

2.10 Deputy J.A. Martin of the Chairman of the Privileges and Procedures Committee regarding the accuracy of the findings of the recent M.O.R.I. poll on electoral reform:

Is the Chairman satisfied that the findings of the recent M.O.R.I. poll accurately reflect the views of Islanders when 50 per cent of those contacted stated that they knew nothing or not very much about electoral reform in Jersey, and only one-third were sure that they had received the leaflet on which the questions were based?

The Connétable of St. Clement (Chairman of the Privileges and Procedures Committee):

P.P.C. contracted with *Jersey Post* to circulate the leaflet to all domestic households. There are some 37,300 on the database. P.P.C. relied entirely on *Jersey Post* to undertake distribution as agreed. P.P.C. agrees it was somewhat disappointed to see that only 37 per cent of those questioned by M.O.R.I. were sure that they had received the reform leaflet but the leaflet was still received and read by many, many thousands of Islanders. I think it would be difficult to think that there was any better way of reaching that number of people. M.O.R.I. surveys are just one part of an overall reform process. P.P.C. believes that they are an important way to gain some idea of public opinion but it would be wrong to give too much weight to findings at the expense of other forms of public consultation which will include, if the States agree, a referendum where everybody on the electoral roll will be able to express an opinion. But you must not forget there have been public meetings, we are going to hold an in-committee debate and we have received written contributions, all of which will inform the Committee on the way ahead.

2.10.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

What precautions were taken in conducting this poll that the order of options was changed in order that a bias was not built-in automatically by people hanging on a phone and picking the first option presented?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I think we must rely on the ability of M.O.R.I. to eliminate any bias.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Is the answer none?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

As I have said before, we must rely on M.O.R.I. to conduct the poll in the way it feels fit.

2.10.2 Deputy J.A. Martin:

Is the Chairman convinced that if we do have a referendum that the people on the electoral roll is the best way to get to everybody on the Island, because I am not quite convinced it is.

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I am not certain that there is any better way of conducting a poll than using the electoral register.

2.10.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Does the Chairman not accept that there are severe limitations with the state of the current electoral roll, particularly in urban areas?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I do not think that there is that much of a problem with the electoral roll.

2.10.4 Connétable D.J. Murphy of Grouville:

Could the Chairman tell us please that in response to the brochure that was sent round to most of the households in Jersey, how many replies or comments he had back; and also how many people attended the public meetings which were held at that time?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I cannot give you exact numbers but there were as far as the public meetings were concerned, and I went to all 3 of them, there were I think 20, 20 and 50. That was in St. Martin, St. Mary and in town, with St. Martin being the most populated meeting.

2.10.5 The Connétable of Grouville:

So in fact less than 100 people attended these meetings. Would I be right in suggesting that you received less than 100 replies to this brochure as well when replies were asked for?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

Yes.

2.10.6 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

The Chairman said that he relied on M.O.R.I. to give him advice. Would he identify whether he told M.O.R.I.: "These are the 5 options, please run a poll around those options" or whether he discussed with M.O.R.I.: "There are different ways of getting objective information from a group of people. Please, M.O.R.I., outline them to us and then we will put the proposals within one of these ways." How was the matter approached?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

We distributed a pamphlet and M.O.R.I. were asked to ask questions relating to that pamphlet.

2.10.7 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Will the Chairman highlight the finding found on page 12 that the views of the informed differ from the overall sample in that the informed were more likely to vote for option 5 than overall?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

That is obviously what the M.O.R.I. poll said.

Deputy G.P. Southern:.

Will the Chairman highlight this fact?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I am not certain when I am supposed to highlight it.