

Access to Public Information Response

May 5th 2017

REQUEST UNDER THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION

Request sent on May 5th 2017:

I wish to request the following documents and I confirm that the information is being requested under the "Code of Practice for Access to Public Information".

- Request sent by SACC to Douzaine requesting their views on the ballot paper and the provision of Polling Stations together with the responses.

I confirm I have asked for a copy of the original communication to the Douzaines from the President of SACC and my request was refused and I have not received a reply to my request addressed to the St Peter Port Douzaine.

States of Guernsey response May 11th 2017:

On behalf of the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee, I am responding to your request under the above Code to be sent a copy of the letter sent by the Committee to the Douzaines.

There were in fact two letters to cover different aspects of this matter. Appendix 1 and 2 below. (Please note that the options will not appear in that order in the policy letter.)

The Committee believes [having considered the provisions of sections 1.2, 2.4 and 2.14 of the Code] that, although it has no reason for the contents of the Douzaines' replies not to be known more widely, it feels unable to release the replies itself because the Douzaines wrote to the Committee without any expectation that their replies would be published. It therefore believes that you should contact the Douzaines and ask them to send you their replies, if they are content to do so.



States' Assembly &
Constitution Committee

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Deputy S. L. Langlois,
Chairman,
Guernsey Douzaine Council,
c/o Pont Renier,
Rue des Marchez,
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28th February, 2017

Dear Deputy Langlois,

Referendum on the voting system

As you will be aware, the States of Deliberation have resolved that a referendum should be held in Guernsey on the method of electing People's Deputies. The States' Assembly & Constitution Committee is currently working on the proposals to bring to the States.

As you will have seen reported in the media, the Committee will propose to the States that a multi-choice referendum with different voting options is held. Notwithstanding that this is a referendum rather than an election of People's Deputies, the Committee believes that it is sensible to run the referendum, as much as possible, along the lines of a General Election. That should be more efficient as it will make best use of the expertise and experience of the douzaines, and others, rather than "re-inventing the wheel".

My purpose in writing to you is, therefore, to ask if all the douzaines would be prepared to help with the important matter of running the referendum by setting up and manning the polling stations.

The Committee will propose that the referendum is multi-choice and uses preferential voting. It will therefore propose that the counting is all done in one place the following day. The assistance of volunteers from the parishes would be most welcome at the count. However, it is not requesting the douzaines to organize the count. It will propose that the organization and much of the manning of it would be by civil servants or volunteers from elsewhere.

The referendum will be a one-off event. At present, the Committee is hoping that it can be held in late spring, 2018.

The Committee and I hope that the douzaines and the parishioners who usually assist them will be prepared to assist in this important event in our democratic process.

Before closing, the Committee and I wish to place on record our appreciation of all the assistance which the parishes and the volunteers who you muster provide at each General Election and in by-elections. It also appreciates that it reduces the burden on the taxpayer by a significant amount.

The Committee looks forward to hearing from you and the Douzaine Council.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. J. Fallaize', with a stylized flourish at the end.

M. J. Fallaize
President



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28th February, 2017

Dear Deputy Langlois,

Future system of electing People's Deputies

As you know, the States of Deliberation have resolved that a referendum should be held in Guernsey on the method of electing People's Deputies. The States' Assembly & Constitution Committee is currently working on the proposals to bring to the States.

As you will have seen reported, the Committee will propose to the States that a multi-choice referendum be held to establish the electorate's views on different options for electing People's Deputies.

Whatever option emerges from the referendum, there will still need to be periodic general elections in order to decide who are the 38 People's Deputies. At present a significant part of the running of General Elections of People's Deputies is carried out by the parish officials.

My purpose in writing is to set out the different options which the Committee intends to recommend to the States for inclusion in the referendum. The Committee would be interested to know what parish officials, given their expertise and experience in this area, think would be the particular challenges or benefits to them of running each of these systems. The Committee would include your responses in the policy letter so that your views are known when Members of the States decide on the matter.

The options are:

Option 1 - the present electoral system, i.e. seven electoral districts each returning five or six Deputies on a single election day to serve four-year terms.

2.

Option 2 - four electoral districts each returning nine or ten Deputies on a single election day to serve four-year terms.

Option 3 - two electoral districts with half the seats in each being elected every two years, for a four-year term.

Option 4 - all Deputies elected on an island-wide basis to serve six-year terms, but with one-third of seats being elected every two years.

Option 5 - all Deputies elected on an island-wide basis on a single election day to serve four-year terms.

At present the douzaines also arrange the hustings meetings. Under some of these options traditional hustings would not work. The Committee is considering how the views of the candidates could best be communicated to the electorate under those options.

If you would like further clarification of any option please do not hesitate to contact me or the Committee's Principal Officer, Adrian Nicolle, on tel: 749526.

The Committee looks forward to hearing from you. Given the timetable which the Committee wishes to follow, a response by the 30th March, if possible, would be much appreciated.

Yours faithfully,



M. J. Fallaize
President