

Chief Minister



Deputy Helen Miles,
Chair, Parishes and Government Review Panel
By email

22nd July 2025

Dear Chair,

Parishes and Government Review Panel – Submission

Thank you for your letter, dated 26th June, and please see below responses to your questions.

1. How does the government engage with the parishes on a day-to-day basis, and what is the nature of the working relationship between the two?

The Government engages with the Parishes on a wide range of operational issues and reasons, including but not limited to:

- planning applications
- infrastructure matters
- transport and road works
- licensing of various types
- honorary policing

The importance of this was formalised in this Council of Ministers' Common Strategic Policy ([R.115/2024](#)), which stated that:

“The way we develop St Helier, and the rest of our parishes not only affects the character of our Island but how we interact with each other. It has important implications for transport, crime and recreation and will help address future climate change, energy and water use challenges.”

Parishes are also consulted on various matters that relate to them from a policy perspective. For example, housing policy and planning policy, such as the development of the Island Plan. The need to engage properly with the parishes was specifically included in the formal Government Engagement Framework ([R.136/2023](#)), which stated that

“any project that is likely to impact on parish administration should be considered by the Comité des Connétables,” and that the government should work with parish halls as part of accessibility and community outreach as part of consultation initiatives.

If the Panel has not done so already, individual Ministers responsible for particular government activities should be contacted in the first instance; the Article 30A report might be useful in this regard. Ministers and their departments will work actively with Parishes on community and local issues relevant to their area.

In an official capacity, the Chief Minister’s relationship with the Parishes is through working with the Comité des Connétables and their representatives. The Chair of the Comité is invited to meetings of the Council of Ministers by longstanding convention, and a representative of the Comité is a member of Emergencies Council.

2. What mechanisms are in place for collaboration between the government and the parishes on community services and local issues?

Please see response to question one.

3. How often do representatives from the government and the parishes meet to discuss joint priorities or concerns (if at all)?

While there is no formal arrangement for regular meetings, the Comité, either collectively or as individual Connétables, can access Ministers and the Council of Ministers in various ways. As stated earlier, the Chair of the Comité is invited to meetings of the Council of Ministers and is free to provide comment on issues from a Comité perspective or speak with the Chief Minister directly if they wish to bring issues to the Council’s attention.

Additionally, it is also worth noting that several Connétables are members of the Council of Ministers, which ensures that the voices of the parishes are heard at Ministerial level.

4. Do the parishes have a role in shaping or providing input into broader government policies and strategies? If so, how is this done?

Yes, they do; please see response to question one.

5. Is there a formal process for ensuring that parish needs are considered when the government is developing new policies?

Yes, please see response to question one.

6. How are government-wide strategies communicated to the parishes, and do they have any involvement in their implementation?

Parishes will be involved in the implementation of strategies if relevant to their remit. For example, strategies to respond to serious incidents will involve close working with the parishes, whereas policy related to external relations that relate to all of government may not be relevant at a parish level.

Good examples of the development of strategies with the parishes include the Children's Plan 2024-27, which included discussions about the parishes' role as statutory corporate parents and children's rights.

7. Is there a designated liaison officer within the government responsible for coordinating with the parishes on local matters?

While there is no specific designated liaison officer, individual civil servants make contact with Parish authorities and political representatives on a case by case basis in order to address any issues raised.

a. If there isn't a parish liaison officer, do you think it would be beneficial to have one to streamline communication and collaboration between the government and parishes?

This government is determined to curb the growth of the public service. So, whilst some may argue the benefits of having a dedicated role, it would be unlikely to be justified when compared to other resourcing pressures.

The variety of activities between government and the parishes are so wide-ranging that a single role looking to manage communication and collaboration, from social housing to environmental controls, for example, would be difficult to achieve. Indeed, it may actually create another layer between parish officials and government officials in departments.

8. How does the government ensure that feedback from parishes is heard and acted upon in decision-making processes?

As stated in the response to question one, at an official-to-official level the parishes are considered in the development of policies, and it is through this process that their feedback will be acted upon as appropriate. Any feedback received from the parishes during a consultation period would be considered when final decisions are made on that issue.

9. Does the government provide any support to the parishes to help them deliver services effectively?

The Climate Change Engagement team offer to support parishes with reducing their carbon footprint, including offering Carbon Literacy Training. One Parish recently attended this training and as a result they are being supported to deliver eco driver training to their workforce. Eco driver training improves fuel efficiency by about 15 mpg, so has the potential to provide some parishes with financial savings from their fleet.

The Climate Change Engagement team have also created a carbon emissions monitoring spreadsheet for parishes at their request. This spreadsheet allows them to track their fuel and energy usage whereby they can identify potential areas where savings can be made.

10. Are there any specific grants, funding programs, or resources that the government offers to assist parishes with local projects or initiatives?

Parishes are funded for their specific projects through the rates system. If and when the Parishes are involved in Government initiatives, the funding is made available according to the project and the need, e.g. student bus card passes, improvements for Government roads. There is no general grant or funding programme for Parish use.

11. What are the main challenges, if any, the government faces in working effectively with the parishes? How can these challenges be addressed?

The Government has not identified any significant challenges in working with the Parishes.

12. Are there any plans to enhance the relationship between the government and the parishes?

Liaison is ongoing on a wide range of subjects. Officers and Ministers are regularly invited to the Comité des Connétables to explain items in detail. There is a good working relationship, and a number of Ministers are serving Connétables and represent the parish perspective at Council of Ministers' meetings.

13. How do you envision the relationship between the government and the parishes evolving over the next few years?

As noted in the answer to question one, this is an important and long-standing partnership, with established methods of engagement. It is expected that this would continue without any changes.

Chief Minister



14. Are there any upcoming projects or initiatives where the government anticipates closer collaboration with the parishes?

Following a recent visit to the Comité des Connétables, the Head of Digital Services will be supporting officials in the Employment, Social Security and Housing Department in organising Parish-based sessions to assist Parishioners with digital matters. Parish Halls and Parish communication channels are used regularly to distribute information to Islanders, e.g. health campaigns and other important public consultations.

Government schools, particularly at Primary level, generally have good connections to the Parishes and work together in a variety of ways on a case-by-case basis.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Lyndon Farnham".

Deputy Lyndon Farnham
Chief Minister

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