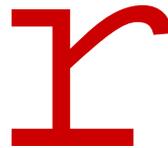

STATES OF JERSEY



COMPOSITION AND ELECTION OF THE STATES ASSEMBLY: OPTIONS FOR CHANGE

Presented to the States on 11th December 2006
by the Privileges and Procedures Committee

STATES GREFFE

REPORT

Introduction

The Privileges and Procedures Committee undertook to bring forward proposals for changes to the current composition of the States Assembly shortly after taking office in December 2005. The Chairman gave an undertaking to bring forward proposals during his speech in December 2005 when he was appointed and the Chief Minister, during the question period that took place during his appointment process, agreed that this was a matter that had to be tackled following the introduction of the new system of government.

During its initial consideration of the issues involved the Committee realised that there were many varying interpretations of what public opinion was on this subject. There was anecdotal evidence from letters and comments in the media, the MORI Poll undertaken for the Clothier Panel, the outcome of the series of parish meetings held by the then Policy and Resources Committee in 2001, and evidence from the personal experience of members of the States during election campaigns or other dealings with their constituents.

PPC concluded that it would be extremely difficult to bring forward proposals unless there was a more rigorous and scientific assessment of public opinion on these issues. The Committee therefore commissioned Ipsos-MORI (MORI) to undertake a survey of public opinion. The survey was undertaken according to proper rigorous statistical methodology and the number of residents interviewed, namely 1,295, represented a substantial proportion of the Island's population for a survey of this nature. (Many surveys undertaken by U.K. polling organisations will rely on a sample of only 1,000 or 2,000 respondents for the whole of the United Kingdom.)

The Committee recognises that the MORI poll was only one small part of the overall process of making recommendations, and accepts that surveys of this nature inevitably contain a specified margin of error, but believes that the results of the survey must be taken to give the most reliable indication possible of current public opinion in the Island on these issues.

It has already been recognised that the MORI poll comprised a series of separate questions and an analysis of the results shows that it may be difficult to produce any package of measures which meets the wishes of the majority of respondents. PPC has therefore decided to produce this consultation paper setting out various options for change, drawing on the results of the MORI poll, so that the interaction between the various responses given in the survey can be set out clearly. If a workable package of measures is to be brought forward some compromises may be needed as it will almost certainly be impossible to propose a workable series of measures that meet all the aspirations of the public.

The reasons for change

Before setting out the proposed options for change it is worthwhile to summarize the reasons why PPC remains convinced that some reform of the current composition and election of the States Assembly is appropriate.

PPC, in common with many others, is extremely concerned by the current low turnouts in elections to the States. The table below gives a summary of the percentage turnout in recent Senatorial and Deputies elections.

Election	Overall Island average turnout
Senatorial 2002	48.6%
Deputies 2002 (contested seats)	39.2%
Senatorial by election 2003	25.99%
Senatorial by election 2004	23.34%
Senatorial 2005	42.55%
Deputies 2005 (contested seats)	33.8%

It is perhaps of note that the turnout in the 2004 general election in Guernsey, with a revised electoral structure, was as follows –

District	Turnout
South East	69%
Vale	68%
Castel	65%
St Sampson	64%
West	64%
St Peter Port South	59%
St Peter Port North	58%
Guernsey Total	64%

Although the turnout in the 2006 elections to the House of Keys in the Isle of Man, with 49,855 registered voters in the contested seats, was marginally lower than the 2004 Guernsey figures it was still considerably higher than the recent Jersey figures –

Constituency	Turnout
Castletown	62%
Douglas East	51%
Douglas North	54%
Douglas South	57%
Douglas West	57%
Garff	64%
Glenfaba	74%
Malew and Santon	60%
Michael	64%
Middle	58%
Onchan	62%
Peel	63%
Ramsey	66%
Rushen	65%
Isle of Man total	61%

The MORI survey gives some indication of the reasons for voter apathy in Jersey but it is apparent that there is no one single reason for declining turnouts. It is, of course, a feature of many western democracies that turnout is falling but PPC's initial assessment is that, in addition to other reasons, the relatively frequent nature of elections in Jersey, with Connétables' elections happening on an annual basis and separate elections for Senators and Deputies, may lead to a form of election fatigue

and, consequentially, lower turnouts. In addition the election of some Connétables outside the normal 3 year electoral cycle can make it more difficult for them to be appointed to positions of responsibility as these appointments are normally made immediately after the Deputies' elections every 3 years.

In addition to the frequency of elections concern has frequently been expressed about the imbalance in representation in the Island particularly in relation to the Deputies seats where changes in population have not been reflected in the allocation of seats that has remained unchanged for many years. The following tables give an indication of the breakdown between population and representation in the Island (the 2001 census figures are the last available accurate statistics on the population of each parish).

	Population 2001 Census	Current Deputies	Residents per Deputy
Grouville	4,702	1	4,702
St. Peter	4,293	1	4,293
St. Clement	8,196	2	4,098
St. Ouen	3,803	1	3,803
St. Martin	3,628	1	3,628
St. Brelade	10,134	3	3,378
St. Helier	28,310	10	2,831
Trinity	2,718	1	2,718
St. John	2,618	1	2,618
St. Saviour	12,491	5	2,498
St. Lawrence	4,702	2	2,351
St. Mary	1,591	1	1,591
TOTALS	87,186	29	
Average			3,006

If the Parish Connétable is counted as part of the parish's representation the imbalance between the parishes is accentuated –

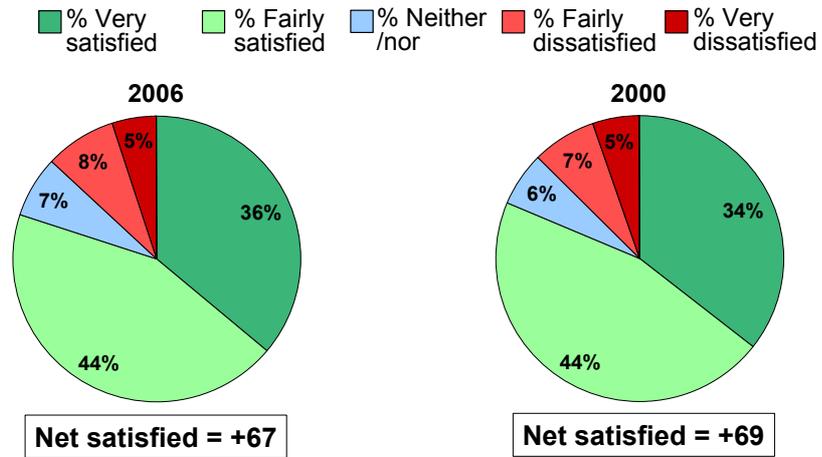
	Population 2001 Census	Current Deputies & Connétable	Residents per Parish representatives
St. Clement	8,196	3	2,732
St. Helier	28,310	11	2,574
St. Brelade	10,134	4	2,534
Grouville	4,702	2	2,351
St. Peter	4,293	2	2,147
St. Saviour	12,491	6	2,082
St. Ouen	3,803	2	1,902
St. Martin	3,628	2	1,814
St. Lawrence	4,702	3	1,567
Trinity	2,718	2	1,359
St. John	2,618	2	1,309
St. Mary	1,591	2	796
TOTALS	87,186	41	
Average			2,126

The conclusions of the MORI survey

The MORI survey, conducted on behalf of the Committee during the summer of 2006, contained a range of individual questions relating to the electoral process. The Committee was pleased to note from the findings that there is, overall, general satisfaction with life in Jersey but disappointed to note that there is clearly dissatisfaction with the way in which the States run the Island.

Chart 1: Satisfaction with Jersey as a place to live

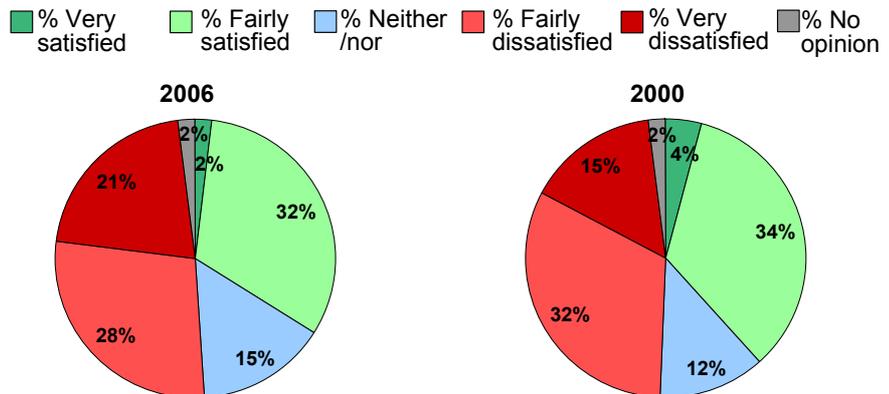
Q *Generally speaking, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the island as a place to live?*



Base: 1,295 Jersey residents aged 18+, interviewed by telephone, 20 July – 24 September 2006 Source: Ipsos MORI

Chart 2: Satisfaction with the States

Q *And how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the States run the island?*

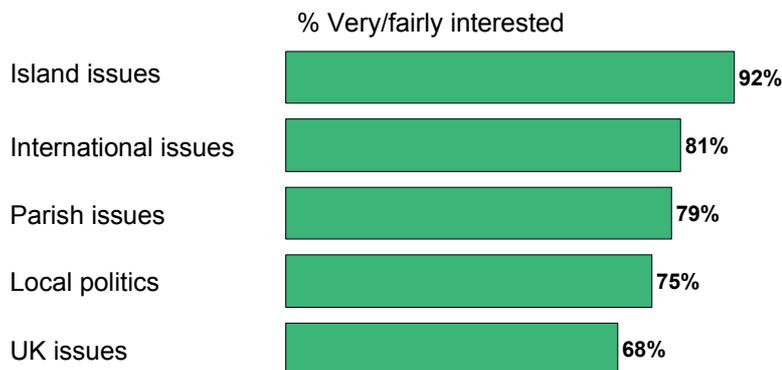


Base: 1,295 Jersey residents aged 18+, interviewed by telephone, 20 July – 24 September 2006 Source: Ipsos MORI

It is clear from the survey results that the low voter turnouts in elections are not simply a reflection of a lack of interest in Island issues among the population.

Chart 13 – Interest in different issues

Q How interested, if at all, would you say you are in the following....?



Base: 1,295 Jersey residents aged 18+, interviewed by telephone, 20 July – 24 September 2006 Source: Ipsos MORI

As can be seen 92% of respondents were very or fairly interested in Island issues and, as MORI point out, this is significantly higher than U.K. comparisons. MORI comment that *“this suggests that it is not any lack of interest in Jersey that is affecting voter turnout. Interest in Island affairs, if effectively harnessed, could lead to wider participation, and should be seen as an opportunity for greater democratic involvement”*. PPC believes it is essential to take steps to harness this enthusiasm and is therefore hopeful that a reformed and simplified electoral system would encourage greater involvement in the democratic process in the Island.

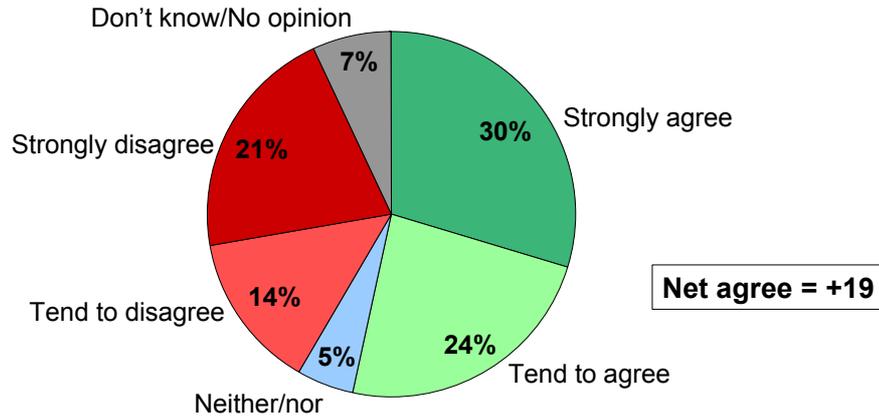
In considering the findings of the MORI poll, PPC has focussed on 4 key findings which it considers are particularly relevant when considering options for change.

The first such finding is that over half of Island residents believe that Parish Connétables should remain as States members. Secondly a large number of respondents believed that the Island-wide mandate was important. 46% of respondents thought that all members should be selected on an Island-wide basis and, to this figure, can be added the 32% who believe that some members should continue to be elected for the whole Island. There was, thirdly, strong support for the concept of a general election with all States members elected on the same day. 71% of respondents supported this concept. Finally a significant majority of respondents, 66%, believe that there are too many members and that the number of members should be reduced. These 4 findings are considered in more detail in the following sections.

The rôle of the Connétables as members of the States

Chart 23 – Parish constables

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree that Parish Constables should remain as members of the States?



Base: 1,295 Jersey residents aged 18+, interviewed by telephone, 20 July – 24 September 2006 Source: Ipsos MORI

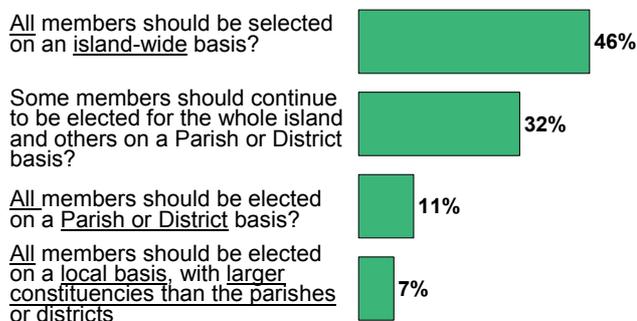
Although views on the position of the Parish Connétables were strongly polarized in the MORI survey PPC accepts that a majority of respondents clearly wish the Connétables to remain as members of the States and PPC believes that the current political mood among States members reflects this preference. The Parish link is clearly seen as being significant by a large number of people in the Island and concerns that the Connétables would not play a full part in the new ministerial system have proved to be unfounded with 3 Connétables being Assistant Ministers, 6 working on scrutiny panels and/or the PAC, 3 on the Planning Applications Panel (in addition to the Assistant Minister), one as Chairman of PPC and one as a member of that Committee. There is currently only one newly elected Connétable who has not yet been elected to any position of responsibility, an indication of the problem alluded to above where Connétables are currently elected at different periods of the normal appointments cycle.

PPC does not believe it would be sensible or productive to put forward options at this stage excluding the retention of the Connétables as members of the States. The Committee accepts that this will disappoint those who believe the Connétables should no longer have an automatic place in the States by virtue of their office but considers that it would simply complicate what is already likely to be a difficult decision to include this option that, realistically, is unlikely to receive political or public support. The Committee is nevertheless keen to clarify the legal status of Connétables as members of the States and is seeking legal advice on the feasibility of ensuring that they are recognised as being 'full' members of the Assembly and not simply members by virtue of their parish office as at present.

Island-wide mandate

Chart 20 - Constituencies

Q *At present, some members are elected by the whole island, while others are elected on a Parish or District basis. Do you think that:*



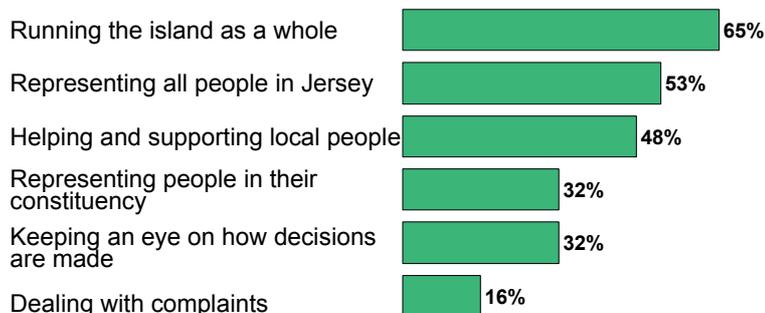
Base: 1,295 Jersey residents aged 18+, interviewed by telephone, 20 July – 24 September 2006 Source: Ipsos MORI

The findings of the MORI poll confirmed earlier anecdotal evidence that electors in Jersey consider that the current Island-wide mandate is important. This is undoubtedly an indication that many electors consider that it is important that all voters have the ability to influence the election of certain members. This may be linked to the fact that, in recent years, some of the most senior positions of executive responsibility, such as the Presidency of the Policy and Resources or Finance and Economics Committee, and now the Chief Minister and 8 other Ministers, have always been held by a member with a Senatorial mandate.

The findings on the importance of the Island-wide mandate appear to be reflected in the MORI question on the rôle of members where the most significant issue identified was that members should run the Island as a whole with the 2nd most significant rôle being 'representing all people in Jersey'. The number of respondents who believed that the most important thing for States members to do was run the Island as a whole was over double the number who believed that a member's most important rôle was representing people in their constituency, with only 32% of respondents choosing this latter response.

Chart 17 – The role of members

Q *I am going to read out a list of things that States members do. Which two or three do you think are most important for them to be doing?*



Base: 1,295 Jersey residents aged 18+, interviewed by telephone, 20 July – 24 September 2006 Source: Ipsos MORI

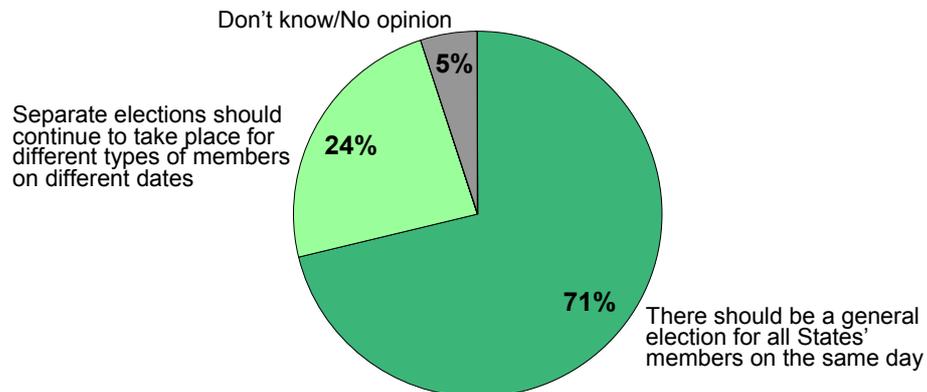
PPC believes that the Island-wide mandate is a feature of the electoral system that should, if possible, be retained. This does, however, clearly have implications for the practicality of certain options referred to below but the Committee accepts that it may be unacceptable to bring forward options without some element of Island-wide mandate.

General election

A very significant majority of respondents in the MORI poll, 71%, believe that there should be a general election for all States members on the same day.

Chart 21 – Attitudes towards a ‘General Election’

Q *States’ members are elected at various times for varying terms of office. Do you think ...*



Base: 1,295 Jersey residents aged 18+, interviewed by telephone, 20 July – 24 September 2006 Source: Ipsos MORI

Jersey is, of course, reasonably unique in unicameral parliamentary systems in having different election days for different members sitting in the same Assembly. It has often been pointed out that it would take a significant number of years to renew the entire membership of the Assembly even if the public wished to do so. During 2007 and 2008, under the current electoral system, there will be 7 elections for Connétables, 1 election for Senators and 1 election for Deputies in a period of only 2 years.

Some have claimed in the past that the lack of a general election leads to greater political stability and avoids the sudden changes in representation that can be seen in other jurisdictions. PPC nevertheless believes that this must be seen against the basic democratic principle, common in most parliamentary democracies, that the public can influence the entire membership of a legislature at one time. Under the current system Connétables can be elected and re-elected at any time during the normal 3 year life of the Council of Ministers and the various panels and Committees, and this can, particularly shortly after the election of a new Connétable, make it more difficult for the Connétables to play as active a rôle as they may wish in the government of the Island. A further disadvantage of the lack of a general election is the concern about

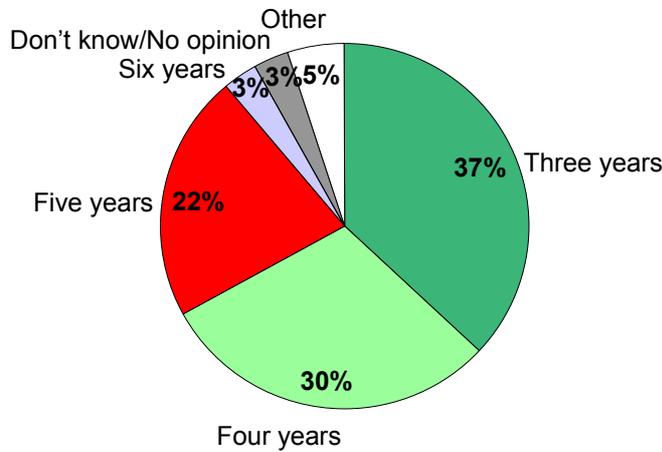
candidates standing in multiple elections with unsuccessful candidates in an Island-wide election being able to stand for election some 4 to 5 weeks later as Deputies.

PPC agrees that a general election is desirable and has attempted to reflect this in some of the options below. Nevertheless there are, for some options, practical difficulties in respect of the potential complexity of elections through having one single general election.

The results of the MORI poll showed a split of views on the term of office.

Chart 22 – Length of office

Q How long do you think the term of office of States members should be?



Base: 1,295 Jersey residents aged 18+, interviewed by telephone, 20 July – 24 September 2006 Source: Ipsos MORI

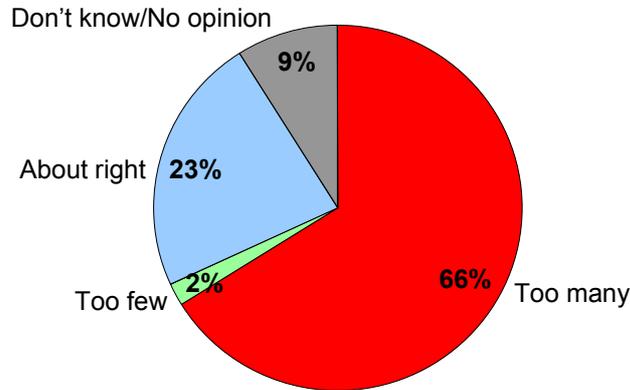
PPC considers that there a reasonable compromise is to propose a 4 year term of office for all members. This would enable a sufficient time for policies to be developed and implemented over a 4 year cycle whilst allowing the electorate to influence the political process through the ballot box more frequently than with a 5 or even 6 year term of office.

Reduction in the number of members

PPC believes that the result of this question, namely that 66% of respondents felt that there were too many States members and only 2% that there were too few, is an almost inevitable response in a survey of this nature.

Chart 18: Number of members

Q *There are 53 States' members. Do you think this is:*



Base: 1,295 Jersey residents aged 18+, interviewed by telephone, 20 July – 24 September 2006 Source: Ipsos MORI

Asking the public whether there should be less politicians could, in some ways, be seen as not dissimilar to asking the public whether they would like to pay less tax or work less hours per week. It is therefore important to consider the potential consequences of reducing the membership of the States from the current 53.

It is interesting to note how Jersey compares with other small jurisdictions in the Commonwealth with a population of less than 100,000 and, as can be seen from the following table, there are a number of small jurisdictions with greater number of representatives per resident although there is no jurisdiction on this list with a larger population and a higher proportion of representatives.

	Lower House	Upper House	Total	Approximate Population	Residents per member
Australia (Norfolk Island)			9	1,534	170
Falkland Islands			8	2,913	364
Montserrat			12	5,000	417
Cook Islands			25	13,900	556
Tuvalu			15	9,043	603
Turks and Caicos			19	20,000	1,053
Guernsey			47	59,807	1,272
Bermuda	36	11	47	64,300	1,368
Canada (Nunavut)			19	26,745	1,408
British Virgin Islands			14	21,333	1,524
Jersey			53	87,186	1,645
Canada (Yukon)			18	30,256	1,681
Gibraltar			15	27,033	1,802
Canada (NW Territories)			19	37,360	1,966
Kiribati			42	84,494	2,012
Isle of Man	24	11	35	76,315	2,180
Cayman Islands			18	40,100	2,228
Seychelles			34	81,000	2,382
Dominica			21	71,727	3,416

It would clearly be necessary to maintain the current percentage relationship between the number of Ministers/Assistant Ministers and the number of non executive members in the event of any reduction of numbers. The table below shows the actual numbers that would be possible to ensure that the “10% difference rule” between the Executive and the non Executive was maintained.

TOTAL MEMBERS	‘10% rule’ (rounded as required)	Maximum in the Executive	Balance (members not in the Executive)	Actual ‘gap’
40	4	18	22	4
41	5	18	23	5
42	5	18	24	6
43	5	19	24	5
44	5	19	25	6
45	5	20	25	5
46	5	20	26	6
47	5	21	26	5
48	5	21	27	6
49	5	22	27	5
50	5	22	28	6
51	6	22	29	7
52	6	23	29	6
53	6	23	30	7

PPC does not believe it is feasible, at present, to suggest any reduction below 42 elected members which would, as seen from the table, allow up to 18 Ministers and Assistant Ministers and 24 members who were not in the Executive. Various options may be possible to achieve a system of government structures around an Assembly of 42 elected members, for example, reducing the number of Ministers from 10 to 8 and reducing the number Assistant Ministers whilst, in parallel, reducing the number of members serving on each scrutiny panel from 5 to 4 or even 3. PPC is nevertheless conscious that respondents to the MORI survey did not, necessarily, fully appreciate the wide range of responsibilities undertaken by the 53 elected members. All members, whether in an Executive or non Executive rôle, have heavy workloads balancing States' work, Ministerial duties, Committee/panel work and a wide range of constituency work and other work related to their States' duties. The weekly meeting list produced every Friday by the States Greffe gives a clear indication of the number of meetings that elected members have to attend on a weekly basis. The total political input into the running of the Island would clearly be diminished if the number of elected members was reduced and PPC believes it is important to assess the consequences of that change very carefully before simply accepting the majority view that the number of members must be reduced at all costs.

For the various options for change set out below the decision on the reduction in numbers is seen by PPC as a distinct issue that can be considered in isolation of the choice of the actual option for change selected. Nevertheless it is clearly the case that some options become increasingly less practical with larger of numbers of elected members.

Other issues

There are a number of issues that are relevant to elections in the Island that have been considered by PPC alongside the discussions on the actual composition of the Assembly. These include ways to improve the ease of voting to encourage greater participation, the regulation of election expenses to ensure a 'level playing field' between candidates, the integrity of the postal voting system and the registration of political parties. The Committee will be bringing forward proposals on these issues and promoting amendments to the Public Elections (Jersey) Law 2002 as appropriate in 2007. In addition the Committee will be considering its response to the matter of lowering the voting age to 16 which has recently be raised.

Options for change

The Committee has set out below 3 options for change to be considered against the status quo. PPC believes it is important to set out the options in this way, making the disadvantages and advantages of each option clear, so that a reasoned and informed decision can be taken on the way forward. PPC accepts that the respondents to the MORI poll gave answers in isolation and it is clear that it may be necessary to compromise in some areas if a workable solution is to be proposed. Before coming forward with the options set out below the Committee considered a number of other alternatives which were rejected as being impractical or undesirable. Rejected options included –

- (i) a system based on an all island-wide election system (together with Connétables) where one quarter of the Island-wide members would be elected each year on a rolling basis and the Connétables every 4th year. Although this system would have enabled more ‘manageable’ island-wide elections than electing all members Island-wide at the same time it would have created a system of almost constant electioneering, would have made it very difficult to plan a programme of government because of annual changes of membership. In addition it would have possibly accentuated the level of voter apathy and ‘election fatigue’ seen at present;
- (ii) a system based on a general election for 12 Senators, 12 Connétables and a reduced number of Deputies, possibly 18, all elected on one day for 4 years, with the Deputies reallocated across the parishes to ensure more even parish representation (taking into account the parish representation provided by the Connétable). The main disadvantage of this system was that, although it was intended to retain the link between parishes and Deputies, the actual calculation of the allocation of Deputies’ seats meant that some 7 parishes would have had to have shared one Deputy against the 9 Deputies that would be needed in St. Helier.
- (iii) different options that involved linking success in island-wide elections to subsequent ministerial office. One scheme that was considered involved allowing electors in each parish a ‘second’ vote for candidates in parishes across the Island to allow voters to identify a number of potential ministerial candidates with island-wide support. A second scheme involved retaining Senators and specifying that they all had to be appointed as Ministers or Assistant Ministers. PPC was concerned that these schemes devalued the scrutiny function by implying that only the Chief Minister and Ministers would be selected in this way and, in addition, the Committee does not believe it would be desirable to mix a system where the public and States members had some influence on who could be selected for ministerial office.

Next steps

PPC intends to consult widely on the options below and plans to send out an Executive Summary of this consultation document to every household in the Island early in 2007 to stimulate a wide debate. In order to gauge the public’s views of the options after the distribution of the summary the Committee may commission a further survey of public opinion to gain reliable evidence of that. In order to gauge the views of States members on the options the Committee also intends to ask the Assembly to discuss the options paper ‘in Committee’ early in the New Year.

It is, of course, possible that during the next consultation period further options may be put forward but the Committee intends to ask the States to decide on one preferred way forward in the first few months of 2007. If an initial, in principle, debate on this option was successful, the Committee, as previously announced, would ask the States to agree that the matter should be put to the electorate in a referendum as soon as possible after the States decision to ascertain the level of public support for the proposed way forward before changes are implemented. The Committee has not touched on the matter of transitional arrangements in this paper as the details of that will depend on the option selected but PPC is hopeful that a revised system can start to be implemented by 2008.

It is clear that the composition of the Assembly, and the methods of electing members to it, are issues of fundamental importance to the governance of the Island and PPC therefore recognises that it is vital that any reform is managed with extreme care. Although several private members have suggested in recent years that reform could be achieved by the simple adoption of a single proposition it can be seen from this paper there is no simple package of measures that could be implemented easily and, although it has no desire to delay appropriate reforms, PPC believes that caution must be taken before rushing into significant change which might have unforeseen consequences for the government of Jersey. There are few more significant decisions that the States will have to take in the next few years and the Island's future depends on getting this decision right. The estimated cost of the next stages in the consultation process set out above could be between approximately £19,700 and £22,700¹ but the Committee believes that this would be a worthwhile investment to ensure proper public engagement and to gauge support for the proposals. Based on the last senatorial election costs, when Parishes received a sum of £840 from the States for each polling station, the proposed referendum would probably cost, in total, some £15,000.

PPC welcomes comments on the options put forward in this paper. Comments can be sent to the Committee, c/o States Greffe, Morier House, St. Helier, Jersey, JE1 1DD or submitted by e-mail to the Committee Clerk at p.horton@gov.je.

¹ *A leaflet to every domestic household in a Jersey Post bulk posting will cost between £3,700 and £5,700 plus printing of between £1,000 and £2,000. Based on the cost of the MORI poll the cost of a shorter and simpler opinion survey should be no more than £15,000.*

OPTION ONE

Elect 30 members island-wide and the 12 Parish Connétables on one single general election day for a term of office of 4 years.

This option is put forward as it probably meets the findings of the MORI poll in the most precise way. The position of Deputy would be abolished and an Assembly of 42 members would be made up of 30 members elected on an island-wide basis together with the 12 Parish Connétables on one single general election day every 4 years.

Advantages

- The island-wide mandate is enhanced and all electors would have the ability to influence a significant proportion of the membership of the Assembly;
- Voters would be sure that the majority of members elected to positions of responsibility in the Executive or in scrutiny had an island-wide mandate;
- The option meets the preferences of a majority of respondents in the MORI survey;
- There would be a general election every 4 years which would hopefully increase interest in the electoral process and increase turnout;
- A direct connection with the Parishes is retained in the States through the Connétables;

Disadvantages

- The logistics of electing 30 members on an island-wide mandate might make this option unworkable, with the possibility of some 60 or even 100 names on a ballot paper;
- The traditional system of hustings would need to be abolished as there would be too many candidates to hold such meetings, and some new method of allowing the electorate to hear the candidates' policies would need to be found, for example dividing the hustings into different parts;
- It may be difficult for the public to gain any real understanding of the candidates' views and policies with so many candidates;
- In the likely absence of elections based entirely on a party political system in Jersey it would be very confusing for the public to know how to choose up to 30 candidates. Electors may restrict themselves to voting for significantly less than 30 names and candidates might then be elected with a very low proportion of votes cast;

- It might be necessary to introduce a system of preferential voting, for example, Single Transferable Vote to ensure a fair result. Although this could, in some ways, be seen as an advantage it would undoubtedly increase the complexity of the voting process and, although it would probably be feasible for electors to place, say, 6 candidates in preference order, it might be unrealistic to expect electors to be able to prioritise 30 candidates.
- The loss of the position of Parish Deputy might weaken the position of the parishes in the island although the Connétables would still provide a direct link from the parishes to the States Assembly;
- The abolition of the position of Parish Deputy may place an additional burden on each Connétable as the Connétable might need to deal with the many queries and problems raised by constituents that are currently dealt with by Parish Deputies.

Option 2

Elect 30 members in a small number of large constituencies and elect these members, and the 12 Parish Connétables, on the same day every 4 years.

Apart from the retention of the Parish Connétables, and the consequential reduction in the number of members elected in the large constituencies, this option is not dissimilar to the proposal put forward by the former Special Committee on the Composition and Election of the States Assembly in 2004. With significant public support for a general election, and concerns about the feasibility of organising such a general election under the other options proposed in this paper, this option may be worth considering again. It is a radical change from the present structure but may represent a realistic way forward to reform the present system successfully.

Analysis of the last senatorial results shows that there is a significant degree of similarity in the results across the Island. As a result it would be possible to retain some of the characteristics of an island-wide vote without the associated complexity of other options. If the senatorial votes cast in 2006 for the top 6 candidates are analysed across the 6 new constituencies proposed above it can be seen from the table in the Appendix that there would be little difference in the overall outcome.

In addition to the Parish Connétables the Assembly would be made up of 30 or more members elected in a number of large constituencies. This model was introduced successfully in Guernsey in 2004 with an average turnout across our sister island, as set out above, of 64%. The exact division of the Island into the larger districts would need to be considered in greater detail if this option was pursued, and a decision taken on whether to account for the representation provided by the Connétables when making the division. The Committee considers that the ‘principle’ of this option would need to be agreed before any final decision was taken on the actual number of districts and a division into either 3, 4, 5 or 6 districts might be appropriate. The Committee would not wish to see more than 6 districts as it believes that the districts would then become too small. One possible division into 6 districts (similar to the proposed division in 2004) that does not take account of the representation provided by the Connétables would be as follows –

	Members	Population per member
St. Helier (divided into 2 districts)	9	3,146
St. Clement		
Grouville	5	2,580
St. Saviour		
St. Martin	6	2,687
St. Brelade		
St. Peter	5	2,885
St. Lawrence		
St. John		
St. Mary		
Trinity		
St. Ouen	5	3,086

A possible division in 3 very large districts with 10 members each, that would have a very good balance of population and representation would be as follows –

	2001 Population	Members	Population per member
St. Clement	8,196		
Grouville	4,702		
St. Martin	3,628		
St. Saviour	12,491		
TOTALS	29,017	10	2,902
St. Helier	28,310	10	2,831
St. Brelade	10,134		
St. John	2,618		
St. Lawrence	4,702		
St. Mary	1,591		
St. Ouen	3,803		
St. Peter	4,293		
Trinity	2,718		
TOTALS	29,859	10	2,986
Island Totals	87,186	30	2,906

Advantages

- This option avoids the complexity of other general election options and the election process would not be significantly more complex than the current process for a senatorial election, although each elector would need to cast a vote for the parish Connétable as well. As electors would vote for a maximum of 6 candidates the process would be similar to the present senatorial election process;
- This system worked well in Guernsey in 2004 and led to an overall average turnout of 64% as shown above;
- Each elector would have up to 6 representatives in addition to his or her Connétable to approach when constituency matters arose;
- The election process, both for hustings and voting, would be more manageable than under Option 1;
- The option meets the public's views expressed through the MORI poll for a general election and for less members;
- It is probable that contested elections would take place in all the new larger districts overcoming concern that some Deputies are elected unopposed in the current system.

Disadvantages

- A version of part of this option, albeit without the important difference that the Connétables are retained in this option, was rejected on the last occasion it was proposed because it was felt that it abolished 2 aspects of the present system which are popular with some residents, namely the island-wide mandate and the direct link between Deputies and their parish, and replaced these with a concept that was alien to Jersey;
- The option might undermine the parish system in the Island although the Connétables would still provide a direct link between each parish and the Assembly (this was, of course, not a feature of the 2004 proposals). As with Option 1 the workload of the Connétables may increase if the new members elected in larger constituency were not seen as accessible by electors for detailed parish issues;
- The strong support in the MORI poll (see MORI chart 20 above) for an island wide mandate for some members, and the lack of support for a larger constituency model, would not be reflected in this option;
- Some of the new districts may be too large for candidates to canvas and canvassing could therefore become superficial, depriving the electorate of this opportunity to learn about the candidates' views and policies (although it is fair to point out that canvassing would be easier under this option than in a current senatorial election).

Option 3

Retain existing membership but elect all 53 members on the same day every 4 years.

Under this option there would be no change to the current membership of the Assembly but a general election would be held every 4 years to elect all members on one day. This option does not address the wider issues about reform but would be a minimum change to overcome the current concern about the frequency of elections over the 3 year cycle.

Advantages

- The retention of the post of Deputy is an advantage for those who favour closer links with the parishes than would be possible under Options 1 and 2;
- The option enables a general election to take place every 4 years;
- The general election would be more manageable in respect of the island-wide positions than under Option 1.

Disadvantages

- The option retains 3 separate categories of members and may devalue the position of Senator as sitting Deputies may be reticent to stand as Senators when there is no longer any chance of standing again as a Deputy if unsuccessful. As a result more Senators may be new members who have not previously been in the Assembly and this would undermine any concept of the Senators being more 'senior' members;
- None of the anomalies of the present allocation of Deputies' seats are addressed and the imbalance in representation across the Island is not corrected;
- Electors may be confused about which candidates are standing for which positions and, during the election campaign, parish issues may be overlooked if most media interest is given to the island-wide senatorial campaign;
- The present hustings process for the senatorial candidates would almost certainly have to change in an election for 12 candidates at one time;
- The general election process, although undoubtedly manageable, would be quite complex and electors would have to be aware of a large number of candidates' names to vote for 12 senators, one Connétable and one or more Deputies at one time when casting their votes;

- It may not be legally possible to prevent candidates from standing for more than one position on the same day which could lead to a need for by-elections if a person was elected to more than one position and could not therefore take office for one of the posts.

Option 4**Retain the status quo but bring forward minor improvements.**

The Committee believes that it is important to set out the status quo as one option alongside the 3 proposed alternatives. Having considered the advantages and disadvantages of the alternative options, members of the States and members of the public may take a conscious decision to retain the present system despite some of the difficulties with it mentioned above.

As part of this option PPC believes that some simple improvements could be made to the current system, including –

- (i) the introduction of an election for all Parish Connétables on one day to increase awareness and interest in these elections. Through transitional arrangements this could be introduced over a period of years to align the current terms of office. It would be necessary to decide whether this Connétables election would be held on the same day, or in the same year, as the elections for Senator or Deputy;
- (ii) taking steps to realign the allocation of Deputies' seats in line with population. As mentioned earlier there are currently some significant imbalances between parishes.

Advantages

- Electors are familiar with the present system which has delivered stability in the Island's government since the present structure was introduced after the Liberation;
- The present system has a mixture of island-wide and parish-based representation and the island-wide elections are easily manageable;
- Deputies can choose to stand as Senator and therefore progress to a position that is regarded as more 'senior' in the Assembly.

Disadvantages

- Even if minor changes were made to the present system, almost none of the issues that have led to calls for reform are addressed by retaining the status quo;
- There would be no general election under this option and it is likely that the present low turnouts would continue;

- There would be no reduction in the number of members;
- Some see it as a disadvantage that candidates who are unsuccessful in the senatorial election can stand for a position of Deputy the following month.

APPENDIX

These tables show the 2005 senatorial results, split into the 6 large constituencies referred to in Option 2. The same 6 candidates would have been elected in each constituency and the inclusion of the results of the unsuccessful candidates in this analysis does not change the results below although the order of some of those placed 7th and below does, of course, vary slightly from constituency to constituency in a wider analysis.

	St C	Gr	TOTAL		St B	St P	TOTAL
Syvret	1,533	1,021	2,554	Syvret	2,163	861	3,024
Shenton	1,439	1,042	2,481	Shenton	2,100	805	2,905
Cohen	1,374	1,105	2,479	Cohen	1,936	796	2,732
Le Main	1,299	1,010	2,309	Le Main	1,648	661	2,309
Le Sueur	995	921	1,916	Le Sueur	1,328	579	1,907
Perchard	918	773	1,691	Perchard	1,270	491	1,761

	St Mn	St S	TOTAL		St H
Syvret	734	2,057	2,791	Syvret	3,433
Shenton	740	1,850	2,590	Shenton	2,901
Cohen	887	1,622	2,509	Cohen	2,460
Le Main	722	1,562	2,284	Le Main	2,244
Le Sueur	666	1,185	1,851	Perchard	1,605
Perchard	594	1,229	1,823	Le Sueur	1,599

	St J	St L	St My	St O	Tr	TOTAL
Cohen	680	1,009	368	742	725	3,524
Syvret	568	956	360	799	646	3,329
Shenton	562	933	317	754	582	3,148
Le Main	544	887	317	662	603	3,013
Le Sueur	485	752	284	593	589	2,703
Perchard	378	610	254	469	407	2,118