

# STATES OF JERSEY



## **PUBLIC ELECTIONS: POLLING CARDS AND ACCESSIBILITY OF POLLING STATIONS (P.97/2016) – COMMENTS**

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**Presented to the States on 31st October 2016  
by the Council of Ministers**

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**STATES GREFFE**

## COMMENTS

A healthy democracy is perhaps the most fundamental public good, or at least, it is the foundation on which we create a better future for our Island.

This Council of Ministers has focused on improving our public services, balancing our finances, and growing our economy, among other things; but it has also supported efforts to improve participation in our democratic processes.

This is why the newly-appointed Assistant Minister with responsibility for eGov, who was appointed to provide clear political leadership to digitise the public sector, has prioritised improvements in this area, including initiating work to secure the necessary technology to enable greater flexibility in voting location, as may be required. This fits well with the wider work already being undertaken. In particular, the eGov team have been supporting the States Greffe on a digital electoral register for some months now as a necessary platform for improvement.

Indeed, there does seem merit in anything which creates a greater sense of notice and awareness, and greater flexibility on where to vote, and better places to vote, appreciating that people may be in different parts of the Island at different parts of the day.

Beyond this, it is a matter for the States Greffe to continue to explore any necessary changes to legislation and process, including what is possible for the 2018 election and what should come afterwards; and to make recommendations as to how best to proceed, to the Privileges and Procedures Committee who, along with the Comité des Connétables, has responsibility in this area.

This needs to be considered alongside the most important element of any democracy – the soundness of the voting process, and confidence in the accuracy of the outcome.