

PRIVILEGES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

(54th Meeting)

8th March 2010PART A

All members were present, with the exception of Deputy M. Tadier, from whom apologies had been received.

Connétable J. Gallichan of St. Mary, Chairman
 Senator B.I. Le Marquand
 Deputy J.B. Fox
 Deputy J.A. Martin
 Deputy C.H. Egré
 Deputy M.R. Higgins

In attendance -

Mrs. A.H. Harris, Deputy Greffier of the States
 P. Monamy, Acting Clerk to the Privileges and Procedures Committee

Note: The Minutes of this meeting comprise Part A only.

Draft Public
 Elections
 (Amendment No.
 4) (Jersey)
 Regulations 201-:
 possible trial of a
 Saturday poll.
 FILE
 424/2(68)

A1. The Committee, with reference to its Minute No. A10 of 2nd March 2010, considered a draft Public Elections (Amendment No. 4) (Jersey) Regulations 201- which would prescribe Saturday as the day for taking a poll where a casual vacancy in the office of Senator, Deputy or Connétable was being filled in an election other than an ordinary election (with Wednesday to remain the day for taking a poll in an ordinary election).

The Committee noted that the draft Regulations had been prepared as a consequence of the ongoing work of the Public Elections Working Party, which was presently reviewing the provisions of the Public Elections (Jersey) Law 2002 with a view to increasing voter turnout at elections. It was recognised that, whilst the Working Party was likely to recommend a 'trial' holding of an election on a Saturday, it had not yet concluded its deliberations on this aspect of the matter, and had therefore not yet submitted a report to the Committee.

The Committee considered whether it would be desirable to attempt to put such provisions in place for any possible by-election in May or June 2010 in the event that a Member of the States were to be disqualified or otherwise leave the States in the near future. In order to achieve such a timescale it was noted that it would be necessary to lodge draft Regulations 'au Greffe' by 9th March 2010. It was agreed that appropriate provisions should be put in place in due course, once the Working Party had concluded its overall review of the Law. This would enable such provisions to be in place for the elections which could arise when expected vacancies occurred in the offices of the Connétables of Grouville (July 2010) and St. Helier (January 2011).

It was recognised, however, that a trial of the sort envisaged would give rise to additional practical considerations for Parish authorities, including weekend staffing

issues. The Deputy Greffier of the States confirmed that enquiries in this regard had been made of the Comité des Connétables but that this consultation had not yet been completed.

The Chairman suggested that it was clear that any move to a Saturday polling day needed to be trialled prior to the next general election, and that such an opportunity could well arise in respect of the forthcoming end to the respective terms of office of the above-mentioned Connétables. It was agreed that, whilst the process towards the introduction of such Regulations to achieve this aim should not be overly delayed, it would be preferable for the matter to be left for the Working Party to deliberate upon further, with a view to the presentation of a report and recommendation to the Committee shortly (i.e. preferably within the next 3 or 4 weeks).

Contraventions of
Human Rights:
Written Question
asked by the
Deputy of St.
Martin.
465/1(145)

A2. The Committee noted that the Chairman had received no comments from members of the Committee in relation to the draft answer which had been circulated to them in respect of the Written Question being asked of the Chairman by the Deputy of St. Martin regarding contraventions of Human Rights, and which would be tabled in the States on 9th March 2010.