

4. Tynwald Standards and Members' Interests Committee – Statement by Mr Speaker

The President: In that case, we move on to Item 4.
I call on Mr Speaker to make a statement.

The Speaker: Mr President, I make this statement in my capacity as Chairman of the Tynwald Standards and Members' Interests Committee, which was tasked in June with the following inquiry:

That Tynwald Standards and Members' Interests Committee should consider the application of the principles governing Members' conduct, to Members' working relationships with public servants in Government, the local authorities and other public bodies and evaluate the introduction of (a) a code of conduct; (b) a schedule of penalties and (c) a recall election procedure and report by January 2017 with recommendations.

The purpose of this statement is to inform the Court that the Committee will not be able to meet the January 2017 deadline.

No work was undertaken on this resolution prior to the General Election for two reasons: the previous Committee felt that the difficult and important matters raised should be put before those Members of Tynwald who had a fresh mandate after the election; and, in any event, it was not practical for the Committee to consider and report on these matters in time for July and the last sitting before the election. It would have left the Committee just over a week to consult Members and deliberate before the report would have been circulated to Members.

As soon as the new Committee was nominated last month, we began work. As a first step the Committee has canvassed the views of Members about these matters and we want to provide a reasonable period for Members to reflect on these important issues. The Committee will welcome comments from Hon. Members about the matter generally, but in particular has invited responses covering the Code of Conduct, methods of enforcement, a recall procedure perhaps similar to the one recently put into law in the United Kingdom, and composition and remit of the Tynwald Standards and Members' Interests Committee.

Once the Committee has consulted Members, it will proceed with its deliberations and report at the earliest opportunity. We recognise that the matters which fall to be considered are of the utmost importance and reflect on the reputation of Tynwald, as well as relating to the happiness and dignity of people in the workplace.

I look forward to Hon. Members' engagement in the process and to reporting back to the Court in 2017, sir.