

I believe that before any decisions can be made on the current proposals for electoral reform, more clarity is needed on the primary purpose(s) of the proposed changes.

Is the intention primarily to achieve (1) *greater parity* in voter representation, or (2) *greater equality* of States' members, or (3) *greater efficiency* in the States, or a combination of two or all of these? Surely we can only decide what changes are needed when we are clear about what they are intended to achieve?

If the primary purpose is (1) *greater parity* of voter representation, then the proposals should be focused on ensuring that the divisions of the electoral districts equate to the voting population of the districts as accurately as possible, with safeguards for 'future proof' fluctuations built-in, if that is possible.

The Main Proposal and the First Amendment are presumably being put forward to achieve this purpose. However, in the absence of an explanation for the differences in the district groupings, particularly in relation to the populations of these areas, it is difficult to comment. However, the names proposed for the districts (apart from St Helier N/S) in the First Amendment do not seem to equate satisfactorily with the district as a whole; for example, St Martin cannot be described as 'South East' (although I notice that this has been labelled as simply 'East' in the Second Amendment, which is better), St Saviour is not in the 'North', St John and St Lawrence can hardly be described as 'West' and St Peter isn't exactly 'South'! So as far as the names proposed for the districts is concerned, I would suggest that the Main Proposal makes more sense.

In relation to the Senators, the question regarding the primary purpose of these reforms is a fundamental one. If it is to achieve (1) *greater parity* of representation, then the fairest way to achieve that would appear to be to give every voter the opportunity to vote for the entire Assembly (apart from the Connetables) – i.e. to do away with district-based Deputies, rather than Island-wide Senators.

This would obviously raise significant logistical questions in relation to the hustings etc, but if there is a genuine intention to make the system fairer (in terms of voter representation), maybe it is possible that these could be resolved with some imaginative thinking. Perhaps, for instance, an election could take place in two stages?

The second amendment to the current proposals is clearly not concerned with achieving (1) *greater parity* of voter representation; it would, in fact, be a step towards *reduced* parity, as any individual would only be able to vote for a maximum of 6 Deputies, rather than up to 6 Deputies + 8 Senators. So this amendment is clearly primarily concerned with (2) the *equality* of the States members, presumably in a bid to do away with the historic 'two-tier' concept that the Senators are the more senior members, who are expected to take more responsibility, due to their Island-wide mandate.

My view is that the elimination of either Deputies or Senators in favour of the existence of a single level of States' membership would be a very big step to take in terms of constitutional reform, following such a brief period of public consultation. It would surely warrant its own debate and considerable public engagement in the process, which is currently not evident at present.

If (3) *greater efficiency* in the workings of the States is desirable, then perhaps more thought needs to be given to the size of the Assembly? Would a smaller body be more efficient and effective? What number of members is optimally needed to cover the workload? While I am not qualified to comment on these questions, it is clear that a smaller Assembly would be less costly, and if every

member was required to be more accountable for their actions/decisions, that would be in the public interest.

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