

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMITÉ DES CONNÉTABLES
BY DEPUTY S.Y. MÉZEC OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 2017**

Question

What consideration, if any, has been given to measures to increase public participation in elections for Parish roles, such as Procureur du Bien Public and membership of the Roads Committee? Has any consideration been given to arranging for all elections to Parish Roads Committees and to the office of Procureur to happen simultaneously, so that an Island-wide focus on Parish affairs can take place and joint efforts between Parishes made to generate interest and to increase turn out?

Answer

The election process for the Procureur du Bien Public was changed four years ago when the States approved the Procureurs du Bien Public (Terms of Election) (Jersey) Law 2013. The report to the draft law (P.45/2013¹) explained that the aim of the legislation was to re-organise the law relating to electing *Procureurs du Bien Public* and to put an end to problems arising from their elections occurring at random.

The Law provides for a public election for one *Procureur du Bien Public* in every Parish at intervals of 18 months, the *Procureur* thus elected to hold office for a term of 3 years. Further, the election dates for the *Procureurs du Bien Public* now fall on the same day (2nd Wednesday of the month) as those of Centeniers in March and September.

This has the advantage that each Parish holds the nomination meetings on the same evening for both Centenier and *Procureur du Bien Public*. Whilst the actual nomination meeting dates vary across the 12 parishes, a single Jersey Gazette notice is published thus giving greater emphasis to the forthcoming elections to generate interest within each parish.

The election of the Procureur du Bien Public is also held in accordance with the Public Elections (Jersey) Law 2002. The process was amended in 2003 following the report of the Report of the Working Party on Parish Assemblies (R.C.38/2001²) which recommended that elections for the Office of *Procureur du Bien Public* be governed by the Public Elections Law rather than be held at a Parish Assembly to ensure that the mandate of the *Procureur* should be seen to be the widest possible of the electorate within the Parish, thus enhancing the status of the office as befitted the nature and responsibilities of that office.

Members of the Roads Committee are elected at a Parish Assembly. The election process is set out in the Loi (1914) sur la Voirie³ which says (in translation⁴)

The said Principals (members of the Roads Committee) and the said Inspectors shall be chosen for a term of 3 years by an Assembly of the Principals and Officers of their respective parishes, convened for that purpose during the month of December, and they shall commence their duties on 1st January thereafter.

The elections are therefore already in the same month every 3 years although the date of the Parish Assembly is likely to vary from parish to parish. The Comité has not, to date, considered an Island-wide focus on these elections.

¹ <http://www.statesassembly.gov.je/assemblypropositions/2013/p.045-2013.pdf>

² <http://www.statesassembly.gov.je/assemblyreports/2001/20964-36802.pdf>

³ <https://www.jerseylaw.je/laws/revised/Pages/25.950.aspx>

⁴ <https://www.jerseylaw.je/laws/translated/Pages/25.950.aspx>