

20.11.30

11 The Connétable of St. Martin of the Chair of the Privileges and Procedures Committee regarding alternative voting options (OQ.348/2020):

Will the Chair state what consideration, if any, has been given by the committee to providing alternative voting options or processes to Members, such as the indicative votes system used by the U.K.'s House of Commons in 2003, 2007, and 2019, to allow Members to debate and vote according to the merits of each amendment to P.139/2020, as well as the proposition itself?

Deputy R. Labey (Chair, Privileges and Procedures Committee):

Standing Orders at present do not make provision for the holding of indicative votes and this issue has not been considered by the P.P.C. that I chair anyway. It did cross my mind when I proposed P.126 early this year, I thought it might attract a lot of amendments, and I wondered if even unofficially, so just us all meeting together, we could try an indicative vote system so you vote for your favourite option and the one that comes bottom of the poll drops out and we continue until one emerges. But you would have to get the guarantee from all the proposers that at the end of that process they would accept a winning one to go forward to the Assembly and drop their amendments and I am not sure that we could ever get that. Another issue I find with the indicative vote is the gap between the indicative vote and when the actual vote takes place, I would be worried about what went on in that gap. In fact, to the potential supporters of P.139, I would say do not indicate to anyone what your vote might be because the phone calls will start, doubtless they already have, from those wishing to twist your arm and to reconsider making this change and being bold and voting for it. I would not want to subject my potential supporters to that kind of pressure and persuasion.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

I have got 2 other questions but I am aware of the time so I will just ask the Chair of P.P.C. privately, if that is okay.