Comité des Connétables

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Deputy Helen Miles
Chair – Parishes and Government Review Panel

By Email to k.boydens@gov.je

Dear Chair and members

Thank you for your recent correspondence. We are disappointed that you were unable to attend the meeting arranged with the Comité for November 2025 and that it is no longer possible to hold a workshop with the Panel as originally proposed.

You have therefore asked that Connétables respond individually to a questionnaire, so that you can hear of personal perspectives, but we believe our individual views can be expressed in a single response and this will avoid duplication and repetition where there is only one response.

Our response may be published (subject to applying any necessary exemptions under FOI) and, being a single submission, this will draw together the various views of all Connétables.

We will start with the questions in the survey and then comment more broadly on the terms of reference; and where relevant we refer to submissions to the Panel and transcripts of public hearings particularly where these contain misunderstandings or inaccuracies as it is important these are corrected.

Part 1

2. How would you describe the current way the Comité operates? What works well? Where are the challenges and how are they addressed? *

Before answering this question, it is helpful to explain the 'Comité des Connétables'. This is aptly summed up in a memorandum from the then Deputy Greffier of the States dated 7 December 1983 which distinguishes between:

> *"The Supervisory Committee created by the provisions of the Parish Rate (Administration) (Jersey) Rules, 1946, as amended, and is therefore a statutory body"*
>
> and
>
> "*the Committee of Connétables which consists of the same people but is not a statutory body. It is a Committee which the Connétables decided to create because it facilitates consultation and collaboration between the Connétables as the people at the head of each Parish administration"*.

In a Memorandum dated 3 February 2015, the then H.M. Attorney General also commented on the presumed origin of the Comité des Connétables and said "*although its existence was not acknowledged in the States of Jersey Law 1966, or in Standing Orders under that Law, this body of the Connétables functioned in some respects as though it were a Committee of the States."* As it was not acknowledged in that 1966 Law, a proposition, amendment, comment or report which the Comité agreed was generally presented in the name of a single Connétable (usually the Comité Chairman). However, there are exceptions such as this example from 1993 which shows a draft Law lodged in the name of the Comité des Connétables - Jersey Heritage archive download.

This changed with the arrival of ministerial government under the States of Jersey Law 2005 and the **statutory** recognition of the Comité des Connétables consisting of the 12 Connétables. The new Standing Orders of the States include the Comité lodging a proposition, or presenting a report or comment, and the Chairman of the Comité answering questions and making statements.

The Comité agrees its own rules and meets to discuss items of interest to the Connétables and their Parishes.

The Comité's current statutory role works well and recognises that in certain areas it is possible and appropriate for a 'corporate' decision to be made, or action taken, whilst in other matters the Connétable is the Parish's representative in the States Assembly and that Connétables may hold differing views on matters debated.

Challenges may therefore arise in areas where the wishes and needs of Parishes differ. However, as it is not the Comité's role or remit to hold or take a collective view or decision on every issue this is not an issue.

3. What are your views on the Comité becoming a statutory body with clearly defined rules and responsibilities?

As explained above, the Comité des Connétables is a 'statutory body' and your question does not explain why you consider this is not the case. We do note the public hearing transcript with the Chief Minister and the Minister for Treasury and Resources contains inaccuracies in this regard (page 27).

The Comité is set up by law (statute – the Standing Orders of the States of Jersey defines the "Comité des Connétables" as the Connétables of the 12 parishes) and is authorised to implement certain legislation, sometimes by being empowered or delegated to set rules, for example making an Order in a particular area.

The Comité therefore already has a statutory basis and it is further recognised in legislation where it has a specific duty or defined role. Examples include the following but this is not an exhaustive list –

- Loi (1914) sur la Voirie
- Dogs (Jersey) Law 1961
- Firearms (Jersey) Law 2000
- Shops (Regulation of Opening and Deliveries) (Jersey) Law 2010
- Police (Complaints and Conduct) (Jersey) Law 2022
- Rates (Jersey) Law 2005

Aside from this, the Comité continues as a body that "*facilitates consultation and collaboration between the Connétables as the people at the head of each Parish administration*" through the pooling of knowledge and experiences and working together to achieve common objectives.

The Comité determines its own rules (details are published on our website Comité des Connétables | Comité des Connétables) which include the appointment of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman, quorum and voting. A decision of the Comité made in accordance with these rules "*is made to the intent that each member will respect it as a collective decision of the Comité*" but in reaching a decision on an issue we recognise that a Connétable will look to serve the best interests of his or her parishioners and ratepayers so may not necessarily be bound to a particular outcome or action (other than when required by law). Examples include –

- Working together/shared actions –
    - Introduction of a dog licence online service/system to replace numerous separate systems across the parishes
    - Agreed charge for property search correspondence
    - Policy updates e.g. under the Firearms (Jersey) Law 2000

- Working differently –
  - Online rates payment service introduced at different times (St Helier and St John added this a year or two after the other 10 parishes) though all parishes use the same system
  - Service provision varies as agreed/requested by Parish Assemblies e.g. two parishes operate a residential home (St Brelade and St Helier), other parishes have a community support group (St Clement, St Martin, St Helier), some have funded and developed youth and community centres (St Mary, Trinity), etc.

The "Supervisory Committee" is established by the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005 and consists of the 12 Connétables. Articles 40-43 of the Law set out the duties and powers of the Supervisory Committee and the rules for its meetings.

In summary, the Comité des Connétables and the Supervisory Committee are already statutory bodies with clearly defined rules and responsibilities; any change to this position will be a matter for consideration by Connétables following the 2026 elections and taking into account any recommendations the Panel may make.

4. How does the Comité contribute to delivering Government Strategic Priorities? *

This appears to relate to the Review's terms of reference no. 4, below, and our comments are set out under comments on the terms of reference –

> *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).*

5. How is the Comité supported in its role in terms of legal advice, administration and policy development?

Until c. the 1980s, the Comité was supported administratively by a committee clerk in the States Greffe. Due to budget cuts, the States Greffe advised it could no longer offer this support and, since then, the Parishes have funded the office for the Comité. It should be noted that in delivering this service the office supports every Parish and the staff work closely together for the benefit of all the Parishes.

The job description for the Secretary is to provide an exceptional and comprehensive advisory and executive service to the Parish Connétables and Parishes, delivering a coherent and dynamic programme of complex policy, legislative, procedural and constitutional work. In doing so, promote confidence in the operation of the Parishes holding to the highest standards of integrity and professionalism working at the heart of Parish politics in Jersey.

In relation to policy development, it also includes to undertake research and analysis of challenging legislative and policy material, and deliver wholly reliable written and oral briefings to Connétables/Parishes on a range of complex matters to underpin informed political discourse and decision making. This includes, for example, the preparation of law-drafting briefs and liaising with the Legislative Drafting Office on the drafting of legislation and amendments for the Comité's consideration and approval.

In terms of legal advice, the Comité is supported by the Law Officers' Department on matters where there is a responsibility to the States but, if a matter also involves a States Department, the Comité might need to seek independent advice. The Attorney General makes reference to this in his submission.

For the last c. 40 years the parishes have thus sourced and funded their own expertise in these areas, whether this be in-house or outsourced using advisers in particular niche areas such as data protection and IT.

This gives the Comité and Parishes independence from Government; the Comité is not reliant on Government resources being available, nor does it compete for the Government's limited resources to meet its own demands (it may be noted that 'financial and staffing implications' on propositions often comment that the adoption of the proposition will result in other work having to be deferred).

As Connétables, we all agree we would not want these resources to be provided/funded by government. Each Parish is a separate corporation sole.

Part 2. Parish Assemblies

6. What are your views on the current democratic processes within Parish Assemblies? Are they effective and representative? What improvements, if any, would you suggest to ensure a greater number of parishioners engage with assemblies?

7. What is your view on enabling virtual attendance and remote voting at parish assemblies?

The legislation covering the Parish Assembly and the Ecclesiastical Assembly (a Parish Assembly but chaired by the Rector as the business relates to ecclesiastical matters) is –

- *Loi (1804) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales*
- *Loi (1815) sur l'ordre de procedure aux assemblées paroissiales (Article 12A in 1804 Loi)*
- *Loi (1905) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales*

There is also the *Loi (1842) sur les publications dans les Eglises.*

The membership, voting rights and functions are outlined in The Parish Assembly | Comité des Connétables. All members have the right to attend and vote but many choose not to exercise that right. Whilst attendance is often low, this may be because the items to be decided are non-contentious.

It should be noted that there have been a number of Parish Assemblies to agree items of significant public interest where hundreds have attended. Where this is expected, Parishes have made specific arrangements to ensure all members have the right to attend and vote. Examples include –

- St Lawrence Parish Assembly in February 2018 regarding the installation of a W.C. at the Parish church – the Assembly was attended by over 500, held over two venues with audio provision and all were able to participate and vote.
- Grouville Parish Assembly in June 2025 attended by c. 200 to discuss the children's play area (Sandy Park).
- St Peter Parish Assembly in June 2024 attended by c. 200 to discuss housing.
- St Helier Parish Assemblies to hear a requête about access route to new hospital – this was held during the coronavirus pandemic with parishioners present in the Assembly Room, Le Capelain Gallery and Old Magistrate's Court as well online (10 February 2021 over 200 people attended; 9 June 2021 over 150 people attended).

There is also the option for ten parishioners to request a Parish Assembly to discuss a specific issue – known as a "*requête*". The request must be made in writing, dated, and –

- Mention the subject ('sujet') put forward, which must be a lawful one.
- There needs to be a proposition
- The proposition must relate to a matter within the competence of the Parish Assembly.

The role of the Parish Assembly does not extend to matters beyond those specifically relating to the administration of the Parish. On occasions meetings are held in Parish Halls to debate matters of local interest; these are informal proceedings and must not be confused with the formal business of the Parish Assembly.

Overall, Assemblies are effective in conducting the Parish's business and those wishing to participate are able to attend. We recognise that there is always room for improvement and have more recently considered issues such as attendance and voting options. The Panel may be aware of the proposition of the then Senator S Mézec "Parish Assemblies: revised arrangements" (P.92/2019) which was withdrawn without debate. The aim of P.92/2019 was for new ways for people to get involved with decision making other than by attending a Parish Assembly meeting e.g. if they couldn't get a babysitter etc.; options might include 'proxy voting' or a Parish referendum on important issues.

The physical capacity at a Parish/Public/Town Hall is limited and it is not possible to accommodate all parishioners who are eligible, or might wish, to attend. This is particularly so in relation to contentious issues which could include Parish elections, setting the rate and specific issues which are the subject of a *requête* (an Assembly pursuant to Article 9 of the 1804 Loi).

Covid-19 also presented unprecedented challenges given the social distancing requirements and limit on the number of persons able to attend an event/meeting. Parish Assemblies nevertheless had to, and did, continue to ensure the business of the Parish was conducted – it was "business as usual". Public health guidelines – which varied from month to month - imposed capacity limits and/or physical distancing requirements which limited the number able to attend a Parish Assembly.

The Connétables and Parishes are committed to supporting parishioners, particularly the vulnerable and those needing to shield, whilst at the same time ensuring Parish business continues to be conducted and that restrictions do not preclude the normal democratic activities and process. Where reasonable, arrangements should take into account those unable to attend an Assembly in person.

Future proofing is important and issues such as the following will need to be addressed –

- Virtual attendance and voting at a Parish Assembly
- Electronic voting.

We had made some progress in considering the requirements for a law-drafting brief but this was suspended when the Jersey Law Commission Report was launched. We comment on that in the next section below.

Part 3. Jersey Law Commission Report

8. What are your views on recommendations made in Parish Assemblies: A Better Legislative Framework (R.187/2024). Do you agree with its recommendations? Why or why not?

Connétables were briefed on the Jersey Law Commission paper "Parish Assemblies: A Better Legislative Framework" and provided its comments on various issues which are included in R.187/2024.

The Loi (1804) au sujet des assemblées paroissiales ("the 1804 Law") sets out basic procedures for convening and conducting an assembly. The Comité commented that legislation should only set out specifics relating to processes and should not establish the Assembly as a statutory body (it is and should remain a creature under customary law), and the supervisory jurisdiction of the Royal Court should continue.

On the issue of voting and attendance, the options to facilitate wider participation at Assemblies has already been considered, for example by permitting a ballot to be held after a meeting, and these will continue to be investigated.

The Comité reached the stage of preparing draft law-drafting instructions but further work was put on hold given the Jerey Law Commission topic consultation.

On the vires for the States Assembly, if so minded, to make provision by Regulations, the Comité considered the provision of subordinate legislation namely Regulations, Orders and procedural standing orders.

- The Comité agrees the States Assembly should be given wide-ranging powers to legislate by Regulations for Parish Assemblies.
- It also agrees that the Comité des Connétables, in consultation with the Attorney General, should be able to make Orders that provide for the more minor matters relating to Parish Assemblies which are not covered by Regulations.
- The Consultation Paper also proposes that the Parish Assembly, with the concurrence of the Comité des Connétables, should be able to make procedural standing orders suiting the needs of that Parish for the benefit of electors attending an Assembly. The Comité considers the process to reach agreement on the wording of such bye-laws will be protracted and likely to result in a lack of consistency and variations across Parishes, and is therefore of the opinion that such matters should be covered by Orders made by the Comité.

The Comité supports the transfer of powers and the making of the necessary provisions in the various laws listed in the consultation paper to carry through any reforms deemed appropriate without the need for primary legislation (i.e. legislation which requires the approval of the Privy Council).

The Comité considers that, if the States Assembly is to be given wide-ranging powers to legislate for Assemblies by Regulations, this should provide for Parishes generally or one or more specific Parishes depending on their different needs (this would take into account, for example, the Parish of St Helier Conseil Municipal discussions).

9. Do you agree with the recommendation to repeal the 1804 and 1905 Laws and recast them in English while preserving their current effect and usage? Why or why not?

The Comité discussed whether, to make the law more accessible and to facilitate future changes, new legislation should be enacted in English to replace the 1804 Loi and other legislation. The Comité heard views both for and against new legislation but reached no decision thereon.

This is an example of an issue where the views of Connétables vary, some preferring to retain the history in the 1804 and 1905 Laws with others holding the view that they should be recast in English.

Should the 1804 and 1905 Laws be retained, it is likely this would be merely as an enabling/over-arching Law with the newer provisions being enacted in English in subordinate legislation.

10. Does the Comité intend to bring forward any legislation based on this report?

The Comité Chairman attended a meeting of the Legislation Advisory Panel when it discussed the Commission's report. Our understanding is there was general agreement regarding the proposals and law drafting instructions (which were part of the report) and there will be further discussion with the Comité following receipt of draft amendments by that Panel (currently in the law-drafting programme).

Part 4. Governance and Administration

11. Should there be a formal structure for the recruitment and induction for honorary officers (including Procureurs)?

All honorary officers are elected either by a Parish Assembly or, for Procureurs du Bien Public and for Centeniers, at an election conducted in accordance with the Elections (Jersey) Law 2002.

Election – parishioners (which can include ratepayers for certain roles) are regularly informed of the various roles and the opportunities to stand for election e.g. through articles in the Parish magazine, newsletters etc. For a number of roles, the timing of the elections is set in legislation and greater publicity may be given at that time, particularly if the elections are in every Parish. Information is also available e.g. on Parishes websites, setting out the role, duties and responsibilities.

Induction – all elected officers will have an introduction to the Parish and be appraised of Parish policies, data protection etc. In addition:

- Procureurs du Bien Public – are elected as trustees and have a wide range of governance experience and qualifications. A guidance document Guidance-for-Procureurs-du-Bien-Public-2022.pdf sets out the role and duties; a training event was held in October 2022 and is likely to be repeated following the March 2026 elections and there is good inter-Parish co-operation between Procureurs as required.
- Honorary Police – each Parish provides an induction and ensures relevant training courses are attended e.g. foundation course, officer safety training, radio/comms, speed detection, first aid etc.; there are additional courses as required e.g. driver training, with relevant training records maintained and refresher courses attended. Enhanced DBS checks are undertaken (vetting checks are provided by SOJP for all members of the Honorary Police before they are sworn to office).
- Rates assessors – are elected in rotation each year, receive in-house and use A-guide-to-the-assessment-of-Parish-Rates-in-Jersey-.pdf. There is also an association for rates assessors which holds an annual meeting and at which updates, news and training is provided.
- Roads Committee members and Roads Inspectors – are elected every 3 years and receive in-house induction; separate training sessions are arranged as required e.g. in relation to new legislation (e.g. Roads Works and Events Law) or significant changes (consultation on the Roads Law review). One change that may be recommended as a result of that Review is to rotate the election of these officers to reduce the risk of losing all experienced members at the same time.

Elected officers sign up to the standards in Parish service and to confirm they understand the requirements of data protection and confidentiality. We are always open to reviewing processes as gaps are identified by officers to ensure those elected are able to provide the best service to the Parish and its parishioners.

12. Do you see value in formalising inter-parish coordination for Procureurs (for example annual meetings, shared guidance)?

Please see the response to Q11; there is good inter-Parish co-operation between Procureurs and meetings are arranged as required (an election takes place every 18 months in each Parish, the two Procureurs each being elected for a 3-year term of office).

The Procureurs role is to 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 and they will therefore take advice if necessary from the Parish's own lawyers or, in appropriate cases from the Attorney General, or seek the guidance of the Royal Court on the meaning or legality of any such instructions

13. Do you think there should be common accounting standards across all parishes to improve transparency and comparability?

Accounting standards are crucial for ensuring that financial information is reliable, comparable, and understandable. They help prevent fraud and misrepresentation in financial reporting, thereby fostering trust among stakeholders. By adhering to these standards, companies can provide a clear and consistent financial picture, which is essential for effective decision-making.

We note that several submissions to the Panel refer to the accounting standards used and suggest GAAP might be appropriate. The question was also posed to the Chief Minister and the Minister for Treasury and Resources at the public hearing on 24 November 2025. The Group Director, Strategic Finance, stated at that public hearing -

> *"Some of the challenge would be when we say G.A.A.P. it is finding what the right generally accepted accounting principles for the body in question are. Obviously if you are a private company you may use I.F.R.S. (International Financial Reporting Standards) or you may use one of the U.K. company reporting standards. If you were a smaller entity you might use the I.F.R.S. 102, which is designed for small companies. The Government of Jersey has moved to I.F.R.S. as amended, following what the U.K. Central Government do. You have also got I.P.S.A.S. (International Public Sector Accounting Standards). I am not aware of an out-of-the-box standard solution that would apply to a public sector entity the size of a parish. I do not mean this disrespectfully, they are relatively small in the world of accounting standards. How would you make sure that whatever standards you are applying are proportionate and adding value? You would have to do some work to decide what they are and I guess it is what additional benefit you would have if all of the information is being provided in the reports as they stand? Would you just be putting another layer of complexity on top of something which is working? I think you were just before undertaking what could be quite interesting, I should say, although I am not necessarily volunteering for extra work, exercise to find out what standards would you apply but would it improve how well parishioners understand those accounts? Because if not, is it justified?"*

The Minister for Treasury and Resources said of the Parishes accounts:

> *"I have not seen a set of accounts where the auditor has raised any concerns. The accounts that you see are very detailed, very, very detailed. I think they are all similar in the sense of what you might call Heads of Expenditure."*
>
> *"I absolutely have no evidence there is anything problematic in terms of the financial administration in the parish."*
>
> *"… the accounts are not massively detailed. The accounts are maybe 8, 9, 10 pages. They are detailed but they are a small document and they are not difficult to read. I think if you would bring in standards, as Andrew says, bringing standards that they then have a whole list of well we have not followed that because, we have not followed that because, et cetera. You are then having to say we will adopt the standard but then have a whole other declaration saying we have not followed it because it is just not appropriate for us; it is difficult."*

The Chief Minister said –

> *"The key thing I think is that their accounts contain all of the information and detail that the parishioners need if they want to investigate their parishes' expenses."*
>
> *"I think they seem to be well resourced, well financially managed. All, if not most, of the parishes have got good reserves; they run tight teams. If anything I think it would be the other way round. I think Government could perhaps learn from some of the ways they operate."*

A Parish is a corporate body separate from its Parishioners – and each Parish is a separate body corporate from other Parishes. The Parishes accounts are all audited by professional firms of auditors to recognised standards, generally historic cost convention but may be GAAP aligned (as a result of work in 2013/14 initiated a former Procureur du Bien Public, the late Clive Barton MBE, the Parish of St Helier uses an accruals-based "GAAP-lite" approach to recognise assets and liabilities, with a reconciliation to the expenditure requirement under rates law performed for setting the Parish Rate i.e. removing non-cash items) and in accordance with professional auditors responsibilities. The auditor expresses an opinion on compliance with the Parish's accounting policies and provides reasonable assurance that the accounts are free from material misstatement. The audited accounts are received by the Parish Assembly in accordance with the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005.

Parish accounts are generally quite straightforward, particularly for the smaller Parishes. Where there are more complex financial arrangements then this may need a higher level of disclosure and there should be proper disclosure to parishioners of the risks. The format of accounts, particularly for companies/businesses, and valuation of assets, is usually driven by income earning assets to reflect the commercial value - most parishes do not have commercially run operations/assets.

While greater alignment between parishes may assist comparability, mandating standards such as UK GAAP (FRS 102) would add significant complexity and disclosure with limited benefit, and could reduce understandability for Parish Assemblies. Also, Parishes vary greatly in size and operations, so a 'one-size-fits-all' approach may not be appropriate.

The Panel referenced "*small charities that are governed by the Charities Commission*" and that "*parishes are not governed by anybody, other than the Connétable, who set their own standards, who set their own policies*". That is not correct. Oversight of the Parishes has always been – and still is – provided by the Royal Court.

A Visite Royale is held every six years in every Parish. This is the occasion when the members of the Court, including the Judicial Greffier and the Viscount, assemble at the parish hall so that the Connétable may present the accounts. These are provided in advance to the Court so that it may examine the accounts in order generally to ensure that they are properly kept. The Connétable must be ready to answer any queries the Court has and, in fact, Connétables are interrogated on the accounts and must be fully conversant with the figures.

In summary:

- Parish accounts are prepared to recognised standards, such as historic cost convention or "GAAP-lite"
- Parish accounts are professionally audited
- Accounts are similar in terms of 'heads of expenditure' but no 'one size fits all'
- Parish accounts will be reviewed by –
    - The Connétable and Procureurs du Bien Public
    - A committee appointed for that purpose by the Parish Assembly
    - Professional auditors, and
    - Audited accounts are presented, and explained, to the Parish Assembly
- The Royal Court has oversight of Parishes including the accounts (in addition to the Parish Assembly).

14. What are your views on the timing of rate-setting assemblies? Should they remain as they are, or be moved to before the financial year starts?

To answer this question, we would first refer to the provisions in the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005. Firstly, Article 15 specifies that any funds raised from the parish rate in excess of payment of the general expenses must be either –

- credited to a fund established for a special purpose agreed by the Parish Assembly, or
- offset against the general expenses of the parish arising during future financial years.

Articles 21 and 22 then deal with setting the parish rate. The current process may be summarised as the Parish Assembly –

- receives the audited accounts for the financial year just ended (this will identify any surplus to be applied against the general expenses during future financial years)
- approves the estimates of the funds required by the parish for the current financial year with or without amendment
- approves a parish rate of an amount that will produce for the parish income that is at least sufficient to satisfy the requirements set out in the approved estimates, taking into account any surplus of funds that are to be used to offset the general expenses of the parish during that financial year.

We note that several submissions to the Panel comment on the unusual approach of setting the budget after – rather than before - the start of the financial year.

It should also be noted that the Rates Law includes the following definitions –

- "financial year" means the year from 1st May till 30th April;
- "rateable year" means a year beginning on the first day of January in respect of which this Law authorizes the levying of rates.

Of course, it is possible to amend legislation. But consideration would need to be given to the above definitions, to the timing of the rate-setting Assembly and to ensuring sufficient time for assessment committees to complete their work, and for the review and appeal procedures so that the Parish Assembly has certainly as to the number of quarters from which the rate will be raised. Moving rates assemblies to before the start of the financial year could create challenges, estimates would need to be set without audited accounts, reducing transparency and making it harder for the Assembly to assess the Parish's financial position. Maintaining the current timing allows each Assembly to make informed decisions tailored to its Parish.

In addition to the Parish rate, there is also provision for a 'supplementary rate' to be set by a Parish if it considers that it is necessary to do so having regard to the requirements of the parish though we cannot recall a supplementary rate being set.

On balance, and taking into account the above, the views of Connétables are that the timing of the rate-setting assemblies works well as it enables the Parish Assembly to know with certainty of any surplus in the previous financial year which should be applied when setting the rate for the year in accordance with the process set out in the law. No case for change has been presented, nor have the submissions made reference to the potential surplus arising in the accounts should the budget be set prior to the commencement of the financial year.

The States Assembly does set its budget ahead of the financial year, and in doing so will determine the taxes to be paid, so presumably cannot take into account underspends. The Chief Minister commented that Government could perhaps learn from some of the ways the Parishes operate.

15. Are there any additional comments or suggestions you would like to share? The survey also includes an opportunity for you to comment on any other matters you may wish to bring to the Panel's attention, including, but not limited to, refuse and recycling, parish rates, community support teams, and firearms certificates.

We turn now to the **Panel's terms of reference**, and comment on these areas and on some of the submissions received by the Panel as follows:

1. <u>To examine and document the current relationship between the civic functions and services provided by the parish and government administration.</u>

   The current relationship has evolved over many decades and a good example would be education. Parish schools were established in the late 19th century to provide education for children in the Parish. This was subsequently taken over by the States with the enacting of legislation, subsequently replaced by the Education (Jersey) Law 1999. Of note is Article 3(3) which states that "*the States shall continue to have possession of and be responsible for the maintenance of the parish schools of Jersey*". Newer schools have been built by the States but many of the original school premises remain owned by the Parishes but used by government at no charge save for the cost of maintenance .

The wide range of civic functions and services is too broad to address in detail though the terms of reference mention some specific areas which are covered in the following sections.

The functions and services provided by parish and government administration were considered in some detail following the Machinery of Government Review in 2000 chaired by Sir Cecil Clothier. The 'Review of the Relationship between the Parishes and the Executive' led to the adoption of P.40/2004 though much of this was rescinded by the adoption of P.66/2005 (the reasons are set out in that report and are not reproduced here).

2. <u>To consider how the government and parishes work collaboratively to deliver timely and effective community services. This includes but is not limited to:</u>

- **Refuse and Recycling**

  The Panel has heard from the Connétable of St John, in his capacity as Minister for infrastructure, of the Parishes arrangements for the collection of refuse and, more recently, for kerbside recycling collections in some Parishes.

  The government's aspiration is to increase the recycling rate, and the waste hierarchy gives the top priorities to prevent waste. It ranks waste management options against what's best for the environment with priority given to: reduce, reuse and repair, recycle, energy recovery and disposal.

  In 2024 the Comité received a presentation on the current policy work around Commercial Waste charging and the future provision of the recycling Bring Banks. The recycling rate for Jersey (municipal and commercial collections through GoJ run services) had increased from 30% in 2015 to 35% in 2022 but this is lower than published figures for Guernsey, Scotland, Wales and England.

  GoJ's ambitions are an overall waste minimisation and an increase in the recycling rate by a cohesive and aligned island operation, with all Parishes providing kerbside recycling.

  Currently each Parish manages its own refuse collections with some provided in-house but others contracting out the service. As well as kerbside collections not being universal, there are other differences between parishes in the mechanism of collection – for example some parishes charge businesses for additional collections, and some have outsourced collection arrangements. The cost of refuse contracts amounts to about a third of total expenditure for each Parish. For those Parishes which do not currently offer a kerbside recycling collection the barriers are identifying a contractor and also the cost. The Parish of St Martin introduced kerbside recycling collections in November 2025 with the annual charge being £61,000 (Parish Assembly minutes - Signed-Minutes.pdf). Another Parish has estimated a 40% increase in rates to cover such a service and income cannot be 'grown' in this way – the Parish Assembly approves the estimates and rate.

  We understand that Parishes opting to use Government channels for Kerbside collected recyclables, receive financial assistance in the initial set up costs for provision of containers and service roll out promotion. Once the service is in place replacement containers is provided at half cost. Otherwise, there is no financial support either way for the ongoing service to the Parishes.

It was the government's intention to remove the recycling bring banks which are located around the Parishes – these are well-used by islanders and we are pleased that these remain at present albeit in one Parish it is only as a result of the Parish Assembly agreeing to cover the cost of the land rental for the site (an example of the government transferring costs to a Parish).

- **Parks and Gardens**

  There are a large number of parks and gardens in Jersey for the use of Islanders, including those formally designated under Policing of Parks (Jersey) Regulations 2005. The ownership and maintenance of these parks sits with central Government and with individual Parishes, the costs of provision and maintenance are currently met in line with ownership. Government parks include the Howard Davis Park, Coronation Park, Churchill Memorial Park, Pont Marquet Country Park, Millennium Town Park, La Collette and Bingham Gardens, Gorey Gardens and Devon Gardens.

  Ownership will have arisen either because of historic ownership of the land or because of a specific bequest resulting in the development of a park in a specific location. Parishes administer their own parks and gardens, and these will be funded from within ratepayer funds.

  Parks and gardens serve as part of a community facility and are used by Islanders in general and by tourists. One of the differences in the St Helier provision is that the parish runs its own nursery and has its own staff. It also undertakes contract work e.g. for the Government (Millennium Park). Other Parishes may have a smaller team of maintenance/grounds staff or will contract out this work.

- **Play spaces**

  Within parks and gardens, both Parishes and government have looked to provide play spaces. The Jersey Play Plan 2025 to 2028 was published recently and references the Government's commitment to making significant investments to create new spaces for young people and enhance existing facilities over the next few years. It also offers to create guidance for people who are building new play spaces, update planning laws about play spaces, investigate which areas in Jersey need more play space etc. However, it does not identify any money for the strategy or propose how such investments will be funded.

  There are also areas where government has chosen to withdraw from the provision of play spaces, for example the Sandy Park in Grouville, resulting in ratepayers being asked at a Parish Assembly to take over and fund the park.

  The Parishes, as duty bearers under the Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022, will consult with children and young people when installing play spaces e.g. Parish of St Martin Village Green.

- **Honorary Policing**

  The Honorary Police are primarily a local resource, with persons elected to serve their Parish community as Centenier, Vingtenier and Constable's Officers.

  A member of the Honorary Police of a Parish is empowered to act within the territorial limits of the Parish (see the Honorary Police (Jersey) Law 1974). The jurisdiction is extended in certain circumstances (Article 5 of the Law) and H M Attorney General's directive sets out the Powers and Duties outside home Parish - Law Officers' Department. The Honorary Police of a Parish may also respond to requests for assistance from another Parish to meet a policing need, as provided for by Article 5A. It must be noted that a Connétable's liability in respect of torts committed by members of the Honorary Police under Article 22 of the 1974 Law includes a member of the Honorary Police of another Parish whilst he or she is placed at the Parish's disposal pursuant to Article 5A.

All members of the Honorary Police have policing powers. However, certain powers are exclusively reserved to the Centenier such as the power to charge, and conduct a parish hall inquiry etc. (see Article 3).

The Honorary Police work closely with the States of Jersey Police (SOJP) who provide community police officers within each Parish. The community police officers are expected to be skilful in solving problems and work collaboratively with the Honorary Police and other agencies to seek long term solutions. This is welcomed by all Connétables but is a service which is often under threat due to SOJP budget constraints.

Each Parish funds the operational and support costs of its own Honorary Police. The Panel has questioned whether this is appropriate, citing the funding of special constables in the United Kingdom and that the town is not expected to provide the cars, uniforms, radios, etc. But making this comparison overlooks that the Honorary Police are parochial and not under the direction of SOJP (UK special constables are part of the UK Police Forces).

That said, the introduction and adoption of new technology by SOJP and expectation for the Honorary Police to do likewise without prior consultation has resulted in unacceptable costs being passed on. Recent examples include the requirement for every Centenier to have a personal laptop for Court work and management of Court papers (this was eventually funded by a grant from the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund) and the proposed upgrade to radios (now postponed but likely to need six-figure funding within the next couple of years to cover all Parishes).

The Parishes engage SOJP to provide training for members of the Honorary Police. This generally works well but there have been occasions when SOJP's resources have been limited due to a new intake of cadets and they are unable to provide training courses on specified dates.

The other area of concern is when SOJP is unable to deploy officers to deal with an incident, or to support an island event, resulting in the expectation that members of the Honorary Police will turn out. Members of the Honorary Police are volunteers with work and family commitments; they are not full-time. The expectation that they will always be able to cover when SOJP is not available is unrealistic.

3. <u>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).</u>

As a body, the Comité does not have a statutory role in setting or delivering government strategic priorities.

Each Connétable does, of course, contribute to setting the priorities as a member of the States Assembly. As States members, Connétables may also serve as Ministers, Assistant Ministers, on Scrutiny or other bodies such as the Corporate Parenting Board, and therefore each also contributes to delivering GSP's in these ways.

Occasionally, but not always, when States departments look to change policy, they will ask to meet the Comité to discuss the proposals. This is welcomed and enables due consideration of the issues and, we hope, a better outcome in terms of the proposals. It can also avoid the need for the Comité to have to propose amendments to draft legislation or propositions.

Implementation by Parishes will vary as not all will be directly applicable. Where adoption will incur costs for ratepayers, the funding will need to be approved by a Parish Assembly.

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:

   - **Firearms certificates**

     The Firearms (Jersey) Law 2000 provides for the control of the manufacture, acquisition, transfer, possession and use of firearms, imitation firearms and other weapons and ammunition. This Law replaced an earlier Law and removed the 'port d'armes' permit for shotguns which no longer exists in Jersey.

     As in a number of other laws, the duties and responsibilities are shared between the Connétables and government. Though this may seem unusual to the outsider, it reflects how services and legislation has evolved in Jersey over many decades.

     Firearms certificates are issued by the Connétable of the Parish in which the applicant lives. The Comité has prepared and published a guide to the process, recently updated and available here - Connetables-manual-for-process-of-FAC-from-January-2026.pdf. The use of this guide by all Connétables ensures consistency in the application process and each case is determined having assessed -

     (a) that the applicant is fit to be entrusted with a firearm and is not prohibited by this Law from possessing a firearm
     (b) that the applicant has a good reason for having in his or her possession, or for purchasing or acquiring, the firearm or ammunition in respect of which the application is made; and
     (c) that in all the circumstances the applicant can be permitted to have the firearm or ammunition in his or her possession without danger to the public safety or to the peace.

     The SOJP undertakes a criminal record check on the applicant and appraises the Connétable of any relevant information as part of the Connétable's determination of the applicant's fitness to be entrusted with the firearm or ammunition. We expect SOJP to appraise the Connétable of any relevant changes or intelligence during the validity of the firearm certificate. Advice may also be sought from SOJP CFI (central firearms index) in relation to specific types of firearms.

     The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs/SOJP is responsible for certain other functions under the law such as the issue of visitor permits, registering firearms dealers etc.

     Whilst the duties and responsibilities are shared, it is the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs who will promote amendments to the Law (or make relevant Orders) when required. This does not always work so well as government's resources are often limited and have to be prioritised. There are a number of legislative amendments which have been identified or requested by the Comité which are outstanding (some from 2015/2016) including –

     i) Article 48 to cover Community Service Orders (CSO)
     ii) Article 37 to cover both suspended sentences and CSOs
     iii) Prescribe notices to cover the revocation or partial revocation of a firearm certificate, or to impose additional conditions on a firearm certificate
     iv) To enable a Connétable to suspend a firearm certificate, as a neutral act, in certain circumstances
     v) To update the application form (a prescribed form)
     vi) To increase the fee for the grant or variation of a firearm certificate.

In the Comité's opinion, the Connétables are best placed to issue firearms certificates as they often have personal local knowledge of the applicant and may receive feedback where an individual is experiencing particular issues which may suggest further investigation or action should be taken. We say this being very mindful of the responsibility it places on the Connétable but recognising the importance of public safety and the peace.

- **Alcohol licensing**

  This is very topical given the States debate on the Draft Alcohol Licensing (Jersey) Law 202- (P.122/2025).

  Currently applications are considered by the Parish Assembly with the recommendation being conveyed to the Licensing Assembly for determination of the application.

  The Panel will be aware from the P.112/2025 debate of the proposals for a new determining authority, and the Comité amendment that this should be the Parish rather than a re-named Gambling Commission. This should be no surprise to the government having been put forward in correspondence to the then Minister for Economic Development as far back as March 2014.

  We understand it was further raised with the Council of Ministers by the Connétable of St Helier and prior to the Minister bringing forward proposals for a review of the Licensing (Jersey) Law 1974. Presentations on the 2024 consultation were given by government to separate Parish groups but not to the Comité, though we invited such a meeting. We were informed the Comité would be briefed once the consultation responses had been analysed.

  The consultation was open in its optimal choice to replace the current Licensing Assembly with a dedicated Regulatory Authority being the Jersey Gambling Commission. The Comité's submission to the consultation was that the Gambling Authority should not become the Regulatory Authority, as these functions could instead be undertaken by the Parish, but this was ignored.

- **Administration and policing of roads, parks and beaches**

  Roads are another example of shared administrative responsibility. The Loi (1914) sur la Voirie classifies certain public roads as main roads which are under the responsibility of the Minister for Infrastructure. All other roads are classified as by-roads and the Parish owns all public by-roads within its boundaries. A Parish is a corporate body separate from its Parishioners. The by-roads are administered by the Roads Committee as agent of the Parish. Individual electors of the Parish have no rights of ownership as such in Parish property.

  The Parishes have been collaborating with government on the Roads Law Review which commenced a few years ago. The Review is to enable the development of appropriate, fit for purpose road transport legislation which will be more effective, improve safety and provide a framework within which central features of the Government Plan can be delivered. The Review is already considering the Road Authority structure and duties and so further comment seems premature at this time.

  However, it is relevant to highlight the co-ordination between Parishes and government particularly in relation to road clearance during storms and bad weather, as experienced in recent weeks.

  The Policing of Roads (Jersey) Regulations 1959 applies to all roads and specifies –

  - prohibited acts, e.g. littering, obstructing free passage, etc. and
  - acts for which written permission of the Connétable is required e.g. to organize or conduct any parade or procession, etc. In considering such requests, Connétables are mindful of the potential impact on all road users.

Another aspect of policing of roads relates to oversized vehicles – these display the P.30 plate issued by Driver and Vehicle Standards. The P.30 permit allows an oversize vehicle to be used on main roads but it cannot – without the written permission of the Connétable – be used on the by-roads of a Parish. Such permission will only be granted where it can be justified for access to premises and, if granted, permission may be for a single journey only or for multiple journeys and may be time limited. Oversize vehicles risk causing damage particularly to the surface and hedges/walls bordering the narrow by-roads.

Beaches are not administered by the Parish but are a government responsibility. It is the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development who gives written permission for certain acts under the Policing of Beaches (Jersey) Regulations 1959. When discussing this, some Connétables had comments regarding the issue of such licences e.g. for parking or driving on beaches.

Parks have been mentioned above and ownership varies, some with government and others with a Parish. The Policing of Parks (Jersey) Regulations 2005 specify acts which are prohibited and those for which written permission of the park authority is required.

- **Role of the Parish in the planning application process**

  The Parish highway authority is a statutory consultee under Article 14 of the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law 2002. The comments of the highway authority must be taken into account where the proposed development involves the creation of a new means of access or the enlargement of an existing means of access to a road; or where it appears that if the development were to be undertaken it might create a problem such as -

  - a source or cause of danger to people using or entering a road bordering the land;
  - a significant effect on the volume or type of traffic using the roads leading to and from or in the vicinity of the development;
  - an increase in the cost of undertaking any improvement of a road bordering the land; or
  - hinder the improvement of a road bordering the land which the highway authority intends to improve.

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.

   To understand how the current system of rates operates under the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005 it is necessary first to understand how the law has evolved. The following is a summary taken from Appendix 2 of the R Report Rates Working Group 20200617 CB.pdf but please let us know if further background is required.

   - 1977 Working Party – chair Philip de Veulle; report issued 1978
   - P.47/1984 Parish Rates: Report of the Committee of Inquiry – chair Senator RR Jeune; report presented to the States on 1 May 1984
     - examined the rating systems in Guernsey, the Isle of Man and the United Kingdom; and also considered the recommendations of the 1978 de Veulle Working Party Report – but decided it could not recommend these schemes
     - a system based on the concept of permanent rateable value had considerable merit – and that this "offered an attractive alternative that could be well worth pursuing ………".
   - P.124/1993 Parish Rates Review contained the report of the Working Party. The States, on 24 May 1994, adopted the following from P.124/1993

1. It is unanimously recommended to alter the fundamental basis of assessing property to rate by dispensing with the existing assessment formula.
2. In its place and stead be formulated a ‘FIXED RATEABLE VALUE’ (FRV) ordinarily derived by freezing a specific year’s assessed rateable value. For foncier purposes the actual rent would be totally disregarded and the landlord’s liability calculated in the aforementioned manner.
3. That FRV figure would remain static from year to year unless there were any improvements, any alterations, any additions, or any change of status to the property. Notwithstanding, an appropriate re-assessment facility should be built in the new procedure for re-evaluation purposes. The frozen FRV would be published annually in a form of valuation list similar to the draft rate list appears at present.
4. With each property permanently assessed, fluctuations in rate liability would be concentrated solely on the unit cost per quarters (i.e. the rate) decided as at present according to the budgetary requirements of the respective parish.

This decision led to the 2003 Law which was subsequently replaced by the 2005 Law, the key parts to each being –

Law	Rateable value based on	Rates levied
Parish Rates (Administration) (Jersey) Law 1946	Land - assessed on “rental value” as defined in the Law	Parish rate
Parish Rates (Administration) (Jersey) Law 2003	Fixed rateable values introduced – based on 2003 assessments and “attributes” as defined in the Law	Parish rate
Rates (Jersey) Law 2005	Fixed rateable values continued (based on “attributes”)	Parish rate and Island wide rate

The fixed rateable values under the 2005 (and 2003) Law are the rateable values based on the rental values under the 1946 Law which have been frozen. The 1946 Law defined the rental value to be used, for example –

- Let from year to year
- Tenant paying the usual tenant’s rates
- Landlord bearing the cost of repairs and insurance etc.
- ‘Arm’s length’ rent

Assessing domestic property was relatively straight-forward as there was a good rental market, but this was not the case for all property e.g. commercial. There was no rental market for the utility companies and the Royal Court 1994 judgment on JNWWCo determined that the profit’s method (not the contractor’s method) should be used. Similarly, there was no rental market for hotels/guest houses/lodging houses etc. so a formula was applied; and for public houses which were ‘tied tenancies’ then the rent paid had to be adjusted to meet the definition.

The occupier was assessed at a ‘fair’ rent but the foncier would be assessed on actual rent. The Housing Committee (now Andium Homes) had fair rents which were c. 80% of market rents and these fair rents were used for the rate assessment. In 2024, a range of Andium Homes 1-bedroom flats across St Helier, St Clement and St Brelade were noted to have different rateable values from 4,888 qrs – 6,800 qrs (the rental values also varied from £893.88 per month - £1,026.25 per month).

It should also be noted that to seek consistency across the Island prior to fixed rateable values being introduced, all Assessment Committees visited a 3-bed family estate house in St Peter as a template for comparing Parish assessments and, where necessary, rateable values in their own Parishes were adjusted so that rateable values are proportionate to attributes. The owner of that St Peter property was the then Chair of the St Peter Assessment Committee – the former Head of JCG – and this was particularly mentioned in the tribute- Bailiwick Express News Jersey printed in February 2022.

The Supervisory Committee has endorsed A-guide-to-the-assessment-of-Parish-Rates-in-Jersey-.pdf, a document prepared by the Assessment Committees which is now published on Parishes' websites. This sets out when and how an assessment is made and how to challenge assessments (the review and appeal processes). In brief the process is to compare the property attributes with similar properties in the immediate location and with a range of similar properties in other Parishes (examples in the Guide) and then to consider whether the assessment is proportionate in comparison with similar properties or are there particular reasons for any variation.

Article 5 of the 2005 Law requires the Assessment Committee to make an assessment if:

- There is no assessment or an incomplete assessment
- Attributes/use have changed
- No Annual Return submitted but Assessment Committee aware of changes
- Owner requests a new assessment by 31 January and gives reasons

Article 6 sets out that the Assessment Committee shall –

a. first acquaint itself with the rateable values of other land in Jersey; and
b. with that knowledge, assess the rateable value of the land in question on the basis that –
    i. each area of land with similar or substantially similar attributes shall have the same rateable value, and
    ii. rateable values shall be proportionate to attributes.

The Guide also provides standard assessments/rateable values for different types of property. This enables a ratepayer to identify a range of rateable values for different types of property. Should they identify property with similar attributes where there is a significant difference in rateable value (defined as 10% or 500 quarters, whichever is the greater), the review and appeal process is open. An Assessment Committee may also correct any typographical or factual error etc. drawn to their attention.

The Panel has received a number of submissions about rates from which there appears to be an expectation that, for example, all 2-bedroom/2-bathroom apartments/flats will have the same rateable value. The tables in Appendix 3 show this is not the case as all attributes (defined as size, location, accommodation, condition and use of the land and the quality of any house, building or other structure in, on, under or over the land) have to be considered. Aside from domestic properties on estates, there are many more individual properties across the island and attributes vary from one to another.

RV 2 bed/2 bathroom apartment – indicative as rateable value depends on all attributes (other individual units assessed up to c. 33,000 qrs)	
7,380	79 Bath Street, H
9,653	Allandale Court, H
10,000	Les Freres, G
10,740	Antoinette Gardens, S
14,500	La Mondine Apartments, C
17,088	Regent House Park Heights, H
22,820	La Colline Court, Mn
30,000	Les Bardeaux, L

So, is 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? We would say the answer is ‘no’. The Guide produced last year provides this common methodology (it replaces those drawn up by individual Assessment Committees as an aid when rateable values were frozen).

It may also be noted that the decrease in appeals indicates the move to fixed rateable values appears to have been welcomed by ratepayers generally. There were an average of 230 rates appeals annually between the years 1996 and 2003, when based on rental values, compared to an average of less than 4 rates appeals annually with a FRV (between the years 2004 and 2025).

It may be helpful to correct misunderstandings or inaccuracies which appear in some of the submissions and public hearing records –

- the Island-wide rate in 2025 was 0.94 pence per quarter for domestic property (not 94 pence per quarter) and 1.38 pence per quarter for non-domestic property - States Assembly | R.96/2025;
- the payment of rates is not linked to services which a ratepayer may receive; a ratepayer may own but not occupy land in a parish and rates is the contribution made to the running costs of the Parish (which ratepayers determine when approving the estimates);
- whilst the Minister for Treasury and Resources proposes to the States the appointment of members to the Rate Appeal Board, the Minister has no other role under the Rates Law. Amendments to legislation are brought by the Comité des Connétables – examples including P.153/2010, P.116/2015, P.28/2016; though pre-2005 proposals for the general system were brought by the Legislation Committee or Policy and Resources Committee - see P.170/2005, P.41/2001, P.199/2002;
- the Report Rates Working Group (“RWG”) considered the revaluation of rateable quarters of property in Jersey – see gov.je/government/freedomofinformation/pages/foi.aspx?ReportID=7168. The RWG report R Report Rates Working Group 20200617 CB.pdf recommended no revaluation of property in Jersey (decision 2:1 of the 3 independent members of the Group) noting that -
  - the monetary adjustment for the majority of ratepayers would be small (estimated average increase in Parish rates of between c. £20 p.a. and c. £26 p.a. for c. 78% of properties revalued) but the cost of carrying out a revaluation could be high
  - c.46k domestic properties and c.13k non-domestic properties in the Island - the RWG were of the opinion that the parish Assessment Committees would not have the capacity to undertake an Island wide revaluation
- other options for the basis of assessment, such as floor area, were considered and rejected in favour of the Fixed Rateable Value. As rateable values are no longer based on rental values, the qualifications offered by the IRRV (Institute of Revenue, Rating and Valuation) for public and private sector valuations would not be relevant to assessments based on attributes.

6. Other comments –

The following are not specifically listed in the terms of references but are a few of the wide range of services provided by the Parishes.

a) Parish churches – we understand the Panel decided these were not within scope of this review but the twelve Parish churches are our most important historic community buildings. Their history dates back a millennium (the first references being made in the early 11th century) and these churches have been the centre of community life in Jersey, playing a significant role in the administration of the parishes and wider Island governance. Funding falls to each

Parish and it must be noted that the significant maintenance costs for such listed buildings are disproportionately greater for those Parishes with a smaller base for rates income, for example the Parish of St Mary.

b) Cemeteries – are provided by Parishes, originally as part of the churchyard but more recently several Parishes have established municipal cemeteries. There is no cemetery provision by government save for the garden of remembrance for ashes at the crematorium.
c) Community support teams – were established in some Parishes following the replacement of welfare by the Income Support benefit. This ensured those most in need of support – other than just financial – could continue to be cared for. More recently some other Parishes have adopted a similar programme to support parishioners.
d) Sheltered housing – many Parishes have financed and built sheltered housing for the elderly of the Parish, and St Brelade and St Helier have residential/nursing home provision.
e) First time buyer homes – many Parishes have also funded and built housing for first time buyers.
f) Public toilets – are provided by government but also by a number of Parishes for example St Helier (various locations), St Brelade (Elephant Park), St Ouen (Parish Church) and St Martin (church car park).
g) Issue of licences and permits –
    - Driving licences – the Road Traffic (Jersey) Law 1956 states that the Minister for Infrastructure is the ‘licensing authority’ but that driving licences are issued – and revoked - by the ‘parochial authority’ which is the Connétable of the parish in which the applicant for a licence or licence holder resides. A driving licence is issued to a person who has passed the prescribed tests and can demonstrate their driving competence. Likewise, a driving licence may be revoked e.g. if a person is suffering from a medical condition that is likely to cause the holder’s driving of any motor vehicle to be a source of danger to the public. This is acknowledged by Connétables as one of the most difficult aspects of the role as removing a person’s driving licence will often have significant impact on their ability to remain independent and be part of the community, but it is critical to remove a source of danger to the public.
    - International driving permits – the 1926, 1949 and 1968 permits are all issued by the Parishes.
    - Disabled ‘blue badge’ parking permits – the Parish of St Helier has been appointed to administer this scheme on behalf of the government.
    - Dog licences – are issued and administered by the Parishes. The Dogs (Jersey) Law 1961 makes provision for stray dogs, dogs worrying livestock, dangerous dogs and dogs that are dangerously out of control. The Parishes also deal with, and ensure appropriate arrangements are in place, for the collection and housing of stray dogs.
    - Sunday trading permits – permits to open are issued under the Shops (Regulation of Opening and Deliveries) (Jersey) Law 2010 and the Shops (Regulation of Opening) (Jersey) Regulations 2011; the legislation controls the opening of shops on Sundays and this includes Good Friday, Liberation Day (9 May), and 26 December. A shop may not open for business on these days unless a permit has been granted. No shop may open on 25 December (Christmas Day). Conditions may be applied and a Connétable must have regard –
        - to the peace and tranquillity of a neighbourhood, and the avoidance of nuisance to residents, on the days and times that the occupier has applied for permission to open
        - in particular, to the kind and size of a shop to which the permit will apply, and to any noise, traffic and litter that are likely to result from its opening under the permit.

- Places of refreshment – registered in accordance with the Places of Refreshment (Jersey) Law 1967 may not open for the serving of customers on a Sunday, Good Friday or Christmas Day unless the Connétable of the parish has granted a permit authorizing the proprietor to open the premises.
- Choses Publiques – permits are granted by the Connétable to authorise exclusive occupation of any land over which the public customarily has the right to pass without let or hindrance (Customary Law (Choses Publiques) (Jersey) Law 1993). This enables permits to be granted for so called 'al fresco' drinking on 'choses publiques'. Conditions and a Code of Conduct apply to all permits issued.

h) Youth work – the submission from the Associate Director – Young Peoples Services, outlines the significant investment of Parishes in youth work. Parishes' funding supports salaries for youth workers who are employed by the government through CYPES. In addition to such funding, a number of Parishes have invested in the provision of buildings from which youth projects operate.

i) Schools – the Parishes work closely with their local schools and Connétables have participated in Citizenship PSHE Workshops at a senior school.

j) Parish Halls – opening hours do vary and are determined by each Parish taking into account the needs of parishioners and staffing resources. Investment has ensured that many services are now available online and this provides parishioners with greater flexibility. Online services currently include –

- Online rates services
- Electoral registration
- Change of name and address
- Driving licence applications/renewals
- Dog licences
- Online payments
- Room bookings (some Parishes)

The Panel's terms of reference enquire about specific areas but in the final section above we list just some of the many other functions and services delivered by the Parishes. To exclude from the Review such fundamental and long-standing areas of interaction as these, and others, risks undermining both the integrity and the purpose of the exercise, particularly where ratepayer-funded resources are being used.

The Panel has stated that this review is aimed to nurture the Parish system; it is an appreciative inquiry into the Parish system and its relationship with Government and that centralisation is not being considered. We trust that this submission will assist the Panel as it prepares its report.

Yours sincerely

Michael Jackson
Chairman, Comité des Connétables