

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMITÉ DES CONNÉTABLES
BY DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 16th APRIL 2013**

Question

Will the Chairman provide a breakdown by parish of attendance at Parish Meetings where votes are taken (including, separately, meetings where the rates are determined) showing the figures as a percentage of the total eligible voters per parish?

Will the Chairman explain what, if anything, the Comité is doing to encourage greater attendance at Parish Meetings from parishioners?

Answer

All Parishes record minutes of official meetings such as Parish Assemblies, Ecclesiastical Assemblies and Electoral Assemblies. Four parishes record the number present at the start of a meeting but some parishioners may arrive late or leave early. Where a vote is taken the number voting may be recorded but this will not necessarily equal the number of persons attending that meeting.

The number eligible to vote at a Parish Assembly is those on the Electoral Register in force on that day and any person who is a ratepayer of the parish (or who represents a body corporate which is a ratepayer) but a person will only have one vote regardless of whether they are eligible in more than one capacity. To determine the exact number eligible to vote at any particular Parish Assembly it is necessary to compare the different registers and exclude those listed more than once.

For these reasons the work required to provide a breakdown by parish showing the attendance figures as a percentage of the total eligible voters per parish would require considerable resources and makes it impossible in the time available.

However, where the business conducted consists of straightforward 'housekeeping' matters it is fair to say that the number attending is usually a small proportion of those eligible to attend. It will be higher for the annual meetings where the rates are determined or if a contentious issue is on the agenda.

All parishioners – "principals and electors" - are notified of the time and date of forthcoming meetings and of the items to be discussed by notices placed in the Jersey Gazette and in the Parish box (*boîte grillée*). Notice may also be given through other media including the Parish newsletter or magazine, website and social media such as 'Twitter' and email, and the radio. Whilst the Comité encourages all to attend it is ultimately a decision for the individual as to how he or she chooses to participate in parish affairs.