

4.5 Deputy F.J. Hill of St. Martin of the Chairman of the Comité des Connétables regarding the availability of ballot papers for pre-poll or postal votes for the Deputies Elections:

Given that ballot papers for pre-poll or postage votes were not available until almost 2 weeks after the Senator's nomination meeting and 2 weeks before their election, what arrangements, if any, have been taken to ensure that similar delays do not occur for the Deputies elections where there is only a 3 week period between their nomination and their election?

Connétable K.P. Vibert of St. Ouen (The Chairman of the Comité des Connétables):

Arrangements for the printing of the ballot papers in the 17 Deputy elections have already been reviewed and discussed with the printers and the Connétables are satisfied that there will be no delay in printing ballot papers for the forthcoming Deputies election. The nomination meetings are on 4th November and the Judicial Greffe will receive 2 books for every election by 9.00 a.m. on Friday, 7th November. This is 2 working days after the nomination meeting and 19 days prior to the election dates.

4.5.1 The Deputy of St. Martin:

I thank the Connétable for his answer but I could ask, is there any reason why there was this 2 week delay before the ballot papers were available after the nominations?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

The arrangements had been that the papers for the referendum would have been printed prior to the nomination meetings. Unfortunately the printers decided to do all the ballot papers, including the referendum papers at the same time and experienced some problems in producing them. This was the reason for the delays.

4.5.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

When reviewing the issue of the ballot papers will the Committee be reviewing one of the great issues of our time: biros versus blunt pencils? **[Laughter]**

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

The decision about using biros or blunt pencils is ultimately that of the Jurats who handle the election.

4.5.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Will the Chairman inform Members how many postal votes were used in this election and compare it with the previous Senatorial election figures?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I promise to make that information available to Members as soon as I can.

4.5.4 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Finally, is the Chairman aware that there was no letterbox on the centre which was in charge of postal voting therefore it was impossible for anybody to return requests for postal voting out of office hours to the right place?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I thank the Deputy for informing me of that and that is a matter which I will take up with the Judicial Greffier.

4.5.5 Connétable D.J. Murphy of Grouville:

Would the Chairman agree with me that the instructions sent down to the Parish Halls very clearly stated that we must provide either biro or pencil? Thank you. **[Laughter]**

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Yes.

4.5.6 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire of St. Helier:

I am sorry it is along the same lines. I did receive a concerned telephone call from a constituent who complained that while trying to vote she was unable to because of the fact that the pencil was blunt and had complained ... now Members may or may not have experienced this, but my constituent who telephoned me was very upset. I am being serious and I would expect Members to just bear with me because this was a genuine complaint, I am trying to ask a question. In the event there are pencils used in these ballots, if these pencils are going to be used can the Constable please ensure that there are sharpeners or also extra pencils available because this lady was very upset.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

It is normal procedure to have spare pencils/biros available at every polling station.

4.5.7 Deputy G.P. Southern:

In the absence of the ability of candidates or their agents to deliver postal vote request forms to the required authorities, will the Chairman raise with the appropriate authorities the possibility of sending out a stamped addressed envelope for return on request of a postal voting request form in order that those who have to do it by post, those disabled, are not penalised by having to pay 35p in order to vote?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I experience as much difficulty in understanding the question as the Deputy did in posing it. **[Laughter]** Maybe if he were to put that request to me in writing I promise I will deal with it.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

I certainly will.

4.5.8 Senator P.F. Routier:

Is the Constable aware that the Jurats at the polling stations have managed to help a significant number of people who have disabilities to go into the polling station and help them to cast their votes rather than making polling votes which ... I mean, there has been some suggestion that postal votes have been interfered with. I know that is something that has been suggested but the option for people with disabilities to go into the polling station, even when they are blind, to have a Jurat to help them with casting their vote is a way forward for those people to cast their vote.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

It is certainly my understanding that this is the process which is used at the moment and I am aware that a number of disabled voters were able to cast their vote quite normally at polling stations.

4.5.9 Deputy G.P. Southern:

If I may? One more. Is the Chairman aware of how many people turned up to vote and were unable to do so because they were not on the register at this particular election?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I am aware in St. Ouen but I am not aware Island-wide until I ask the question of my fellow Connétables, and I will give you that answer.

4.5.10 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:

Seeing as we are on this subject I thought I might try a second go at this. The referendum proved to be an excellent exercise in conducting referenda in Jersey, the result in itself was interesting. It may have drawn-up some interesting things to bear in mind for future referendums which might have more gravity. Does the Constable agree with me that it was useful and is the Constable aware

of any issues in regard to the referendum that we are not aware of and is there any truth that some people were being offered the opportunity to participate in the referendum in some parishes and just handed the referendum in others? Is there not a need for uniformity in these issues?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

A meeting has already been pencilled-in **[Laughter]** for the Jurats and the Connétables to meet together early in the new year to discuss any items which have arisen over the multiple election system which we have adopted this year, and I assure the House that if there are any recommendations to be made the Comité des Connétables will make them to the House.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Deputy of St. Martin, do you wish to have a final question?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

No, other than to remind the Connétable that I will be around on the 7th if they are not available.