

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMITÉ DE CONNÉTABLES
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. MARY
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 8th SEPTEMBER 2009**

Given that the Parish Assembly is the decision-making body of each parish and the role these assemblies play in the democratic life of the Island, would the Chairman please advise the Assembly (with details of each individual parish):

Question

The precise measures taken, in each parish, to publicise the date and time of each Parish Assembly before it takes place, and how long in advance of the meeting it is publicised?

Answer

The Loi (1804) au sujet des Assemblées paroissiales, Loi (1905) au sujet des Assemblées paroissiales and Loi (1842) sur les publications dans les Eglises specify the requirements for the holding of a Parish Assembly. All parishes comply with the requirements of the law and publish in the Jersey Gazette and in the Boîte Grillée (Church box) a notice giving the date and time of the Parish Assembly. The notice must be placed in the Jersey Gazette at least two days before holding the Assembly but in practice could be placed up to a week or more prior to the meeting. The notice will appear on at least two dates but additional dates may be added depending upon the business to be conducted. The Jersey Gazette is also available on the website (www.thisisjersey.co.uk). Additional information received from parishes is as follows:

St Clement: a notice is placed on the notice board at the Parish Hall and advance notice can also be found on the Parish website.

Grouville: also advertised on the Parish website and, depending on the amount of notice, may be publicised in the Parish Magazine if printing deadlines permit.

St Helier: advertised on the Parish website and at the Town Hall.

St John: advertised on the Parish website.

St Lawrence: advertised on Parish Hall notice boards and Parish website; forthcoming events are also announced at community meetings (e.g. Sheltered Housing, Honorary Police Meetings, Roads Committee) and in the Parish magazine if printing deadlines permit.

St Martin: advertised on the Parish website and a diary of events is sent out with mailings 3-4 times a year.

St Mary: advertised on the Parish website.

St Ouen: advertised in a Notice Box in the public car park for the shopping area opposite the Parish Hall and, depending upon printing deadlines, in the Parish Magazine '*Le Gris Ventre*'.

St Saviour: advertised on the Parish website.

Question

The precise measures taken, in each parish, to publicise the Agenda of each Assembly before it takes place, and how long in advance of the meeting it is publicised?

Answer

In accordance with the Loi (1804) au sujet des Assemblées paroissiales, the convening notice for a Parish

Assembly must set out the business to be discussed. All parishes comply with the requirements of the law and publish the agenda in the Jersey Gazette and in the Boîte Grillée (Church box) as outlined in the answer above. The Jersey Gazette is also available on the website (www.thisisjersey.co.uk). As the notice of the meeting includes the agenda the additional information received from parishes for the previous question also applies to this question.

Question

When and how the date for an Assembly is fixed?

Answer

The Parish Assembly is convened when required by the Connétable, and after notifying the Rector, to conduct the business of the Parish and to comply with dates in relevant legislation e.g. Licensing (Jersey) Law 1974. Most Parishes have one day of the week when Assemblies are usually held.

Question

Whether any individuals or groups are notified directly by arrangements other than by publication or public display of a notice or notices, and if so, who?

Answer

The statutory notices are the legitimate notices for convening an Assembly. The Connétable notifies the Rector before publishing the date of the assembly and the Parish will contact those who are required to attend the Assembly e.g. applicants for a licence under the Licensing (Jersey) Law 1974; candidates for election to offices such as Rates Assessor, Roads Inspector, etc. Additional information received from parishes is as follows:

St Brelade: notification given to Procureurs du Bien Public and Parish Deputies.

St Clement: notification given to those parishioners who have signed up to the mailing list (electronic).

St Helier: notification given to Parish officials, Parish Deputies and Senators living in the Parish.

St Lawrence: notification given to Parish officials and Deputies.

St Ouen: notification given to Procureurs du Bien Public, Roads Committee and Honorary Police.

St Peter: notification given to those parishioners who have signed up to the mailing list (electronic).

Trinity: notification is given to the Procureurs du Bien Public, Honorary Police and Deputy.

Question

Whether there is a fixed schedule of Assemblies or whether they are arranged as required, and in the former case, what steps are taken to publicise this Schedule?

Answer

Parish Assemblies are only held to conduct the business of the Parish. Whilst an Assembly might be expected to be held at certain times of the year, e.g. early summer to set the Parish rate, quarterly to consider applications under the Licensing (Jersey) Law 1974 etc., there is no fixed schedule of dates. The exception is the Parish of St Helier which advertises, on its website, that a Parish Assembly “usually occurs on the last Wednesday of the month”; but meetings would only be held if there was business to conduct and the meeting to set the Parish rate might be in addition to these meetings.

Question

Whether a note is kept of the numbers attending each meeting and if this note is an estimate or an actual count, and if a note is kept, how many attended the last meeting to set the parish rate?

Answer

Although there is no requirement in law to record the number of persons attending a Parish Assembly, the following information has been received from parishes:

St Brelade: a count is made and the number is recorded in the minutes; 41 persons were present at the meeting to set the 2009 Parish rate.

St Clement: 84 parishioners were present at the meeting to set the 2009 Parish rate.

Grouville: a count is made and the number is recorded in the minutes; 40 persons were present at the meeting to set the 2009 Parish rate.

St Helier: a note is sometimes kept of the estimated number attending. At the meeting to set the 2009 Parish rate there were 47 persons present of whom 41 were eligible to vote.

St John: a count is made and the number is recorded in the minutes; 21 persons were present at the meeting to set the 2009 Parish rate.

St Lawrence: a count is made and the number is recorded in the minutes; 48 persons were present at the meeting to set the 2009 Parish rate.

St Martin: no official count or estimate is made; those attending have the option to sign the attendance book but this is not an accurate measure of the numbers attending. An estimated 80 persons were present at the meeting to set the 2009 Parish rate.

St Mary: a count is not routinely made but might be included in the minutes if a contentious item was on the agenda; it is estimated that there were in excess of 30 persons present at the meeting to set the 2009 Parish rate.

St Ouen: a count is only made in the event of a vote.

St Peter: a count is made but not recorded in the minutes; an estimated 40 persons were present at the meeting to set the 2009 Parish rate.

St Saviour: a count is made and recorded in the minutes; 28 persons were present at the meeting to set the 2009 Parish rate.

Trinity: an approximate count is made but not recorded in the minutes; an estimated 40 persons were present at the meeting to set the 2009 Parish rate.