

Comité des Connétables

Minutes of the meeting held on
Monday 14th October 2024
at the Parish Hall, St Lawrence.

Present:

Connétable de St Brélade - M. K. Jackson, Chairman
Connétable de St Laurent - Mrs D. W. Mezbourian, Vice Chairman
Connétable de la Trinité - P. B. Le Sueur
Connétable de St Pierre - R. P. Vibert (present for items 1-13)
Connétable de St Jean - A. N. Jehan
Connétable de Grouville - M. Labey
Connétable de Ste Marie - R. D. Johnson
Connétable de St Sauveur - K. C. Lewis

Apologies for absence were received from the Connétable de St Hélier - A. S. Crowcroft, the Connétable de St Martin - Mrs K. Shenton-Stone, the Connétable de St Clément - M. O'D. Troy and the Connétable de St Ouën - R. Honeycombe.

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

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

Minutes

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 16th September 2024, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed.

Office accounts
– audited

*This is also
recorded in the
Supervisory
Committee
minutes*

2. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 5 of 16th September 2024, received and approved the audited accounts for the Comité des Connétables/Supervisory Committee for the year end 30th April 2024 and noted expenditure of £136,545 (2023 - £129,052) and income of £137,794 (2023 - £127,303) thus resulting in a surplus of £1,429 (2023 – deficit of £1,749). The balance sheet, which included the Comité des Chefs de Police, showed net current assets of £23,172 (2023 - £22,882). The auditors, Alex Picot, had reported they would be issuing a clean audit report.

Driving tests -
cessation out-
of-hours theory
tests

3. The Comité noted that with effect from 1st September 2024, the provision of out-of-hours theory tests had been withdrawn and this might have an impact on the ability of provisional licence holders to access the service within the 6-month validity of that licence, especially 16-year-olds during their GCSE year and those with work or childcare commitments who would no longer be able to sit tests outside of work or school hours. In reply to a question the Connétable of St John, in his capacity as Minister for Infrastructure, said he was not aware of a backlog in test bookings and officers at Driver and Vehicle Standards had been asked to look at the overall provision of test slots.

Driving
licences –
changes to
legislation

4. The Comité, with partial reference to its minute no. 15 of 22nd April 2024, noted the coming into force of the Road Traffic (No. 65) (Jersey) Regulations 2021 (R&O.43/2024) on 5th October 2024. These Regulations and the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Jersey) Amendment Order 2024 (R&O.44/2024) implemented changes to driving licences including defining a “Group 1 licence” and “Group 2 licence” as licences to drive specified categories of vehicle; the manner of applying for a licence and medical conditions that must be declared by an applicant for a licence. The changes included new application forms and medical certificates which should be used for applications from the 5th October 2024. All Parish staff had been fully briefed on the changes but the Vice

Chairman reported that conflicting, and incorrect, advice had been given by staff of Driver and Vehicle Standards (DVS) to some parishioners who had queried the changes. The Comité suggested that the changes might be publicised through Parish magazines and websites.

Emergencies
Council and
Parish
emergency
response plans

5. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 4 of 16th September 2024, received feedback from the Parish Emergency Planning Working Group (PEPWG) meeting on 17th September 2024 (the group was a subgroup of the Jersey Resilience Forum Delivery Group). At that meeting it had become clear that a further discussion was needed regarding recent major incidents that the Parishes had been involved with and this would be held on 31st October 2024.

Honorary
Police –
Coronation
medals

6. The Comité was informed by the Bailiff's Chief Officer that the King's Coronation Medals awarded to members of the Honorary Police who held office on 6th May 2023 and had, at that date, completed 5 years continuous service, had been received by the Bailiff's Chambers. The Connétables were asked to arrange for the medals to be collected and distributed to those members of their Honorary Police who met the criteria.

Roads
Committees –
various matters

7. The Comité considered matters relating to the Roads Committees as it had been asked –

- to agree on a consistent approach across the Parishes regarding the communication of information about the Roads Committees to the public, and
- to have regard to the presumption of openness.

The report addressed the consistency of naming the Roads Committee and its members on Parish websites, the terms of office and length of service of members together with notice periods for future elections and publicity campaigns, publishing the Committees' terms of reference and minutes of meetings and allowing members of the public to attend meetings.

The Comité discussed the various matters and requested the Chairman to respond in the following terms –

- a) Roads Committee terms of reference – the duties and role of the Roads Committees, being the 'highway authority' in relation to the by-roads of the Parish, were set out in detail in legislation including the Loi (1914) sur la Voirie, the Highways (Jersey) Law 1956, the Road Traffic (Jersey) Law 1956, the Roads Administration (Jersey) Law 1960, the Roads (Drainage) (Jersey) Law 1962, the Extinguishment of Roads (Jersey) Law 1972, the Road Works and Events (Jersey) Law 2016 and the Planning and Building (Jersey) Law 2002.
- b) Naming of the Committee and its members on websites – each Parish was a separate entity and should use the style and approach expected or preferred by its parishioners and officers.
- c) Terms of office and length of service of members – the term of office was 3 years with duties commencing on 1st January (Article 5 of the Loi (1914) sur la Voirie) and ending on 31st December 2024 (St John), 2025 (St Lawrence, St Mary, St Peter) or 2026 (St Brelade, St Clement, Grouville, St Helier, St Martin, St Ouen, St Saviour, Trinity). Length of members' service varied and might be specifically listed on websites.
- d) Notice periods for future elections and publicity campaigns to encourage diverse membership – elections were held at a Parish Assembly in December, the next being for St John in December 2024. Diversity was welcomed, any eligible persons might stand for election to the various Parish positions though the particular skills and experience which were desirable would differ according to the role. The skills and experience which would be useful for members of the

Roads Committee might include, for example, engineering, conveyancing or highway maintenance. As there might be a limited pool of such persons, restricting the number of terms a person might serve could be detrimental to the Committee’s duties to fulfil the duties required and it was for members of the Parish Assembly to elect those it wished to serve on the Committee.

- e) Publication of minutes of meetings – all information recorded by a Parish, as a scheduled public authority, was subject to the Freedom of Information (Jersey) Law 2011 (FOI) and available if requested, subject to the application of any exemptions. As outlined in response to FOI requests in 2017 and 2018, information in Roads Committee minutes was available to view by appointment at Parishes where the minutes were not routinely published online and, in those cases, most had indicated they hoped to publish at some future date subject to resources. The resources available within a Parish were dependent on the decision of parishioners for example in relation to the staffing budget etc., and each managed these in accordance with its parishioners wishes.
- f) Public attendance at meetings – whilst it was noted the Parish of St Helier Roads Committee met each month and part of the meeting, where issues were not exempt under FOI, were open for members of the public to attend, the Comité heard that meetings in other Parishes were convened as and when required to consider business and often involved site visits or meetings with contractors/suppliers (likely to be exempt under FOI). Contractor/supplier meetings would likely be conducted by the infrastructure staff of the Parish of St Helier rather than by the St Helier Roads Committee so would not be an item on the agenda. It would not be practicable to open meetings to the general public though, should any parishioner wish to discuss a specific matter, the Committee would extend an invitation to a meeting.

Next meeting

8. The Connétable of St Lawrence was thanked for her hospitality and the Comité noted the next meeting would be on 18th November 2024.

Chairman Date