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Senator J Le Fondré
Chief Minister
Government of Jersey

9th November 2020

Dear Chief Minister

It is with great sadness that I am writing to you to confirm that following our discussions I have agreed to step down as Chief Executive and Head of the Public Service for the Government of Jersey.

This is a job I love, in a beautiful place that I am privileged to call home and I do not wish to leave.

The events of the last two weeks have been extremely difficult for all parties, but in particular for my family. I have tried to find a way through this impasse without seriously tarnishing my professional reputation and undermining my authority as Chief Executive, but unfortunately my efforts have been to no avail.

I was recruited to modernise the public service so that it provides high-quality, affordable and timely services to Islanders, and to lead the delivery of ambitious and overdue infrastructure projects, including investment for a new hospital. Following your election as Chief Minister in 2018, the entire States Assembly united behind the priorities that the Government set out in the Common Strategic Policy, and on then emphatically endorsed the Government Plan. I wanted to implement those priorities, and improve the long-term future prospects for Jersey.

We have made significant progress in creating One Government, in which public servants work together for the common good, with a culture based on respect and collaboration. We have developed and secured approval for a new health model and made substantial progress with a raft of service improvements.

We have modernised our financial systems and reporting, giving us near real-time information on our income and expenditure, enabling the fastest close of Government accounts that the Island has ever seen, which provides both for better year-end out-turns and for better future years planning. We are on the cusp of significant technology improvements that will protect us from cyber attacks and join up our finance, payroll, HR, procurement and asset management arrangements.

We have identified significant and sustainable efficiencies, which will free funding for Government priorities, including investment in schools, health, infrastructure and for tackling the climate emergency. We have put strong measures in place to prepare for Brexit, and Jersey is acknowledged to have been among the very best jurisdictions in the world in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic.

I am tremendously proud to have worked with you and led all of this, as Chief Executive.

There is much still to do to complete the public service reforms, to steer Jersey through the second wave of Covid and the long economic recovery ahead, to withstand and adapt to the challenges of Brexit, to modernise services to Islanders, to deliver investment and to implement the many, many other initiatives in the Government Plan. I am deeply saddened that I will not be able to lead this.

I also want to thank you again for your leadership as Chief Minister. The relationship between the leader of the Government and the leader of the public service is crucial if the ambitions of Ministers are to be delivered. Our relationship has been based on mutual respect, trust, honesty, clarity of purpose, loyalty and support. I am grateful to you for your integrity as Chief Minister and for your personal support to me at this most difficult time in my career.

Doing the right thing isn't always popular, but it is important that public leaders show integrity in the face of adversity. You have done that in spades. Those close to you know how hard you have worked for this Island over the last year as we have dealt with unprecedented times.

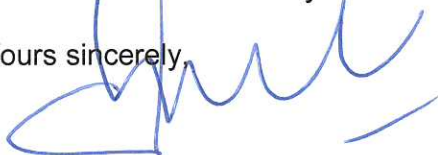
I am truly appalled that what should be an uncontroversial individual employment matter has been used as the catalyst to challenge your position – especially at a time when we should be focused on our winter planning for Covid-19, the economic recovery and the delivery of the Government Plan. I believe that neither of us have deserved the treatment that we have received by those who seek to oppose and undermine the agenda for change that you have championed.

Finally, I want to pay tribute to the thousands of public servants who come to work every day to do the best job they can for Jersey. I want to thank all of them for their hard work and commitment. I also want to thank those senior leaders with whom I have worked most closely and on whose expertise and effort I have relied to develop and deliver what we have achieved so far. This is a collective, collaborative effort. I am truly sorry that I will not be able to lead those colleagues, although I know that I will retain and cherish the many friendships that I have made, both in work and outside, after I have left.

While I am a public figure, many in a similar position have shared with me how their public life affects their families and loved ones. Public servants – both elected and employed – should not be fair game for some of the recent attacks by those who should know better. They put themselves forward, sometimes with little thanks or praise, but with a deep sense of commitment and self-sacrifice. Jersey would do well to remember that.

It is important that any disruption as a result of my departure is kept to an absolute minimum, which is why I have offered to continue in post for as long as the Government requests me to, in order to ensure an orderly transition.

Yours sincerely,



Charlie Parker
Chief Executive and Head of the Public Service

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