



Government of Sark

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE FUTURE ENERGY COMMITTEE

Committees of the Chief Pleas of Sark

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PUBLIC STATEMENT

Chief Pleas responds to SEL claims: clarifying facts and next steps

Chief Pleas is issuing this statement in response to the press release from Sark Electricity Ltd (SEL), in which various claims were made about the actions and intentions of the Policy & Finance (P&F) and Future Energy (FE) Committees.

It is vital to provide clarity and reassurance to Sark residents regarding the current status of the electricity project and the ongoing efforts to secure a safe, sustainable and community-focused electricity supply for the island.

No interference in private sale negotiations

P&F / FE have acted in good faith throughout discussions with SEL and Island Power (IP). Meetings with all Conseillers were arranged at short notice and full engagement was maintained throughout these communications; we explored all reasonable avenues for a negotiated sale.

In an email to all Conseillers yesterday IP confirmed two key points:

- That IP have not pulled out of negotiations. However, they do not intend to purchase SEL, but to enter into a partnership agreement with SEL.
- That, contrary to statements in the press, IP have made no claims that Chief Pleas have acted in bad faith.

Chief Pleas has remained open to all serious proposals and obtained professional advice from multiple sources. This advice, along with our own assessment, has led us to conclude that IP's proposal is not in the best interests of the Sark community.

Unit pricing and dividends

No “dividends” will be withdrawn by Chief Pleas and a statement to this effect has been made. The unit price will continue to be monitored by the Sark Electricity Price Control Commissioner to ensure a fair, reasonable and sustainable price for Sark residents.

Continued expert support and forward momentum

Alan Bates (Guernsey Electricity Ltd) and James Lancaster (Alderney Electricity Ltd) continue to provide expert advice on all aspects of this project; their involvement remains valued and active. Assertions to the contrary are incorrect and misleading.

A community ownership vision from the outset

Chief Pleas has always advocated for community ownership of this critical infrastructure. This principle has guided our actions from the beginning and remains central to our approach. Ownership by Sark for Sark will ensure transparency, accountability, and reinvestment of any surplus into the community owned infrastructure - rather than profiting external shareholders. Assertions that our plan involves drawing dividends are not only inaccurate but misleading. The community plan is built on conservative, sustainable projections with regulatory compliance at its core.

Sark’s relationship with the Ministry of Justice

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) respects Sark's autonomy as a self-governing jurisdiction in the Bailiwick of Guernsey. Chief Pleas will continue to work with MoJ to support Sark's autonomy and good government, and to uphold the existing constitutional relationship. Claims suggesting otherwise are incorrect.

Compulsory Purchase: a necessary step, not a desired one

After five years of almost no progress on critical safety and reliability upgrades under the current ownership of SEL, and multiple attempts at negotiated acquisition, Chief Pleas remains open to further negotiation with SEL, but on terms that are financially responsible and which do not place unreasonable burdens on islanders. The P&F and FE Committees have determined that the only sensible option remaining is to proceed with implementing the compulsory purchase process. An extraordinary meeting of Chief Pleas is to be called for Wednesday 25th June at 5pm to debate a proposition directing the P&F Committee to bring the Law into force. This is the only sensible option remaining to provide the much-needed investment in local electricity infrastructure in a timely manner and for the best value for the community.

A call for constructive progress

Chief Pleas is focused on securing an energy future for Sark that is modern, resilient, and community led. We are moving forward with integrity and a commitment to serve the best interests of the island. We urge all parties to engage constructively and respectfully. Our door remains open to meaningful dialogue and cooperative solutions, but our priority will always be the well-being and safety of the people of Sark.

Island Hall drop in surgery

Members of the Policy & Finance and Future Energy Committees will be holding a drop-in surgery on compulsory purchase for residents to come and ask questions this Saturday, 21st June, from 9am to 12 at the Boardroom in the Island Hall.

Conseiller John Guille

Chair, Policy & Finance Committee

Conseiller Mike Locke

Chair, Future Energy Committee

18th June 2025