

3.13 Deputy T.M. Pitman of the Chairman of the Privileges and Procedures Committee regarding the implementation of Option B following the recent referendum:

Given that Option B gained a total of only 8,190 votes of the total 16,749 cast and thus achieved only 48.8 per cent of the vote, why is the Committee putting this option forward, having failed to achieve even 50 per cent of the vote?

Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier (Chairman, Privileges and Procedures Committee):

The Privileges and Procedures Committee has agreed to proceed with implementation of Option B, because that is the will expressed by the electorate in a referendum held in accordance with the Referendum Act - P.5/2013 - that this Assembly approved. To do otherwise would have sent a very negative message to those who took the trouble to vote and would probably have discredited any future referendum. Whether Option B is to be implemented is ultimately a matter for the States. The result of a referendum is not binding on the States, but there is an expectation that the States will consider the outcome of the referendum and determine the way forward. P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee) believes that its duty is simply to act as a midwife in this process. The committee expects to fulfil that duty by lodging a draft amendment to the States of Jersey Law 2005 in a matter of weeks, with the potential for a debate in the last meeting of the States before the summer recess.

3.13.1 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Supplementary? I have to say, if the P.P.C. is a midwife, then it is going to birth a monster. But, P.P.C. will obviously be bringing forward what is effectively disenfranchising to people of St. Helier. I think the Constable would agree with that. Now, those people voted to have parity, equality, with their country Parish compatriots. So, can I ask the Chairman, will P.P.C. additionally then be seeking to amend proposals to give St. Helier the 4 additional representatives required to make this fair, an opportunity that was spurned by the Assembly, sadly?

The Connétable of St. Helier:

The Deputy is right that the States Assembly did consider a number of amendments to the referendum, which were rejected. I cannot really speak of how the Privileges and Procedures Committee will act when it receives the instructions at its next meeting. I would suggest that if the Deputy is interested he attends the meeting. I am assuming it is going to be on the open agenda. As soon as the Committee has had a chance to consider it the matter will be brought forward. As the Deputy may know, the committee was not unanimous in its decision as soon as the referendum outcome was known to proceed with lodging instructions, amendments and there may well be a lively discussion in the Privileges and Procedures Committee when these instructions come forward.

The Bailiff:

Very well, no further questions. Deputy Pitman, final question.

3.13.2 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

I was not quite ready for that one. Is the Chairman of P.P.C. aware and will it be taken into consideration when they are discussing what is going to be put forward that there are already moves by a number of different groups to take this matter to the U.K. Privy Council?

The Connétable of St. Helier:

I certainly heard rumours to that effect.