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Establishment of the Bailiwick Commission

An independent panel (to be known as the Bailiwick Commission) is being set up by Guernsey, Alderney and Sark together to conduct a comprehensive review of the constitutional, economic and working relationships between the three jurisdictions.

The Bailiwick community and local organisations are being encouraged to follow, participate in and contribute to the Commission's work, when it is up and running.

The Bailiwick Commission will be separate and independent from the three islands' governments and parliaments. However, to set up the Commission, the three governments, represented by Guernsey's Policy & Resources Committee and by Alderney and Sark's Policy & Finance Committees, have worked together closely to set the terms of reference and constitution for the Commission and to agree who to appoint as Commissioners. The full terms of reference and Constitution of the group can be found at gov.gg/BailiwickCommissionEstablished.

Five independent experts, who are all external to the Bailiwick, have now agreed to be appointed as Commissioners. The Commissioners (listed alphabetically after the Chair) are:

- Sir Robert Neill KC (Chair)
- Dr Lisa Cameron
- Lord Carwyn Jones
- Professor Caroline Morris
- Philip Rycroft

It is anticipated that the Commission will exist for 12-18 months from its launch. During that time, the Commission will gather evidence about the constitutional and working arrangements that exist now between the islands of the Bailiwick and whether any changes might be helpful so that the Bailiwick can best meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. The Commission will also consider how to maintain the independence and unique characteristics of each island and for the Bailiwick as a whole.

The Commission will decide how it undertakes its work to meet the terms of reference, but there will be a programme of engagement to stimulate a national conversation within the Bailiwick islands' communities, including with individuals, organisations and civil society. The intention is that anyone who wishes to contribute can do so, with all Bailiwick voices having the opportunity to be heard. This engagement will help to inform the Commission's recommendations.

After the Commission has completed its investigations, it will publish a report including its recommendations to be considered by the governments of the three islands. The Commission's final report is expected by the end of September 2027.

The Guernsey and Sark parliaments approved the establishment of the Bailiwick Commission and directed and gave delegated authority to the Policy & Resources Committee (Guernsey) and Policy & Finance Committee (Sark) to make and approve the necessary arrangements. In Alderney, the Policy & Finance Committee was directed to undertake the work and approve the necessary arrangements. The matter will be considered at a meeting of the States of Alderney in March 2026 for ratification, in accordance with Resolutions it made in July 2025.

Deputy Lindsay de Sausmarez, President of the Policy & Resources Committee, Guernsey, said:

“Over recent years, the Bailiwick has shown its strength when united for a common purpose – for example, when facing the Covid-19 pandemic or developing the islands' response to Brexit. The Bailiwick Commission will consider how to ensure that the relationships between the Bailiwick islands are fit for purpose so that we can best meet the challenges and opportunities ahead in our increasingly complex world.

“The calibre of the Commissioners is exceptional, and they all have a genuine interest in the task in hand. Collectively, they have the experience and knowledge to undertake this inquiry, under the strong and distinguished leadership of Sir Bob Neill. I encourage as many people as possible to engage with the Commission when it launches its work and gathers evidence. Any individual or organisation in Guernsey can contribute in that way to the future of the Bailiwick.”

Alderney States Member Jeannie Cameron, Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee, Alderney, said:

“The islands are jointly setting up the Bailiwick Commission so that careful consideration can be given to what relationships exist within the Bailiwick and how they might be adapted to help all three islands to face the future with confidence. It is important that the Commission is being established by the islands themselves, rather than suggested, or somehow imposed on us, by any other government. However, it is also right that all of the Commissioners are

from outside the Bailiwick so that they can be fully independent once the Commission's work is underway.

“As we all know, one significant element of the relationships between Alderney and Guernsey is the 1948 Agreement which is now almost 80 years old. Its provisions could usefully be reviewed as part of the Commission's work to ensure the quality and future resilience of the two islands' constitutional and economic relationships.

“Each island has unique characteristics, needs and aspirations and I would encourage anyone and everyone with an interest in the future of their island community to use the opportunities that arise to share their views, thoughts, concerns and ideas with the Commission as it conducts its research.”

Conseiller John Guille, Chair of Chief Pleas Policy and Finance Committee, Sark said:

“We welcome the establishment of the Commission. It provides an opportunity for everyone on Sark to engage with an independent panel of experts on the key challenges facing our community, such as access to and the cost of healthcare, and the delivery of services. The concept of a Commission is not new and builds on previous dialogues, such as those chaired by Lord Wolfson. What is different this time is the clear focus on community input, which will be essential to its success. We look forward to welcoming the Commissioners to Sark as soon as possible.”

Ends

Notes to media

Chair – Sir Robert Neill (Sir Bob)

Sir Bob has been appointed as the Chair of the Commission with the agreement of the three Bailiwick governments. He is a former Conservative MP (serving between 2006-2024) and was Minister for Local Government, Planning and the Fire Service from 2010 to 2012. Sir Bob is a former Chair of the House of Commons Justice Committee, which considered issues regarding the Bailiwick, including undertaking inquiries and publishing specific reports about the constitutional and working relationships between the Crown Dependencies and the UK. Since leaving Parliament in 2024, Sir Bob has resumed his career as a practising barrister based in London.

Dr Lisa Cameron has experience in devolved administrations and the UK Parliament, as a former MP (SNP then Conservative, between 2015-2024), where she served on various Select Committees. She is a clinical psychologist and has acted as an expert witness in Scottish childcare cases. Dr Cameron was a member of the Channel Islands All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) from 2019-2023.

Lord Carwyn Jones is the former First Minister of Wales (2009-2018) and former Leader of Welsh Labour. He was a member of the Senedd (the Welsh Parliament) from 1999-2021. He attended the British Irish Council (BIC) Summit hosted in Guernsey in 2018. Lord Jones became a Member of the House of Lords in January 2025 where he is a member of the House of Lords Constitution Committee. He leads the UK delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Lord Jones is a Professor of Law at Aberystwyth University.

Professor Caroline Morris PhD is a Professor in Constitutional Law at Queen Mary University of London. Her particular interests include constitutional reform, legislatures, elections and referendums. She is also the Founder and Director of the Centre for Small States which specialises in the law and legal frameworks of small states, territories and jurisdictions. Professor Morris is an expert in constitutional issues in the Crown Dependencies, with academic and practical experience in Alderney, Guernsey, Sark and Jersey. She has also provided advice to courts, parliaments and Non-Governmental Organisations in Seychelles, Guyana, Bermuda and New Zealand.

Philip Rycroft is a former senior civil servant. During his career, he worked for the devolved government in Scotland and for the UK Government. He was Permanent Secretary for the Department for Exiting the EU and Director General in the Deputy Prime Minister's office. From 2012 to 2019 he was the lead Whitehall official on constitutional and devolution matters. He served as a Commissioner for the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales between 2021-2024. Mr Rycroft also worked closely with the Bailiwick and the other Crown Dependencies through his responsibilities for the British Irish Council (Guernsey being one of the eight member administrations).

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