

Response by the Procureurs of the Parish of St Martin
to the
Parishes and Government Review Panel

Terms of Reference

1. To examine and document the current relationship between the civic functions and services provided by the parish and government administration.
2. To consider how the government and parishes work collaboratively to deliver timely and effective community services. This includes but is not limited to:
 - a) Refuse and Recycling
 - b) Parks and Gardens
 - c) Play spaces
 - d) Honorary Policing
3. To explore the ways in which government engages and interacts with the parishes in order to deliver on its key strategies and policies (i.e. putting children first, carbon neutral roadmap, community safety, health prevention, reducing bureaucracy).
4. To review the administrative functions currently being delivered by the parishes and to consider whether different mechanisms might be needed to meet modern requirements for satisfactory interaction with relevant government functions. This will include but is not limited to:
 - a) Firearms certificates
 - b) Alcohol licensing
 - c) Administration and policing of roads, parks and beaches
 - d) Role of parish in the planning application process
5. To understand how the current system of rates operates and is being applied. To assess whether there is a role for the government in ensuring that each parish applies a transparent and sustainable model and a common methodology which acts in the best interests of all islanders.

Questions – Financial oversight of the Parish

1. Can you provide a summary of the process for allocating funds within the parish, and who is involved in the decision-making process?

The process for allocating funds etc. is made by the Parish Assembly when setting the budget and agreeing the parish rate.

2. How are different spending needs prioritised within the parish when allocating funds?

The process for allocating funds etc. is made by the Parish Assembly when setting the budget and agreeing the parish rate.

3. Are there specific criteria or guidelines used to assess which projects or initiatives receive funding?

The process for allocating funds etc. is made by the Parish Assembly when setting the budget and agreeing the parish rate.

4. How does the parish ensure that funds are allocated in a way that benefits parishioners?

The process for allocating funds etc. is made by the Parish Assembly when setting the budget and agreeing the parish rate.

5. What role does the Parish Assembly play in the decision-making process for fund allocation?

The process for allocating funds etc. is made by the Parish Assembly when setting the budget and agreeing the parish rate.

6. Do the Procureurs consider government strategies when making decisions about fund allocation? If so, which strategies are taken into account?

Fund allocation is as per the budget set by the Parish Assembly. The Procureurs “Carry out the lawful instructions/decisions of the Parish Assembly or officers in relation to the use and application of funds and resources, even if disagreeing with their wisdom ...” as above (see re Grouville (Procureurs du Bien Public) (1970) JJ 1451)

7. How do the Procureurs ensure that parish funding is aligned with the broader objectives or goals of the government (e.g. putting children first, health prevention, carbon neutral roadmap, community safety)?

Where the Parish has a duty under specific legislation to deliver then this should be provided within the budget (e.g. as duty bearer under Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022, scheduled public authority under FOI/DP etc); this is different from ‘government priorities or policies’ which are States of Jersey strategies

8. Have there been any instances when government priorities or policies have directly influenced how parish funds are allocated?

Where the Parish has a duty under specific legislation to deliver then this should be provided within the budget (e.g. as duty bearer under Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022, scheduled public authority under FOI/DP etc); this is different from ‘government priorities or policies’ which are States of Jersey strategies

9. How do the Procureurs coordinate with the government when their priorities or policies overlap with parish spending?

The Procureurs have no direct relationship with the government; should government priorities or policies overlap with Parish spending, the Constable will discuss such overlaps with the Comite des Connetables which will then make such representations as it sees fit.

10. Is there a formal or informal process for consulting with the government before making significant financial decisions or allocating funds for projects that could overlap with government policy?

Should government priorities or policies overlap with Parish spending, the Constable will discuss such overlaps with the Comite des Connetables which will then make such representations as it sees fit.

11. Do the Procureurs assess the potential impact of funded projects on the local community?

Allocation of funds e.g. charitable grants, is as per the Parish Assembly decision/budget

12. Do the Procureurs allocate funds based on the needs or demands of specific groups within the parish, such as youth services, the elderly, or businesses?

Allocation of funds e.g. charitable grants, is as per the Parish Assembly decision/budget

13. How do the Procureurs monitor and track the spending of allocated funds to ensure accountability and prevent overspending or misallocation?

The Procureurs meet with the Constable and the Parish Secretary on a regular basis to consider the allocation of funds and to prevent overspending and/or misallocation. The Parish Accountant prepares quarterly accounts and these are reviewed in detail by the Procureurs and the Constable each quarter.

14. Are there any external audits or reviews of the parish's finances to ensure transparency and responsible management of public funds?

All Parishes have their accounts independently/professionally audited to ensure transparency, audited accounts have to be presented to the Parish Assembly by Law (Rates Law Article 21) before setting the parish rate for the year

15. How do the Procureurs/parishes manage any surplus or deficit funds?

Surplus/deficit is factored into the following year budget, see Article 21(3) of the Rates Law

16. What types of projects or initiatives typically receive the most funding?

This will vary from Parish to Parish but in St Martin, the three most funded projects or initiatives are Staff salaries, pensions and social security, Refuse collection (including glass collection and kerbside recycling) and Parish road maintenance

17. How does the parish handle requests for funding from local organisations or groups, and what criteria are used to assess these requests?

Requests for funding – as per Q11/12 above and charitable grants? Grants are listed in the annual accounts which are published on the parish website; may also be communicated through parish magazine articles etc?

18. How do the parishes ensure transparency in the fund allocation process? Is there a public facing report or summary of how funds have been allocated and spent?

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19. How are decisions communicated to parishioners of how their contributions are being used?

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20. Is there a mechanism for parishioners to raise concerns or questions about fund allocation decisions?

Parishioners raise concerns at Parish Assembly/ies or directly with the Connétable

21. How does the parish ensure that allocated funds are spent as intended, and are there any measures in place to prevent misuse?

As per earlier questions, see the Procureurs duty on use/application of funds, the Parish Assembly approves the budget, accounts are audited and published etc.

22. Is there any joint funding or shared investment in projects between the parish and the government? If so, can you provide some examples?

In St Martin, we have only one such initiative; the Parish converted the old St Martin's School into La Vielle Ecole, a block containing a vet, a distribution outlet, a well-known supermarket, a chemist and a doctor's surgery and, in order to do so, borrowed a large sum from the government at a fixed rate of interest and which it will be repaying quarterly until 2036.