

This written submission is addressed to The Electoral Reform Scrutiny Panel

The objective of the reform is to improve democratic representation balancing the number of voters or population size per representative.

1 The proposals do not meet the criteria of the Venice convention in either P.18/2017 or amendment to P.133/2016.

The former proposition fails in districts 1 and 2 (St Helier) and district 5 varying from +15.5% over to -40.5% under.

The latter proposition amendment fails in districts 4, 5 and 6 varying from +18.3% under to -48% over. The latter proposition amendment is by these criteria not worthy of consideration.

2 There is no electoral gain in splitting St Helier into two districts.

3 The boundaries of electoral districts must be subject to review (a la UK boundaries commission at intervals prescribed in law to cater for movements in population. Without this provision since most of housing development is to be in St Helier, already under represented would be prone to rapid and even greater under representation.

Review either impacts on boundaries or number of representatives.

4 The retention of Constables in the States is a substantial fundamental anomaly. They are elected by only Parish voters and have a duty to serve their interests but with the proposed larger electoral districts they will have a fundamental conflict of interests. This is a gross affront to democratic principles.

5 The question was asked by the panel "when you vote in a general election do you vote in the interests of the Island or the Parish?" My answer is unequivocal everyone should vote in the interests of the Island.

For these reasons the proposals do not get my general support.

However some move towards more democratic representation is imperative if you wish to engage the electorate, either larger districts without senators or Island wide vote for all representatives.

This latter option is to be preferred as it provides the greatest improvement in fairer representation and democracy.

Ray Banks