

Comité des Connétables

Minutes of the meeting held on
Monday 14th April 2020
(virtual meeting conducted online).

Present:

Connétable de St Laurent - Mrs D. W. Mezbourian, Chairman
Connétable de St Hélier - A. S. Crowcroft, Vice Chairman
Connétable de St Clément - L. Norman
Connétable de St Sauveur - Mrs S. A. Le Sueur-Rennard
Connétable de St Brélade - M. K. Jackson
Connétable de Grouville - J. E. Le Maistre
Connétable de St Jean - C. H. Taylor
Connétable de la Trinité - P. B. Le Sueur
Connétable de St Pierre - R. P. Vibert
Connétable de Ste Marie - J. M. Le Bailly
Connétable de St Ouën - R. A. Buchanan

An apology for absence was received from the Connétable de St Martin - Mrs K. Shenton-Stone.

In attendance:

Mrs S. R. de Gruchy, Secretary

Non-exempt (public) under Freedom of Information (Jersey) Law 2011

- Minutes 1. The minutes of the meeting held on 6th April 2020, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed.
- Emergencies Council meetings 2. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 1 of 6th April 2020, was briefed by the Chairman on issues addressed at the recent meeting of the Emergencies Council including the construction of the temporary Nightingale Hospital at Millbrook Playing Fields, St Lawrence. The Chairman, as Connétable of St Lawrence, reported that the main concerns she had received related to seeking assurance that the Nightingale Hospital would be a temporary, and not a permanent, structure.
- Community Task Force and Steering Group meetings 3. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 2 of 6th April 2020, noted that a summary of the daily officer Community Task Force meetings was being provided by the Chief Executive, Parish of St Helier, and forwarded to all Connétables. Thanks were recorded to the Chief Executive for undertaking this role.
- COVID-19 States of Jersey Police – letter of thanks 4. The Comité noted a letter of thanks from the Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police, for the remarkable efforts of members of the Honorary Police over the last week or so. The Chief Officer expressed his enormous gratitude to Connétables and their officers for the work in reassuring the community and encouraging compliance with current restrictions. The Comité welcomed the correspondence which reflected the excellent relationship currently existing between the States Police and the Honorary Police.

The Comité echoed these sentiments and requested the Chairman to write to the Chairman of the Comité des Chefs de Police to extend its thanks to all members of the Honorary Police for their tireless work over the Easter weekend and the many hours of

service given across the island. Though the duration of the current restrictions was unknown, the Connétables and parish communities expected the continued service of members of the Honorary Police was likely to be required for a number of weeks to come.

COVID-19 –
parking scheme
for carers

5. The Comité was informed that as part of the response to the COVID-19 situation, a Carers' Parking Permit Scheme had been introduced by the Parish of St Helier which would operate on roads throughout St Helier. The scheme allowed those providing registered care services to St Helier residents' access to free on-street parking throughout the Parish whilst they were providing care. The Minister for Infrastructure had agreed that Growth, Housing and Environment (GHE) officers would respect the parish permits for the duration of the emergency, as long as the vehicles were safely parked and did not present a hazard or obstruct disabled parking or commercial unloading bays. Those providing care to St Helier residents would be asked to apply to the Parish for an electronic permit and comply with specified conditions. The permit would allow Parish and GHE parking control staff to know which vehicles were approved as 'delivering care', to avoid issuing parking tickets. This would not provide access to free parking in public car parks outside the COVID-19 situation. In addition Andium Homes was also permitting parking for carers on its estates during the day to enable people to make food and medical deliveries.

The Comité recalled that questions about parking costs for carers had been asked in the States on 21st January and 4th February 2020. The Connétable of St Helier said that the Carers' Parking Permit Scheme would be kept under review to ensure it was not abused but might be amended after the current COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. As Deputy G Southern had requested a meeting with the Comité regarding the introduction of a parking scheme for carers, the Connétable of St Helier was asked to inform the Deputy of the St Helier scheme and clarify whether this addressed his concerns. The Comité considered that parking was a lesser problem for carers in other parts of the island but noted comments from two Connétables that a driver causing a hazard to other pedestrian and vehicular traffic by dangerous parking might be dealt with at a Parish Hall Enquiry.

Our Island and
Capital
Magazines

6. The Comité was informed that Mediamasters had advised that mid May 2020 was the revised publication date for issues of "Our Island" and "Capital" magazines. In view of the COVID-19 situation these editions would provide a social marketing opportunity to reach the island's 43,800 homes and Connétables were offered a half page editorial at no cost. This would provide an opportunity for parishes to report to the wider Island community how they had been working through the crisis, offer thanks and also provide any information for readers in their own parish. The Comité was reminded that these magazines were issued in addition to the parishes' magazines and decided that any Connétable wishing to accept this offer should contact Mediamasters.

COVID-19 -
Rates (Jersey)
Law 2005:
display of Rates
Lists

7. The Comité considered arrangements to display Rates Lists and to allow Parishioners to examine the Lists, discuss with the Assessors and seek a Review and Appeal of the Assessment in accordance with the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005 as parish halls remained closed to the public. The Comité was reminded that the Rates List could be viewed online and it was therefore available for public inspection; should a ratepayer be unable to access the Rates List in this way they could telephone the Parish for information. Whilst Assessment Committees would be unable to conduct the usual 'clinics' to discuss assessments with ratepayers, due to the current social distancing restrictions, they could discuss queries by telephone or online meetings. The Application for Review form was on the parishes' website but could also be posted out to a ratepayer on request.

The Comité requested an update from parishes for its next meeting so it might hear of progress towards completing the 2020 assessments and consider what action might be necessary to ensure parishes could complete the cycle and set a rate for 2020.

GoJ - Comms

8. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 9 of 6th April 2020, noted that the Chairman would be speaking with the Director of Communications later in the week and would report at its next meeting.

COVID-19
Cemeteries /
grave diggers /
general grounds
maintenance

9 The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 12(e) of 6th April 2020, noted the press release issued by the Chief Minister on 8th April 2020 regarding temporary funeral arrangements which referred to the enhanced protocols for the safe handling of bodies and dignified burials for any patients who had died, or were suspected to have died, from COVID-19.

COVID-19
General
grounds
maintenance

10. The Comité, with reference to its minute nos. 4 and 5 of 6th April 2020, noted clarification that those tending cemeteries, gardens in retirement homes etc. were not considered essential workers as set out in the COVID-19 (Screening, Assessment and Isolation) (Jersey) Regulations 2020. Though 'non-essential', such workers could nevertheless continue to operate if this would not spread coronavirus and this would require having a maximum of two people together on business premises or in a team working outside; ensuring that every member of staff would maintain a distance of two metres from each other and every other person both while travelling to and from the place of work, and at all times during the course of the work, and ensuring that no member of staff would increase the risk of spreading coronavirus to their household as a result of their work.

The Comité also noted correspondence from the Recycling Manager, Department for Growth, Housing and Environment, advising that the preferred option for garden waste was for householders to manage this on their properties but, in recognition of current challenges, the Minister for Infrastructure had agreed that for a temporary period (while the Household Green Waste Reception at La Collette was closed) parishes might deliver household green waste into the Commercial Composting Reception free of charge should they wish to offer this service to their parishioners. The Comité recognised the difficulties for a Parish in identifying where and when such garden waste would arise and that each would have to consider the provision which might be made.

Emergency
payments by
parishes and
Income Support

11. The Comité, with reference to its minute no. 15 of 6th April 2020, noted that the Director General, Customer and Local Services (CLS), was content to operate the agreement dating from 2008 whereby emergency payments might be made by a parish. The payment would be subject to the claimant satisfactorily proving his/her identity, explaining the emergency that had led to the need for an emergency payment and proving that he/she had no alternative means of financial support; the claimant was also required to seek CLS support on the next working day. As the agreement required the personal data of the claimant to be collected and passed to CLS when the funds were reclaimed by the parish, the Comité approved a template form which might be used by parishes.

Arising from this the Comité noted concerns that though some assistance was available to self-employed persons through the COVID-19 financial assistance schemes, this group would not usually be eligible for Income Support. The Comité also noted that a Connétable might consider whether assistance through a discretionary Parish fund was appropriate.

Next meeting

12. The Comité noted the next meeting would be on 20th April 2020.

Chairman Date

