel for the last four weeks and Sark Shipping have not accessed that same request; no continued works have been done on the *Sark Venture* for all this time that we have been going through lockdown.

355

We have been expressing to Sark Shipping the importance of getting the *Venture* back up, to have the re-engining completed. There are difficulties, they need the MCA from the UK to visit to complete the stability certificate for the boat to go back in service and they need the engine manufacturers from France to visit to commission the brand new engines that have gone into the vessel.

360

We have been in contact with the authorities in Guernsey to expedite those two separate requests, because we consider the *Venture* as a back-up vessel for Sark's lifeline freight service. We consider getting those professionals over to the Island, in terms of Guernsey's travel restrictions, they would be absolutely critical workers and we have had officials from Guernsey in contact with Sark Shipping to help them to facilitate these people coming over to Guernsey to get the boat operational again.

365

So it is rather disappointing that the vessel, the works are not completed. We are doing everything we can to make sure that Sark Shipping prioritise this. I hope that has answered Conseiller Blythe's questions on the *Sark Venture*.

370

The Speaker: Conseiller Sandra Williams, do you wish to add anything from the Harbours & Shipping Committee?

375

Conseiller Sandra Williams: No sir. This is strictly finance and policy. Operational issues, we do not really seem to have any at the moment because we are not operating. When there is more to update I will update everybody on what is going on.

Conseiller Nightingale: Can I just come in, sir? Conseiller Nightingale.

The Speaker: Conseiller Nightingale, yes. Speak, Conseiller Nightingale.

380

Conseiller Nightingale: Thank you, sir. Couldn't someone from Sark Shipping personnel be working on the *Venture*, painting and stuff like that, to get it more ready for action as and when it is available? Thank you.

385

Conseiller Guille: Conseiller Guille – can I come in on that please, sir?

The Speaker: Conseiller Guille, yes.

390 **Conseiller Guille:** Conseiller Nightingale, that is absolutely what we have requested from the company, that they prioritise the return to service of the *Sark Venture*. We see that as key back-up asset. The *Viking* is our key vessel at the moment and we see the *Sark Venture* as a key back-up and we have asked the company to prioritise this.

395 **The Speaker:** Thank you. Conseiller Blythe, do you wish to have any supplementary questions or are you satisfied with what you have heard?

Conseiller Blythe: Thank you, sir.
I think as usual Conseiller Raymond has answered most of the questions in his Report but he has just made it a lot easier to understand and very sufficient answers. Thank you very much for that. Conseiller Guille, thank you for your explanations too. Sorry to have put you on the spot
400 but now you have ticked all the boxes for me. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Before I move to the Propositions, is there anybody who wishes to ask a final question? If not, we will go to the Propositions and we have had a request that each Proposition will be taken in turn. So we will do that. Is anybody wishing to speak more?
405

Conseiller Plummer: Yes please. Conseiller Plummer.

The Speaker: Conseiller Plummer.

410 **Conseiller Plummer:** May I ask Conseiller Guille, you have approached Isle of Sark Shipping Company for the staff to paint and prepare the boat. Have you had a reply from them yet and, if the answer is no, will they be made to put their staff to work there?

415 **The Speaker:** Conseiller Guille.

Conseiller Guille: Conseiller Plummer, that is absolutely what we have requested. We have requested that they prioritise the recommissioning of the *Venture*, we have not heard back from them so far in regard to this but they have been put on notice that the Policy & Finance Committee consider this an absolute priority for the company to make happen.
420

The Speaker: Thank you, Conseiller Guille.

Conseiller La Trobe-Bateman: Could I say something please, sir?

425 **The Speaker:** Who is that?

Conseiller La Trobe-Bateman: Sam La Trobe-Bateman.

430 **The Speaker:** Conseiller La Trobe-Bateman, off you go.

Conseiller La Trobe-Bateman: I would just like to say, for the record, I would really like to thank Conseiller William Raymond for this because, without him, I am pretty sure that the company would go into administration. He has worked tirelessly with the bank to negotiate this deal and I would really like to take my hat off to him, so thank you.
435

Conseiller Nightingale: It is Conseiller Nightingale. I would like to add my thanks to that, please sir.

440 **The Speaker:** Thank you, Conseiller Nightingale. Before we go to Propositions do you wish to say anything further, Conseiller Raymond, and do you wish to explain anything with the Propositions before we go to the vote on them?

445 **Conseiller Raymond:** Sir, I feel that I could not answer all of Conseiller Makepeace's points because I think some of them were perhaps outside the scope of this paper. Can I just apologise to him if I cannot and say that we do not intend to make payments of wages and salaries to Sark Shipping as a habit, but it was an expedient because the staff were not responsible for the problems that the company found itself in and therefore we thought that we should maintain the service, make sure the service continued, so that supplies continued to flow to the Island. So it was an expedient at the time and I hope that he will take it in that spirit.

450

Conseiller Makepeace: Could I answer that, sir?

The Speaker: Conseiller Makepeace, you can come back on that one.

455 **Conseiller Makepeace:** All I have got to say was my intention was never to eschew the payments to the staff. I do not want to take anything away from the chaps in Guernsey. It was more to make sure that people here, who would be in the hospitality industry we have, can get some sort of work when they are not allowed to leave the Island and do not get any benefits. That was all. He has answered the question anyway but I am concerned that no provisions have
460 been made for local people. Thank you.

The Speaker: With regard to that, as I said, when you finished your questions, you were asking questions of the Pandemic Emergency Committee, I think you must direct those questions to the Committee outside of this Meeting and, if necessary, they can take it to the
465 Policy & Finance Committee.

So we will now call time on the debate and now go to the Propositions. Conseiller Raymond, do you wish to say anything on the Propositions before I take them in turn?

470 **Conseiller Raymond:** Just a brief summary, sir, if I may. They are very much inter-linked and they are part of a package of measures, which we have agreed with the bank. The only one which falls outside that is Proposition 2, which is the retrospective approval, where we have paid wages and salaries to the crews.

475 So from that viewpoint, Proposition 1, we require authority, please, to pay up to £30,000 – it will be the sum of £30,000 – to the company by the end of this month. That is within our resources and we can fund that.

480 Moving on then to Proposition 3, which is the next linked Proposition, that the Chairman of P&F should execute a guarantee to the lending bank for a further £70,000, that is to cover the difference between the bank's existing guarantee that they hold for £150,000 up to the new limit that the company has requested, of £220,000 – £70,000 please. And that Chief Pleas authorise the signing of a guarantee to support secure lending in the amount of £350,000, such funds to be released as the Proposition states and on the signature of, amongst others, the Treasurer of the Island.

485 That will be in place once the charge over the vessels have been taken so we will not be guaranteeing until that is in place and the funds will not be drawn until that, as a particular parcel, has been properly drafted. We will be taking advice from the Law Officers, as we have been already in this matter, about this.

So I just want people to know that we are taking every care because the sums that are involved here are, frankly, eye-watering. Thank you sir.

490 **The Speaker:** Right, we will move to Proposition 1 –

Conseiller Raymond: Speaker, we cannot hear you.

The Speaker: Thank you. I have switched myself back on again.

495 We will move to Proposition 1, that Chief Pleas authorise the Policy & Finance Committee to provide funds not exceeding £30,000 only to the Isle of Sark Shipping Company Limited, this amount to be added to the existing loan and under the same terms and conditions. If the total wages and salaries paid on behalf of the company prior to 31st May 2020 is less than £30,000 then the balance will be paid over. Greffier.

Carried – Pour 13, Contre 1, No Vote 0

POUR

Conseiller Alan Blythe
Conseiller Peter La Trobe-Bateman
Conseiller Christopher Nightingale
Conseiller Anthony Ventress
Conseiller Paul Williams
Conseiller Sandra Williams
Conseiller Helen Plummer
Conseiller Philip Long
Conseiller John Guille
Conseiller Christopher Drillot
Conseiller William Raymond
Conseiller Amanda de Carteret
Conseiller Simon Couldridge

CONTRE

Conseiller Frank Makepeace

NO VOTE

None

The Speaker: I declare Proposition 1 **carried**, 13 votes Pour, 1 vote Contre.

500 We now move to Proposition 2, that Chief Pleas agree retrospectively to the payment provided to Isle of Sark Shipping for the payment of wages and salaries. I will read that again, that Chief Pleas agree retrospectively to the payment provided to Isle of Sark Shipping for the payment of wages and salaries. Greffier.

Carried – Pour 13, Contre 1, No Vote 0

POUR

Conseiller Alan Blythe
Conseiller Peter La Trobe-Bateman
Conseiller Christopher Nightingale
Conseiller Anthony Ventress
Conseiller Paul Williams
Conseiller Sandra Williams
Conseiller Helen Plummer
Conseiller Philip Long
Conseiller John Guille
Conseiller Christopher Drillot
Conseiller William Raymond
Conseiller Amanda de Carteret
Conseiller Simon Couldridge

CONTRE

Conseiller Frank Makepeace

NO VOTE

None

The Speaker: I declare Proposition 2 **carried** by 13 votes Pour to 1 Contre.

505 We now move to Proposition 3, that Chief Pleas authorise the Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee to execute a guarantee to the lending bank to Isle of Sark Shipping Company Limited by way of an extension to the agreed overdraft facility in the event of £70,000 only. Greffier.

Carried – Pour 13, Contre 1, No Vote 0

POUR

Conseiller Alan Blythe
Conseiller Peter La Trobe-Bateman
Conseiller Christopher Nightingale
Conseiller Anthony Ventress
Conseiller Paul Williams
Conseiller Sandra Williams
Conseiller Helen Plummer
Conseiller Philip Long
Conseiller John Guille
Conseiller Christopher Drillot
Conseiller William Raymond
Conseiller Amanda de Carteret
Conseiller Simon Couldridge

CONTRE

Conseiller Frank Makepeace

NO VOTE

None

The Speaker: I declare Proposition 3 **carried** by 13 votes Pour to 1 vote Contre.

510 We go to Proposition 4, that Chief Pleas authorise the Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee to execute a guarantee to the lending bank to Isle of Sark Shipping Company Limited, to support secure lending in the amount of £350,000 only, such funds to be released in five tranches of at least £50,000 only, as authorised by the Treasurer for the Island of Sark and one director of Isle of Sark Shipping. Greffier.

Carried – Pour 13, Contre 1, No Vote 0

POUR

Conseiller Alan Blythe
Conseiller Peter La Trobe-Bateman
Conseiller Christopher Nightingale
Conseiller Anthony Ventress
Conseiller Paul Williams
Conseiller Sandra Williams
Conseiller Helen Plummer
Conseiller Philip Long
Conseiller John Guille
Conseiller Christopher Drillot
Conseiller William Raymond
Conseiller Amanda de Carteret
Conseiller Simon Couldridge

CONTRE

Conseiller Frank Makepeace

NO VOTE

None

515 **The Speaker:** I declare Proposition 4 **carried** by 13 votes Pour to 1 vote Contre.

Conseiller Raymond: Sir, may I make a statement please, very quickly?

The Speaker: Yes, Conseiller Raymond.

520 **Conseiller Raymond:** Just to say that the board of the company have also agreed these terms with the bank, who are sitting, as it were, in the middle, and therefore they will go ahead and the problems are solved for the moment.

Thank you, sir.

525 **The Speaker:** Thank you very much indeed for that final comment.

Conseiller Raymond: We cannot hear you, Speaker!

530 **The Speaker:** Ah, I have been trying to switch on and off. Okay, thank you very much Conseiller Raymond for that final comment.

**Regulations Laid Before Chief Pleas –
The Emergency Powers (Coronavirus) (General Provision) (Bailiwick of Guernsey)
(Amendment) Regulations, 2020**

535 **The Speaker:** It only leaves now the Regulations Laid Before Chief Pleas and the regulation is the Emergency Powers (Coronavirus) (General Provision) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Regulations, 2020. The Regulations came into operation on 24th April, has been on the website since that time and therefore, as there have been no proposals to annul, and you did not really have much time in which to get a proposal to annul in, I declare the Regulations laid before.

Procedural

540 **The Speaker:** I wish to, for the record, strike out the spurious agenda item 2 that I inserted, Questions not related to the Business of the Day, as if they had never been spoken. I was obviously on autopilot at that stage!
Thank you all very much. That concludes this Meeting of Chief Pleas and Greffier, the Grace please.

PRAYER
The Greffier

Chief Pleas closed at 8.03 p.m.