

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIR OF THE COMITÉ DES CONNÉTABLES
BY DEPUTY R.S. KOVACS OF ST. SAVIOUR
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 17th JULY 2023
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 24th JULY 2023**

Question

“Will the Chair state, in respect of electoral registrations during the last two electoral periods –

- (a) how much each Parish spent on posting electoral registration forms;
- (b) how much each Parish spent on the administration of the Electoral Roll, including sorting paperwork, distributing it, and collating the returns;
- (c) what number and percentage of households returned their electoral registration forms within the period allowed;
- (d) what number and percentage of households did not return their electoral registration forms within the period allowed;
- (e) what follow up procedure, if any, was used when households did not return their electoral registration form within the period allowed;
- (f) what sanctions may be used in respect of those who fail to make the required returns; and
- (g) when any such sanctions were last used?”

Answer

The electoral registration procedures are set out in Part 3 of the Elections (Jersey) Law 2002 (“the 2002 Law”).

Article 7 deals with the “Addition and keeping of name on electoral register” and provides for

- i) the sending (not later than 1 November each year) and return (by 1 December in the same year) to every unit of dwelling accommodation of the Annual Statements, and
- ii) the duty to apply for registration at any other time.

Article 8 deals with the “Exclusion or removal of name from electoral register”.

- (a) The cost of posting the Annual Statements in the autumn of 2021 and 2022 is set out below (* indicates the Parish uses a mailing house so the cost includes printing and postage).

Parish	2021 cost (54p per letter)	2022 cost (56p per letter)
St Brelade *	£4,112.27	£5,350.55
St Clement *	£2,345.79	£2,436.93
Grouville	£1,913.13	£2,065.22
St Helier *	£16,461.38	£17,831.80
St John	£655.86	£707.30
St Lawrence	£1,250.52	£1,306.45
St Martin	£957.42	£955.12
St Mary	£400.14	£414.96
St Ouen	£944.46	£987.84
St Peter	£1,435.77	£1,441.60
St Saviour *	£4,747.56	£5,184.19
Trinity	£776.24	£859.22
TOTAL	£35,999.98	£39,540.99

- (b) Parishes do not maintain a detailed cost analysis that would enable all the administration costs to be calculated. Administration of the Electoral Register (Electoral Roll) is undertaken on a daily/weekly/annual basis and includes –
- a. Updating changes to names and addresses of electors
 - b. Entering data from ‘Applications to register as an elector’ (both online and paper applications)
 - c. Generating, processing, printing and posting of the Annual Statements and collating/entering data from returns and
 - d. Responding to general queries and to subject access requests from members of the public.
- The Electoral Register is a rolling register and updates are specifically required prior to compiling the Register each time it is used, such as for -
- e. Parish/Ecclesiastical Assemblies (the Register being the list of members entitled to vote at such meetings)
 - f. Parish elections (elections under the 2002 Law of Procureurs du Bien Public and Centeniers in June 2022 and March 2023)
 - g. Public elections (elections of Connétables and Deputies in June 2022) and sending the Notice of Registered Voters in accordance with Article 7A of the 2002 Law (in March 2022)
 - h. Providing a copy of the Register as at 1 September each year to the Jersey Library and to the Judicial Greffe in accordance with Article 11 of the 2002 Law.

(c) Whilst the Annual Statement should be returned by 1 December, a number of persons choose instead to make a digital return using the Parishes online ‘Register as an elector’ service. Digital returns relate to an individual whereas the Annual Statement relates to a unit of dwelling accommodation and may include more than one person who is eligible as an elector. The way in which returns have been recorded does not enable the Parishes to provide the number and percentage of households that returned the Annual Statement within the period allowed. However, in the two months to 1 December 2022, 38,876 elector records (64% of registered electors) were updated.

(d) The way in which returns have been recorded does not enable the Parishes to provide the number and percentage of households that did not return the Annual Statement within the period allowed. In the two months to 1 December 2022 the records of 21,540 electors (36% of registered electors) were not updated.

(e) The 2002 Law does not require further action (follow up) to be taken when households do not return the Annual Statement within the period allowed. There is, however, the process in Article 8(4) – see (f) below – where there has been no return for 3 consecutive years.

(f) There are no sanctions in respect of those who fail to make the required returns (of the Annual Statement). Article 7(6) of the 2002 Law provides that no civil or criminal liability attaches to a failure to discharge a duty under this Article. This includes the duty under Article 7(3) of each person ordinarily resident in a unit of dwelling accommodation to which a statement is sent to ensure that it is returned, with any necessary corrections, to the electoral administrator for the parish by 1 December in the same year.

However, Article 8(4) does provide that -

“If a person whose name is included on an electoral register has not, for a period of 3 consecutive years, been included in and signed a statement returned under Article 7(3), the electoral administrator shall serve notice on that person stating that the electoral administrator shall remove the person’s name from the register unless the person delivers to the electoral administrator, within the period of 28 days following

service of the notice, confirmation, in such form as the States may prescribe by Regulations or, if none is prescribed, in such form as the electoral administrator requires, that the person is still entitled to have his or her name on the register.”

A repeated failure to make a return (which includes through the online service – see (c) above) will therefore result in the person receiving a notice under Article 8 and, should they fail to confirm their eligibility as an elector within 28 days, to removal from the register.

(g) Notices under Article 8(4) were last served by the electoral administrators on the dates shown below. To minimise the risk of a person being removed from the Electoral Register prior to the elections for States members, notices were issued before the Annual Statements were sent to every unit of dwelling accommodation in 2021 (2019 for one Parish), so any person whose name was removed (because they failed to respond to the Notice) had the opportunity to reregister when the Annual Statement was received.

Parish Last time Notices were sent under Article 8(4)

St Brelade	June 2021
St Clement	June 2021
Grouville	June 2021
St Helier	May 2021
St John	August 2021
St Lawrence	August 2019
St Martin	May 2021
St Mary	June 2021
St Ouen	June 2021
St Peter	June 2021
St Saviour	May 2021
Trinity	August 2021