

Comité des Connétables

Minutes of the meeting held on
Monday 7th March 2022
at the Parish Hall, St Lawrence.

Present:

Connétable de St Laurent - Mrs D. W. Mezbourian, Chairman
Connétable de St Hélier - A. S. Crowcroft, Vice Chairman
Connétable de St Brélade - M. K. Jackson
Connétable de la Trinité - P. B. Le Sueur (present for items 1-3, 19-21)
Connétable de St Pierre - R. P. Vibert (not present for item 17)
Connétable de Ste Marie - J. M. Le Bailly
Connétable de St Ouën - R. A. Buchanan
Connétable de St Martin - Mrs K. Shenton-Stone
Connétable de St Jean - A. N. Jehan
Connétable de St Clément - M. O'D. Troy

Apologies for absence were received from the Connétable de St Sauveur - Mrs S. A. Le Sueur-Rennard and the Connétable de Grouville - J. E. Le Maistre.

In attendance: Mrs S. R. de Gruchy, Secretary

Non-exempt (public) under Freedom of Information (Jersey) Law 2011

Former
Connétable of
St Mary –
Edwin Godel

1. The Comité noted, with sadness, the death of Mr E Godel and paid tribute to his service as Connétable of St Mary for nearly 16 years from November 1984 to 2000, having also served as a Vingtenier and Centenier for that Parish. Mr Godel served as Vice Chairman of the Comité from November 1998 and then as Chairman from February 2000 to his retirement in August 2000. One minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect.

Chief Executive
Officer,
Government of
Jersey -
welcome

2. The Comité welcomed the newly appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the Government of Jersey and provided an overview of the Parish system of local government. The Comité heard from the CEO of her background and experience in the public sector in Northern Ireland and the issues she would be focusing on in the coming months including the development of a strategic regeneration plan for the Island and building on the work undertaken by the Interim CEO in the last year.

The Comité discussed various issues with the CEO including the constitution of the States Assembly after the June 2022 elections when the Connétable would be the only Parish representative; the government workforce, staffing and recruitment and working with Guernsey and trade unions. The Comité commented that Parishes should have a greater role in licensing and infrastructure processes which were currently unsatisfactory, the opportunities for States Departments to work more closely with Parishes and that the Parish of St Helier had been exploring a shadow town council which, if supported by the States, could be included in a future Government Plan. The CEO was invited to meet with parishioner groups and officers to gain a better understanding and insight of the Parishes. The Comité also proposed the Directors-General within GoJ should be invited to meet with it in due course.

The CEO responded to the comments of Connétables and recognised the extraordinary voluntary service within the Parishes. Following discussion, the CEO was thanked for attending and then withdrew from the meeting.

States of Jersey
Police – 2022
policing plan

3. The Comité received the Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police (SOJP), who provided an overview of the 2022 policing plan for the SOJP which had been agreed with the Jersey Police Authority. Performance indicators were attached to the policing priorities so that the SOJP could demonstrate how it performed. The Chief Officer outlined the key issues for Parishes and proposed to meet individually with Connétables to discuss the threats and risks to islanders. The Chief Officer also spoke of the work of the community policing teams (minute no. 5 of 9th November 2020 refers). The Chief Officer was thanked for attending the meeting and then withdrew.

Covid-19
review –
Government
Plan P.90/2021
2nd amendment
by Connétable
of St Brelade

4. The Comité welcomed to the meeting Sir Derek Myers, Chair of the Independent Panel which would review the Island's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Professor M Rae, Panel Member, and Mr I Hickman, executive support. The Chairman of the Comité des Chefs de Police was also welcomed to the meeting for this item. The Comité heard from the Connétable of St Brelade that he had intended his proposition "Proposed Government Plan 2022–2025 (P.90/2021): Second Amendment" to provide a rapid 'lessons learned' review (rather than an inquiry or inspection) and had hoped it would have been in place before the end of April 2022.

The Comité was informed by Sir Derek that the review would be an objective, impartial and independent analysis of the actions undertaken by the Island of Jersey in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and would provide evidence-based recommendations, guidelines and areas for improvement based on lessons learned to inform future strategies and operational plans for the management of any future pandemic or comparable disruptive event. It would focus on evaluating the policies, decisions and actions taken by the Government of Jersey (GoJ) and its partner organisations during the Covid-19 pandemic. This included, but was not restricted to, the effectiveness of the governance arrangements to evaluate options and make decisions; how quickly appropriate measures were put in place to restrict the spread of the virus and the schemes that were implemented to mitigate the economic and social impacts. The assumption was that professionals and political decision makers wished to do the right thing so the review would identify what went well and what did not. It would be completed by the end of July 2022 with findings discussed in the autumn.

The Comité outlined the issues which had arisen for the Parishes including in relation to the Honorary Police, the difficulties in GoJ sharing data on vulnerable persons needing support arising from data protection issues, the challenges for Parishes of staff working from home and the continued delivery of services from Parish Halls when GoJ offices, including Customer and Local Services, remained closed to the public. The Comité also drew attention to the submissions it, and Parishes, had made to the "Response to Covid-19" Scrutiny review undertaken by the Public Accounts Committee.

The Comité was informed the Panel welcomed submissions and would be willing to meet with any individuals or groups. The Chairman of the Comité des Chefs de Police confirmed an invitation would be extended to meet with that Comité. Following discussion, the delegation was thanked for attending and then withdrew from the meeting.

Jersey Royal
potato growing
competition –
Occupation
VIPs

5. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 2 of 14th February 2022, decided that the Occupation VIPs taking part in the 2022 Jersey Royal potato growing competition should be invited to bring their entries to a weigh-in to be hosted by Parishes at 11 a.m. on Tuesday 17th May 2022. Those Parishes having few entries might wish to host a joint event with another Parish for their weigh-in. The results would be reported at the weigh-in of Connétables entries on 19th May 2022 and those with the heaviest crop and with the most potatoes from each Parish would also be invited to attend on 19th May 2022 when the overall winners in each category would be announced.

- Minutes 6. The minutes of the meetings held on 10th January and 14th February 2022, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed.
- Data Sharing Agreements - DVS 7. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 10 of 14th February 2022, confirmed that all Connétables would renew the Data Sharing Agreement with Driver and Vehicle Services (for the vehicle registration system (VRS)) and this was circulated for signature.
- Hon. Police – P.22/2022 new Complaints and Conduct Law 8. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 14 of 22nd June 2020, noted the draft Police (Complaints and Conduct) (Jersey) Law 202- (P.22/2022) had been lodged by the Minister for Home Affairs and was scheduled for debate by the States Assembly on 29th March 2022.
- 2022 elections – Notice of Registered Voters, Hustings, Nomination form and Ballot boxes 9. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 9 of 14th February 2022, noted the following in relation to the elections in 2022 –
- Notice of Registered Voters – Mailmate had been engaged to print and post these Notices, the data extract commenced on 4th March 2022 and all Parishes had been asked to ensure a Data Processing Agreement was in place with Mailmate. The States Greffe had decided to include one postal application form with each Notice to remove a potential barrier to a person seeking to vote in the 22nd June 2022 elections.
- Hustings – the written response WQ.54/2022 from the Chair of the Privileges and Procedures Committee (PPC) regarding hustings for the 22nd June 2022 elections was noted. The response was that the rationale for the proposed changes was to try and broaden the reach of these valuable events. It was therefore decided that for 2022, PPC would offer candidates the chance to attend live broadcast hustings to which the public could submit questions both in advance and in real time. Hustings had always been a matter for the candidates to arrange, they were not prescribed in the Elections (Jersey) Law 2002, and Vote.je had only started filming hustings at Parish Halls in 2014 (prior to this date the public either attended hustings in person, or relied upon media reports of the events afterwards).
- Nomination form – the Jersey Electoral Authority (JEA) was preparing the nomination form for the election of Connétables and Deputies, details were awaited as to when these would be available.
- Ballot boxes – having noted that the JEA had adopted the same design for ballot boxes as that previously agreed by the Comité, it confirmed the following design would also be used for Parish elections (the election of Centeniers and of Procureurs du Bien Public) -
- a) *The Connétable shall furnish an official ballot box for the election in each voting district.*
 - b) *Each box must be capable of being securely sealed.*
 - c) *In the top of the box there must be an opening large enough to allow a single folded ballot to be inserted. There must be a device by which the opening may be covered or uncovered.*
 - d) *The lid of the box must be hinged to allow the whole of the interior of the box to be made visible to the public prior to it being securely sealed at the commencement of the taking of the poll.*
 - e) *The box must be large enough to receive the ballots deposited in it at any election, its volume commensurate with the number of potential ballots as evidenced on the electoral register in force.*
 - f) *The box must be robust and capable of being sealed securely at the aperture.*
 - g) *The box shall be marked as the ballot box for the election.*

- Procureurs du Bien Public – St Mary
10. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 7 of 14th February 2022, noted the Act of the Royal Court dated 4th February 2022 in which it declined to accept the resignations of the two Procureurs du Bien Public for St Mary, adjourned the matter for a period of two months, invited the said Procureurs to contact the Chair of the Comité des Connétables to seek assistance with a view to reaching a resolution to matters and directed that, in the event a resolution was not reached, the matter should be returned to the Court in two months' time.
- Draft Marriage and Civil Status (Amendment No. 5) (Jersey) Law 202- (P.6/2022)
11. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 11 of 14th February 2022, noted that the draft Marriage and Civil Status (Amendment No. 5) (Jersey) Law 202- (P.6/2022) was approved by the States on 2nd March 2022 and would, following approval by Privy Council, come into force 7 days after it was registered by the Royal Court.
- Canons of the Church of England in Jersey (P.12/2022)
12. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 12 of 8th November 2021, noted that the States on 1st March 2022 had adopted the proposition "Order in Council: adoption of new Canons" (P.12/2022) and had thus endorsed the amended Canons of the Church of England in Jersey as set out in R.8/2022.
- Standing Orders of the States of Jersey – amendment (P.1/2022)
13. The Comité noted that the States, on 1st March 2022, had adopted an amendment to the Standing Orders of the States of Jersey had inserted paragraph (4) in section 5 which related to 'Gifts, hospitality and other benefits'. As a result, a Connétable was not required to register an interest in relation to a gift, hospitality or benefit if the giving or offer of the gift, hospitality or benefit entirely related to his or her parochial duties and conferred no personal benefit on the Connétable or a relevant person.
- JURAF
14. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 10 of 8th November 2021, noted that the next meeting of the Jersey Utility and Road Authority Forum (JURAF) was expected to be held in early April 2022.
- Don Balleine Will Trust
15. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 3 of 10th January 2022, noted a letter from Mr J A Le Maistre MBE thanking it for its support for the proposal of the Trustees of the Don Balleine Will Trust to transfer all the assets of the Trust to Le Don Balleine Incorporated Association.
- Immigration and Community TCG Cell – Ukraine emergency
16. The Comité received a report from the Chairman on the recent Emergency Council meeting. At that meeting a cross government officer team, the Immigration and Community cell, had been set up to help facilitate the immigration/visa process and to co-ordinate support to those from Ukraine who were seeking refuge to stay with family in Jersey. The Comité was invited to nominate a Parish representative to the group and the Connétable of St Clement, to be assisted by the Connétable of St Martin, offered to act in this capacity.
- Countryside access and wellbeing – network of Parish paths
17. The Comité received the Head of Land Resource Management and the Senior Natural Environment Officer - Access, Natural Environment, Government of Jersey (GoJ), to discuss a project on countryside access and wellbeing. The Chief Minister had asked the Connétable of St Peter to assist with this project which sought to bring two important elements together, following Covid-19, and would be achieved via a series of paths linking up with existing networks in the Parishes. The assistance of the Parishes would therefore be essential if the scheme was to be successful.

The Comité was informed that the vision was to achieve some positive outcomes from Covid-19 and to ‘build back better’ by increasing the personal and societal benefits derived from re-connecting with nature and the countryside and volunteering and working together as a community. This would be achieved by linking up with the established Parish system, identifying potential countryside paths to enhance the existing network across the Island, forming and managing volunteer groups to create countryside paths and measuring the impact i.e. the increase in path users, benefits to volunteers, social connections etc. This would be strengthened and supported by the Government’s Countryside Access Strategy for 2016, the experience of GoJ officers linking with existing initiatives and advice from functioning stakeholder groups and their experience (the Jersey Access Service Providers (JASP) and the Jersey Access Forum (JAF)). Funding of £375,000 for each of 2 years had been approved for the project. All schemes would be assessed and approved by a central steering group which would be chaired by, and include, representatives of the Connétables.

The Comité discussed the project and sought clarification on the criteria which would be applied to determine support and funding for individual Parish projects, and whether the funding would be available for conveyancing and other costs should paths cross privately owned land, for creating paths identified for walking routes to school and for renovating “chemins” (smaller Parish by-roads) for such use. The reinstatement, if required, of the historic Parish ‘*perquage*’ paths, where some parts might have been lost was also suggested. Following discussion, the delegation was asked to consider the overall network across the island and to identify where there were currently gaps in that network and to bring forward for consideration proposals to link up the network which the Comité might discuss. The delegation was thanked for attending and then withdrew from the meeting.

Next meeting

18. The Chairman was thanked for her hospitality and the Comité noted the next meeting was on 4th April 2022.

Chairman Date

