



PARISH OF ST HELIER



<b>Minutes of the Parish Assembly</b>	
<b>Wednesday 27 April 2022 at 7.00 p.m.</b>	
<b>Assembly Room, Town Hall</b>	
<b>12/22</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies –</b>
	<p><b>Apologies:</b> The Constable, Deputies Le Hegarat and Martin, Stewart Mourant, Edward Trevor and Malcolm L’Amy.</p> <p><b>Deputies / Senators in Attendance:</b> Deputy Stephen Ahier, Deputy Inna Gardiner, Deputy Rob Ward &amp; Senator Sam Mezec</p> <p><b>Procureurs in attendance:</b> Peter Pearce (Chairperson), Geraint Jennings</p> <p>Parishioners were advised that the Parish Assembly was being broadcast electronically</p>
<b>13/22</b>	<b>Item 1: To approve the Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 23 February 2022;</b>
	<p><b>Proposer:</b> Procureur Geraint Jennings <b>Seconder:</b> Deputy Stephen Ahier The minutes were adopted</p>
<b>14/22</b>	<b>Item 2: To elect a Constable’s Officer for the Canton de Bas de la Vingtaine de la Ville;</b>
	<p>DIANA PONTES</p> <p>Proposed: Jane Pearce</p> <p>Seconded: Isaura De Castro</p> <p>There being no further nominations Diana Pontes, was re-elected as Constable’s Officer for the Canton de Bas de la Vingtaine de la Ville. Procureur Pearce thanked Diana for allowing her name to go forward for a further term of office, as Constable’s Officer and formally warned her to appear before the Magistrates Court at 10am on Friday 29th April to take her Oath of Office.</p>
<b>15/22</b>	<b>Item 3: To elect a Constable’s Officer for the Vingtaine de Bas du Mont au Prêtre</b>
	<p>ELVIS MANUEL RODRIGUES VIEIRA</p> <p>Proposed: Danny Scaife</p> <p>Seconded: Paul Davies</p> <p>There being no further nominations Elvis Vieira, was re-elected as Constable’s Officer for the Vingtaine de Bas du Mont au Prêtre. Procureur Pearce thanked Elvis for allowing his name to go forward for a further term of office, as Constable’s Officer and formally warned him to appear before the Magistrates Court at 10am on Friday 29th April to take his Oath of Office.</p>
<b>16/22</b>	<b>Item 4: To elect a Constable’s Officer for the Vingtaine du Mont a l’Abbe</b>
	<p>LAURA FRANCISCO VIEIRA MOTOS GONCALVES</p> <p>Proposed: Danny Scaife</p> <p>Seconded: Isaura De Castro</p> <p>There being no further nominations Laura Goncalves, was elected as Constable’s Officer for the. Vingtaine du Mont a l’Abbe. Procureur Pearce thanked Laura for allowing her name to go forward for a term of office, as Constable’s Officer and formally warned her to appear before the Magistrates Court at 10am on Friday 29th April to take her Oath of Office.</p>
<b>17/22</b>	<b>Item 5: To approve the recommendation of the Connétable and Procureurs du Bien Public that the proposition requesting that proposals to form the Conseil Municipal for St Helier are included in the new Government Plan is lodged by the Connétable in the next States Assembly for debate later this year P.01/2022*;</b>
	<p>In the absence of the Constable, Procureur Geraint Jennings took the Assembly through a Power Point presentation in relation to the Projet, providing an introduction, the background, details of a working group, key stages of the Shadow Conseil and the next steps.</p>

Procureur Pearce asked for a Proposer and Seconder:

**Proposer:** Deputy Rob Ward; **Seconder:** Senator Sam Mezec.

John Baker, member of the Shadow Conseil Municipal, stated there had been a letter from a member of the municipality in the Bailiwick Express stating how expensive this option would be to ratepayers and he would like to hear the Parish's view.

Procureur Jennings stated it was important to remember that the Parish Assembly set the Parish budget and rate and that major projects would still come before a Parish Assembly for their agreement and so costs would be determined by the Assembly. Procureur Jennings couldn't say that it wouldn't result in increased costs, but this will be for parishioners to decide. The results might be so good that parishioners may be willing to approve additional spending in certain instances. It is believed the Parish could undertake some services more effectively and efficiently at a local government level if they are given the powers and a new structure under which to perform. There has been reference to payment of counsellors, however the Parish currently have many Honorary Officials, such as the Procureurs, Roads Committee, Rates Assessors, Honorary Police, and the Shadow Conseil, which demonstrates that there are people willing undertake these roles without the need for payment. A Conseil would provide more opportunities for Parish involvement and seeing the results achieved will motivate elected members far more than any payment would do.

John Baker stated that as Chair of the Environment Committee as part of the Shadow Conseil, they had incredible plans for a cleaner and greener Parish, improving, quality of life for many residents at a grassroots level. He was disappointed in the low turnout and involvement from parishioners at this Assembly, but often a low turnout at Assemblies is indicative of public support. In his view the income from services devolved from the States to the Parish will cover any additional costs. Mr Baker advised the Assembly he will be supporting the proposition.

Ted Vibert understands this is a huge break in tradition, however it is required because the Parish has 36,000 residents whereas other Parishes have 5,000. The current system may still be suitable for smaller Parishes, but it is inadequate for a Parish the size of St Helier. Mr Vibert has been on the Roads Committee for a year and can't believe how difficult it is to get things done, the reason being the Parish must go to through the States whatever they wish to do. It is ridiculous that the Parish is responsible for by-roads and the States responsible for main roads. It is time to forget history and recognise the importance of St Helier, not just for the 36,000 residents but for those who work, shop, travel and use its facilities. Currently the Parish can only control a tiny part of how we live in St Helier. Mr Vibert thanked all those involved to date for the role they had played in the trial; he was impressed that St Helier had managed to get the backing of the other eleven Constables.

Deputy Gardiner stated everyone in room works together and deeply cares for St Helier. Whilst in agreement that measures need to be introduced to improve in St Helier's autonomy, she has been listening to the debate so far and has found herself in a very challenging situation as she can't see the proposition being put forward to the States not costing ratepayers a considerable amount of money. Deputy Gardiner questioned what it means for residents in practical terms, given that there are only a small number of people at the Assembly this evening to discuss and debate, many of whom are likely vote in favour of the Projet, which will commit 36,000 residents without knowing the exact cost implications for Government and Parish ratepayers. Deputy Gardiner said she would like to make an amendment to the floor, stating that as elections are being held on on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, St Helier should allow parishioners to have their say, by having a public vote on the Projet on election day. Deputy Gardiner expressed concern that something as important as municipal reform, will be decided by such a small number. I know this is the law and the Parish struggle with engagement, but I don't feel this is right and would like to find a way to progress.

Procureur Jennings advised the reason for bringing the Projet forward before the election is to enable candidates to engage with potential voters and gain their views. The topic is likely to feature at the upcoming hustings meetings and will then be taken to the new States Assembly for debate. Those elected will have engaged with their electorate and will have received feedback from their constituencies and can use this feedback to form their views when debating the matter in the States. The Parish has done everything in its power to be open and transparent in its engagement and other than forcing people off the street to attend, there is little more it can do. Deputy Gardiner was advised that an amendment to this effect was not something that could be put to the Assembly this evening as the mechanism afforded to the Parish Assembly does not allow such matters to be put to a public election or any form of referendum.

Deputy Gardiner stated she was not against the proposals but requested that final proposition be presented and approved by a Parish Assembly before being taken to the States.

John Baker said whilst he applauded Deputy Gardiner's statement, if she is re-elected as a member of the States, she will be part of the debate and able to make an amendment. Tonight, the Assembly were being asked to agree the principle being presented to the States and not the proposition.

Lyndsay Feltham said she came from a similar place to Deputy Gardiner and as a member of Shadow Conseil Engagement Committee she had found some aspects to be disappointing, partly because of Covid. She was a member of the Public Engagement Committee, at a time when you were not able to engage with public, the Conseil lacked powers and therefore it became a talking shop. However there had been elements of progress and good movement from the Parish, she expressed thanks to the Parish Secretary and administration which enabled parishioners to attend Assemblies and vote online, this was not part of the Conseil but a good example of how Parishes can and are prepared to modernise. Her disappointment in what could be achieved should not be a reason to stop change, the fact there are so few people present at the Assembly is the reason why change is required. We need debate in the States as the current structure is outdated and not fit for purpose. The age of groups such as the Roads Committee are not a demographic representation of the Parish, explaining she was 1 of only 2 women on the Shadow Conseil, and there has never been a female representative on the Roads Committee. The Parish needs delivery of a vibrant and modern process fit for 2022 not 1922 and a structure, representatives, and framework to implement it.

Mr Pirozzolo was surprised at the comment of a lack of inclusion in Parish Committees, as it is not the Parish who decides whether a member is male or female, it is parishioners, The Parish Assembly has been well advertised on Bailiwick Express, Jersey Evening Post, social media, and radio, and like the Procureur states, is the Parish expected to drag people off the street to attend. Mr Pirozzolo took exception to the remarks about ageism of Road Committee Members, these individuals in his view are inspirational, know their job and have vast experience. Mr Pirozzolo was previously a member of a UK City Council and tried to bring this concept to the Conseil. The Conseil lacked teeth, but then it was only ever a Shadow Conseil, set up to prove the tracks align with the engine, and it managed to achieve this. He was sorry the previous speaker had been disappointed in the experience, he found it to be interesting, lessons were learned, the Conseil established where it went wrong, and this can be found in the report provided.

Deputy Ward stated I am supportive of the Conseil for a few reasons, St Helier is unique in terms of size, quantity, and diversity. A Council needs to be a true representation of the population, including a youth section. The issue of engagement is vital if we want to have more power making decisions in regards of travel, licensing, etc. The council needs more credibility and that will only be achieved by increasing turnout in Parish elections, the only way to achieve this is by knowing through elections that we are making the right decisions. I know the process and speed of the States Assembly, this is an in-principal proposition to the Assembly to enable a Conseil to take powers, those powers will need to be discussed as to what they are, that is a long process. I agree with Deputy Gardiner in part, the Parish need to be precise about its intentions, as the proposition will be pulled apart in the States Assembly and arguments about, we don't know what it looks like or costs, will win the day. Local democracy in Jersey is vital, and we have an opportunity to do that. As States members we have more access democratically in Jersey than anywhere else in the world, we can bring propositions to the States in 6 weeks, for discussion and decision, this democracy should be extended to St Helier and the people elected given the support and assistance of the Parish. The Parish can do it as I know the staff work hard. I would encourage you to support this Projet and start the process, detailed discussion and consultation will come later.

James Corbett advised that layers of government cost money, however there was no sign of this within the Projet. It is an exciting project to remedy a significant deficit in representation, I was chairman of a Parish Council in the UK with 9 elected members for less than 900 villagers. In comparison it makes the absence of the number of elected members of Conseil insufficient. It is not an unusual to see a small number of people at a Parish Assembly, this concept will increase the numbers that particate and assist in making the right decisions. I hope the Projet goes forward for consideration by the States.

Mario Pirozzolo explained the Conseil struggled from day 1 to get youth representation. There was tremendous support from the Parish CEO and his team, they were looking over the shoulder of the Conseil, making suggestions, commenting, assisting and that's what got us through the process. I work in hospitality and can inform you the current process to transfer a liquor licence is so long that I gave up. In my view these services can be done much quicker and with more flexibility by the Parish.

Senator Sam Mezec quoted Tony Benn, stating when you fight for progress, first they ignore you, then they think you are mad, then dangerous, then there is a pause when they can't find anyone who disagreed in the first place; this has been the journey of the Conseil. For some 150 years there has been calls by the Parish for more powers

	<p>to which the States Assembly have not agreed, the States should give the Parish their support especially in relation to infrastructure, which a big town like St Helier needs. In 2015 I took an amendment to government plan to establish what a Town Council would look like and the powers and laws it should have. The debate was lost as it was said it was not a priority or something the States should be involved in. In this term the Parish has decided to do this itself by forming a Shadow Conseil, creating a report, and demonstrating the concept can work and there is widespread agreement from outside; even the other eleven Constables have given it their support.</p> <p>Now is the time with the upcoming elections to provide a fresh mandate, bearing in mind St Helier will get 3 additional representatives, therefore strengthening its position. It is good timing after there was an article in the media, where the Parish had difficulty with the St Patricks Day event and licensing by the Bailiff's Panel, by not being able to show a rugby match, which cost Parishioners £16,000. The event was fantastic, the Parish need a Culture and Events Committee as part of the Council, to ensure events like this take place without all the bureaucracy and risks involved when things go wrong. The prospects for a council are exciting and I would urge you to support the proposition.</p> <p>Procureur Jennings summed up by saying that government works when it runs like a well-oiled machine; what I want to stress is autonomy for St Helier and decision making at a local level. It is important that local government works together efficiently with central government. States Ministers should set policy, guidelines and strategies and the Parish at a lower level should know how to deliver those at a grass roots level. A good example of this concept of government can be found in the Isle of Man.</p> <p>A vote was taken at the Assembly by secret ballot, the result was as follows:</p> <p>The proposition was accepted with <b>14 votes in favour, 1 abstention and 2 spoilt papers.</b></p>
18/22	<p><b>Item 6: To consider an application by ArtHouse Jersey to use its recently acquired space of the Ground Floor at Capital House, 8 Church Street for a Bailiff's Annual Entertainment permit; to enable visual art exhibitions, dance, theatre, poetry, music performances, films and creative talks and workshops to take place. Opening hours are typically two weeks for exhibitions with the venue closed to the public on Mondays. There is usually 7 – 10 days turn around for changing exhibitions, but apart from this ArtHouse plans to run a programme of events on a continuous basis.</b></p>
	<p><b>Proposer:</b> Karen Le Roy Harris; <b>Seconder:</b> Martin Curd</p> <p>Ellie Haywood, Head of Operations spoke on behalf of the application, explaining ArtHouse have acquired Capital House, where they would like to start holding art exhibitions and entertainment and so are requesting a Bailiff's Entertainment Permit. ArtHouse are a professional and considerate organisation who have recently held a successful event at the Town Church.</p> <p>The Dean stated that after working with ArtHouse he could testify that they were immensely considerate of his requirements and the event had been brilliant. As they are neighbours, he hopes that this relationship between the two parties will continue, and he urged parishioners to support the application.</p> <p>Mario Pirozzolo congratulated ArtHouse on their achievements, stating St Helier needs more venues of this nature. He questioned whether the premises would have an alcohol licence and was advised that ArtHouse did not intend to sell alcohol, although there may be events such as private exhibitions and book launches where stewards would be in place and a free glass of wine may be served.</p> <p>James Corbett declared an interest as a member of the Arthouse Board. He explained although the organisation was short of funds it had moved from Greve De L'ecq to St Helier to offer exciting exhibitions for those that can't travel that far and to enable more people to experience beautiful things.</p> <p>Procureur Jennings asked about noise control and sound insulation for music performances. ArtHouse advised they have no music performances planned for 2022. When and if they hold an event of this nature, they will work with a sound engineer to produce a sound risk assessment and will be considerate of their neighbours</p> <p>The Assembly had no further questions, on being put to a vote the application was approved unanimously.</p>
	<p>The date of the next scheduled Parish Assembly is Wednesday 25th May 2022</p>