

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIRMAN OF PRIVILEGES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 10th MARCH 2009**

Question

Will the Chairman inform members whether additional measures were considered following the enactment of Article 39A of Public Elections Law (Jersey) 2002 on 31st October 2008 to –

- (a) encourage voting by post especially by the housebound and those with a learning disability;
- (b) inform constituents of the new regulations concerning postal voting;
- (c) display posters advertising a telephone number for those who wished to vote by post

and if not, why not?

Answer

An extensive advertising campaign was undertaken in 2008 to ensure that Islanders were aware of the elections and to encourage them to vote. The campaign, which included 2 inserts in the Jersey Evening Post, drew attention to the facility for postal and pre-poll voting and gave relevant contact information. Adverts also encouraged Islanders to phone their parish hall should they have any questions, and informed them that further information was available at www.vote.je. Although not all of the points raised by Deputy Southern were necessarily specifically addressed, measures have been in place since the 2002 Law was brought into force for postal votes to be cast by persons unable to attend the polling station. The question is concerned with only Article 39A of the relevant Law and the changes made by that Article were communicated to every candidate in the Elections for Deputy.

Staff at the Island's parish halls were available to answer any queries, and would have been able to assist anyone who was not aware of the regulations concerning postal voting. They would also have notified interested parties of the provision under the law for anyone to request a 'sick' vote on the day of the poll and receive a personal visit from the Autorisé or his designated assistant.

All candidates were notified of relevant postal voting procedures by the Deputy Judicial Greffier in a letter dated 6th November 2008. That letter contained the following information relating to Article 39A –

“I draw your specific attention to Public Elections (Amendment No. 3) (Jersey) Law 2008, which came into force on the 31st October, 2008, and which makes it an offence for a candidate or a representative of a candidate:

- (a) to complete, or to assist a person to complete an application form to register as a postal or pre-poll voter;
- (b) to deliver, or cause to be delivered, to the Judicial Greffier, on behalf of such person any form or application for a postal or pre-poll vote; or
- (c) to provide transport for such person so as to enable them to make an application in person to the Judicial Greffier for a postal or pre-poll vote.

The law permits a candidate, or a representative of a candidate, to provide a person with a **blank** application form to register as a postal or pre-poll voter.

If you have any queries in relation to postal or pre-poll voting, please do not hesitate to contact *[NAME]*,

the Postal & Pre-Poll Voting Officer, on 441314, or myself on 441383.

As a result of this letter all candidates were fully aware of the statutory procedures relating to postal voting and were therefore in a position to advise voters accordingly if asked.

I would like to inform members that, the Privileges and Procedures Committee will be considering all voting procedures in the Public Elections Law 2002 in the coming months.