

7. The Chairman of the Comité des Connétables will make a statement regarding the Island-wide rate

7.1 The Connétable of St. Ouen (Chairman, Comité des Connétables):

I wish to inform Members of the cost to ratepayers across the Island, of the Island-wide rate for 2009, which has been determined in accordance with the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005. The 2009 annual Island-wide rate figure is the 2008 figure of £10,093,606 increased by the Jersey Retail Price Index for the 12 months to March 2009, of 2.1 per cent, resulting in a sum of £10,205,572. In accordance with the Rates Apportionment (Jersey) Regulations 2006, 55 per cent of the annual Island-wide rate figure is to be met from the domestic rate, and 45 per cent of the annual Island-side rate figure is to be met from the non-domestic rate. The sum of £5,668,065 is therefore to be raised from the domestic rate and a sum of £4,637,507 from the non-domestic rate. The rates are determined by dividing the sum to be raised between the number of quarters assessed on domestic and non-domestic property. The rates will therefore be 0.65 pence per quarter for domestic rate payers and 1.14 pence per quarter for non-domestic rate-payers. I would just like to add that these figures are added to the rates as set by each individual parish assembly.

The Greffier of the States (in the Chair):

Does anyone wish to ask any questions of the Chairman? Deputy Southern.

7.1.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Will the chairman inform Members whether any consideration was given to the possibility of freezing the Island-wide rate at this stage, given that we are about to freeze the wages of public sector workers?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

The decision to freeze, or otherwise, the Island-wide rate is one which has to be made by the States, not by the Comité des Connétables. The Comité des Connétables are obliged to find that figure from the rates in order to produce it for the States.

7.1.2 The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I wonder if the chairman would be good enough to inform the Assembly what was the rate per quarter, of both domestic and non-domestic property, in 2008?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

The increase of 2 per cent in the non-domestic quarter results from the fact that there is a different number of quarters to be assessed annually. The rates assessors in their assessment find a different figure annually and therefore it is not exactly a simple system to compare one with the other. In fact, what happens in this year is that there is a slight increase in the domestic quarter figure, but in fact a decrease in the non-domestic figure.

7.1.3 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Just a clarification really - could the Connétable just clarify whether this will come back to the House to be debated and decided on?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Sorry, will I come back to the House with ...?

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

You said it was the House who decides on this. Will it come back to the House to be debated?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

No. It is set in law what the Connétables have to raise towards the Island-wide rate. That is set in the law and therefore it is a matter of either a Minister or an individual Member bringing the law back for a change.

7.1.4 Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

Could the Connétable just remind Members of how the figure of £10,093,000 is arrived at? Is that an automatic figure or is that a figure that the Comité des Connétables has set?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

It is a figure which is set in the law. It was originally the amount which the Parishes together raised towards welfare, and that figure was transferred to the Treasury, and the agreement written within the law was that it would rise annually by the Retail Price Index as set at March of each year.