



Parish and Government Review Panel

Public Hearing

Witness: (Mr. E. Trevor)

Tuesday, 18 November 2025

Panel:

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade (Chair)

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Vice Chair)

Witnesses:

Mr. E. Trevor, former Assessment Committee Member

[12:31]

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade (Chair):

Okay, thank you very much. Today is Tuesday, 18th November and this is the public hearing with Edward Trevor for the Parishes and Government Scrutiny Panel. I would like to draw people's attention to the following. This meeting is being recorded and streamed live. I would like everybody to make sure that they have their mobile telephones switched off and all electronic devices switched to silent. We have got one hour for this hearing. So just to start with introductions, I am Deputy Helen Miles and I am Chair of the panel.

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central:

I am Deputy Catherine Curtis, I am the Vice Chair of the panel. Also yourself, Mr. Trevor.

Mr. E. Trevor:

I am Edward Trevor and I used to be Chairman of St. Helier and also the Island Committee at one time.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, thank you very much. I would like to thank you very much the submission that you made about the rates to the panel. The purpose of today is really for you to talk to us a little bit more. We have a series of questions but they are at quite a high level. I am not a rates assessor, so I know very little about the rates system but my colleague here, Deputy Curtis ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Knows a little bit.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

... has been a rates assessor before. We have got a nice balance of questions between us. Really, I think, the first question for you, Mr. Trevor, in your submission you described the current parish rate system as broken and at risk of collapse. So can you explain to us a little bit about why you believe that to be the case?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Yes, I can. There are 12 parishes, each parish has its own way of doing things. St. Brelade, for instance, uses a system of points, most of the other parishes have grids. This is for domestic property only. The grids are different for each parish. It is well known that Grouville had nothing and stuck a finger in the air. I believe now they do have a grid which may be similar to St. Martin, I believe. Even in St. Helier, assessments in different vingtaines are different because it was told to me that when the new system came in, in 2003, there were 4 committees of 3 people each in St. Helier, they did not agree with each other and made different assessments on similar types of property. What also happened is that over the years things have varied very considerably. The problem with the Island is that we have a minimum of 62 assessors covering very few properties essentially. As far as I am aware now, there is not one assessor who has any idea of valuing property. The assessments are based on the 2000 to 2002 rental values. That covers domestic and non-domestic properties. When it comes to non-domestic properties, they are quite complicated as the Vice Chairman knows. You cannot have a grid, although the new assessors in St. Helier have asked for one, it is not practical or possible because there are so many different types of property. There are shops, there are offices, there are warehouses, there is an abattoir, there is the port, and so on and so forth. Nobody knows how to value them. The new government building, for instance.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You highlighted concerns in your submission about the qualifications of assessors. What model do you think should be introduced to improve matters?

Mr. E. Trevor:

What I think should be done is that there should be employed a professional who could oversee and do the valuations. My suggestion is that there should be an Island panel of 9 people who would be under the control of the Constables as a supervisory committee, because otherwise the Constables would not be happy. There should be 3 from St. Helier and 6 from the other parishes. I put it that way because St. Helier has roughly a third of the value of quarters on the Island and St. Helier is complicated for the reasons I gave before.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Just thinking about what you were saying, I remember that we used to go out to look at new properties or office type developments and so on, and this depended on your knowledge really, there was not that structure there of information to draw on for the non-domestic properties, was there?

Mr. E. Trevor:

No, there cannot be, because shops, if they are in King and Queen Street, are zoned, which I think I explained at the time how to zone. In other places, it is overall, different types of property are valued in different ways. This is one of the problems and unless a person is qualified, it is extremely difficult to explain to them each type and how it is done, as you well found out.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

When you talk about a qualified person, do you talk about one person, so a particular role? Would that person be appointed by the Government, for example, or would they be appointed by the Comité des Connétables?

Mr. E. Trevor:

I suspect it will be the Connétables because it is always said, rightly or wrongly, the central government does something, it expands and gets more and more expensive. So I would suggest and recommend it would be the Connétables.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But it would be a paid post?

Mr. E. Trevor:

That would be my view.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, thank you.

Mr. E. Trevor:

The problem with the present system is that, if you exclude St. Helier for a moment, the parishes each elect for 3-year terms, 5 assessors. Anybody can apply. I said exclude St. Helier, they have to have between 7 and 12. Anyone can apply, regardless of their knowledge. To give an example, years ago, a person who was looking after car parks for the harbours, making sure the right people parked, applied, then said that they work from 9.00 to 5.00 so we should start at 6 o'clock in the evening. Well, they never turned up because they could not. You cannot work only in the evenings because the shops and offices are not open and you have to visit properties. Although I am told the present committee in St. Helier do not go out and look. To give an example of what will need doing, in my view, is Fotosound have moved into the shop next door to Voisins. There should be a new assessment on Voisins including Fotosound because they either have or are knocking holes in the wall to join the 2 together, so that you can move from one to the other. My suspicion is that they will not because they will not know how to do it.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Whose responsibility would it be to highlight those sorts of issues? Would that be the Chair of the Parish Rates Committee?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Yes, the Parish Rates Committee Chairman should, in fact, check this sort of thing. What the Parish Assessment Committee is supposed to do is to keep an eye on the parish and see when things are happening. You do not only rely upon the rates form that is sent out at the beginning of the year.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Who is responsible for oversight of the work of the Rates Committee?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Nobody. They are independent. If I may add, having said that they are independent, it has always been my view that if you are a rates assessor, you should not, in fact, be on the Accounts Committee because the public might think if an assessment is increased that you are increasing it in order to raise the number of quarters in the parish. So I firmly always said, but it was not always accepted, that you should not be on the Accounts Committee if you are an assessor.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You may not know this, it is a parish issue, but are the rates assessors posts advertised? How are they recruited, the rates assessors?

Mr. E. Trevor:

To the best of my knowledge in St. Helier it is certainly word of mouth or the Constables saying to somebody: "Why not be a rates assessor?"

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It may be on the website as well, I think. On the parish website I think as well, possibly.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is there a job specification and a description of the role?

Mr. E. Trevor:

There was not when I was an assessor which finished 2 years ago.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So when people are applying to be rates assessors, there is no clarity about actually what it means to be a rates assessor?

Mr. E. Trevor:

What I did in St. Helier was interview people, as your Vice Chair will know, and explain to them what was involved. Whether that happens or not in other parishes, I do not know.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That was a good explanation but, like you say, maybe it is not happening elsewhere.

Mr. E. Trevor:

Well, I do not know.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So, if somebody came forward as a rates assessor who you interviewed that you did not consider to be suitable, because you did not feel they had the necessary knowledge, skills and experience, would you be able to veto that appointment?

Mr. E. Trevor:

No, but I would try and put them off.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. The Comité des Connétables published some new guidelines ... actually it was not the Comité, it was the Rates Assessment Committee, in June, setting out how and when and by whom

assessments are made to ensure a consistent approach across all the parishes. I was just wondering if you have had sight of that assessment guide at all?

Mr. E. Trevor:

No.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

No, okay. It has been published.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Now, I just have some questions about public understanding of the rates system. So, in your view, how well does the public understand the parish rates system, including the terminology used?

Mr. E. Trevor:

The public does not understand it and nor do the surveyors, assessors, estate agents on the Island. Virtually nobody understands it. People do not understand what quarters are, people do not understand what attributes are.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Why do you think that is?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Partly because the amount of rates people pay in Jersey is very low. When there was a working party from the Treasury Department, probably 5 or 6 years ago, I cannot remember the date, the average for domestic payment per annum was £358. I suspect it has probably gone up to £370, £380. A band D in the U.K. (United Kingdom), which is the average, is about £2,000 to £2,200 and, to give an example of the amount of rates that is paid being so low here - and I think it is good it is low - is that a company rang to ask how much they would have to pay and if they could pay monthly.

[12:45]

For some reason, the office put it through to me. It was not a question an assessor should have answered, but I did. It was £7,400, and the lady said to me: "That is a month?" and I said: "No, that is for the year." She said: "Oh, we will pay it all in one."

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Do you think that is a reason for why people or companies are not motivated to find out more about the process, because they hardly notice it sometimes?

Mr. E. Trevor:

It is so low that people are not particularly concerned. Of course, where I said it was £358, that is the 2 parts of the assessment, because you have the owner and you have the occupier. In many cases, each pays separately, which is uneconomic.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Uneconomic in what way, in terms of collection?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Yes. If you take somebody - not all of them are uneconomic - with a garage and an assessment on that garage, the assessment could be, in many cases, is 1,000 quarters. At 2½ p ... well it is 5p for the 2 roughly, you are collecting whatever ... it is about £25. So you are collecting £12.50 from the occupier and £12.50 from the owner. The cost of collection is greater than that and if the people do not pay and have to have a reminder, it is even higher. If they have to be chased after a reminder, it is even higher. So my recommendation is that it should just be one figure for the property.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

For the property.

Mr. E. Trevor:

As the Deputy Chairman I think is aware, people with the 9-year lease pay both. Owner occupiers pay both. Share transfer, the administrator pays both. Now, we changed that 10 years ago or whatever so why should it not apply in all cases?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

If that were to happen, presumably landlords would still want their tenants to pay what they are used to them paying rather than the landlord having to pay all themselves? They would have to make some agreements privately in the lease. It would still be collected as one amount rather than split into occupier ... yes, okay, I see what you mean. Also just going back to what you were saying on the commercial properties and the business person thinking that it might be £7,000 a month or whatever they have to pay. Do you think that generally a lot of the commercial rates are too low, the non-domestic amounts are too low?

Mr. E. Trevor:

What one has to remember in Jersey, which is totally different to the U.K., is that the amount of rates charged and collected is determined by the amount each parish needs to have in order to run the parish and that has to be approved by a parish assembly. So it does not matter what the levels are

as far as the amount of money is collected, because if the parish needs £122 a year, in a year, that is all it can collect.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I am just trying to think of the part of the Island-wide rate as well, and how something like that would be restricted to ... sorry, I am just thinking it through at the moment.

Mr. E. Trevor:

The Island-wide rate was set some years ago and normally goes up by the rate of inflation. There were 2 years perhaps when it was frozen. I think it was one year but I cannot remember. It was frozen because of the pandemic, I think. That could be changed by, I presume the States, I am not sure. But the Constables look at that every year.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, okay. Just quickly coming back to the public understanding, do you think there is anything that could be done to make it more transparent and clearer for those ratepayers who might want to understand more?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Yes, I think there is. I think we should get rid of quarters which were brought in to try and differentiate between the law prior to the change in 2003 and after it. I think it should be shown as pounds.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, because nobody understands the term.

Mr. E. Trevor:

Nobody understands quarters, so I think it should be pounds. An assessment, if it were to be assessed, a single bedroom flat for instance, would have an assessment of between 11,000 and 15,000 depending on the flat in general, rather than at the moment they are about 5,800 from memory on average, totally out of kilter with current day figures. So a person does not understand what 5,800 is, they would understand what 11,000, 12,000, 13,000 was and they could then look at their rent and see if the assessment corresponded with it. Because the parishes may only collect the money they need, which would be exactly the same as before, the poundage would be reduced. It would still be the same but instead of it being 1.3 pence or whatever it may be today, it would come down to 0.6 or whatever.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

There is not really any reason why it should not be done, is there? You know, instead of quarters having it as pounds?

Mr. E. Trevor:

There is no reason in my view that it should not be done because rates are a tax and all taxes should be fair and the current system is not fair. Now if there were a reassessment, a revaluation, my view is, as I think I said, you, the Government or whoever should change the law so that the parishes could, if they wished, have a domestic and a non-domestic rate. I say that because domestic rents have increased substantially more than almost all commercial rents. If there were only one rate still, it would mean domestic payments would be much higher than now and commercial ones would be less. We already have, on the Island-wide rate, 2 levels, so there is no reason why the parishes should not. I suspect that a place like St. Ouen would only need one because they consist of 6,000 fields, 2 or 3 houses and maybe a shop and that is it. I mean obviously that is an exaggeration, but it gives the idea. Whereas in St. Helier, for instance, it has about 70 per cent of the non-domestic quarters and if I remember - and I am going back 2 or 3 years when I did it - about 40 per cent of the domestic. Now that will have changed slightly because there has been a lot of building of domestic and they have replaced very often hotels and so on which are non-domestic. So I do not know what the figures are now because I do not have access to the rates management system anymore so I cannot look up the figures.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

If St. Helier was to have those 2 different rates for domestic and non-domestic, for them to get the same amount of revenue in, the domestic rates would have to go up quite a lot then, would they not, I suppose? If the non-domestic ones were more reasonable.

Mr. E. Trevor:

If it happened in St Helier, the poundage, I will call it, would go down substantially for domestic and go up for non-domestic in order to get the same amount of money as before. The way that it could be calculated to get the differential rate in the pound, or the rate it is called, would be what we did on hotels, guest houses and lodging houses, which had not been reassessed for 2003. They had just all been left as they were before and they were totally out of kilter, and the pubs. We added all the hotels together and got a figure, whatever it might have been, and then reassessed so that the hotels, for instance, had what we thought were correct assessments but the total number of quarters came to roughly the same as before. Now this meant that some went up a lot, some went down, some stayed the same. In all cases the bodies like the Hospitality Association and the Lodging Houses Association told their members to appeal regardless and not one did in any case. An hotelier came in who owned an hotel and was taking over another one, or had taken over another one, came in and the other one had doubled and I expected him to create merry hell. He came in and said: "I

am glad you have done that because such and such hotel is now similar to mine and that is correct, they were wrong before.”

Deputy H.M. Miles:

It is about that perception of fairness, it is procedural justice, is it not?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

If people understand if the processes and the procedures are fair, they are more likely to abide by them and be happy with them.

Mr. E. Trevor:

If you can show they are fair, yes. I was an assessor in St. Helier for 17 years. Because I moved to St. Saviour, I was told that I could not do my last year of that 3-year term and that was confirmed by the Attorney General's office so I had to give up. In that 17 years there was not one appeal.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Actually that is what I am about to ask more questions on right now, the appeals process. So you propose separating advisory roles from appeals committees. So why do you see that as necessary?

Mr. E. Trevor:

The present system is that if a person wants to appeal, they have to appeal to the Assessment Committee itself, where 3 members of the Assessment Committee sit in judgment. One puts the assessor's case. So it is the body setting the assessment, having to decide whether it is right or wrong. After that, if the person is dissatisfied, as they might well be, it can go to the Rates Appeal Board. The system that we used in St. Helier was, if a person did not like their assessment, was to ask them if they would like to come in and have an informal discussion. We were always able to prove that it had been done fairly and they had an assessment that was fair but told them that they could appeal and we told them the way in which it could be done. As I said, nobody ever appealed beyond the Parish Assessment Committee.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so ideally then people come in, have a chat about things. After that, if they are still not satisfied, what mechanisms do you think should exist that would be best for them?

Mr. E. Trevor:

There should be an independent appeals committee.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right, okay.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

When you say independent, who should sit on that sort of committee? People with no rates experience or ...

[13:00]

Mr. E. Trevor:

I would suggest people who have rates experience. On any semi-legal system, you have to be fair and if I can go back to my time in the UK, I used to be on an appeal committee which covered 9 London boroughs and we used to sit ... I was a chairman and 3 used to sit and hear the appeals, the other 2 might not have been qualified as I was. I am a chartered surveyor, as I put in my thing. The others might well have not been, we had to deal with it as if it were a court of law and we were the lowest level possible. The appeals were to the courts if necessary and it is very, very rare. Now it is called the Lands Tribunal. I think we should have a system here where people can appeal to an independent body and they should have some knowledge of property or finance or the law ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, thank you.

Mr. E. Trevor:

... would be my view.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Should the recommendations ... if an independent committee was established, should the committee be able to make recommendations for, say, a reduction or an increase in rates? Should that automatically be enforceable by the parishes?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Yes. If you have got an Appeals Committee and they say it should go down then the parish would have to put it down.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Would have to put it down?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Have to.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Is that the case at the moment?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

The Parish cannot choose?

Mr. E. Trevor:

No.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you. You have talked a lot about the improvements that you would suggest to strengthen the rates system and its administration. Which improvement do you think is the most important?

Mr. E. Trevor:

There are 2. The first one is a revaluation of all properties ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Island-wide?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Island-wide. The second one is for the officials in the parishes to be properly trained and to have it as their job. To give an example of some years ago a parish secretary rang me and said: "Do we have a rate where people have to pay when a property is empty or do they not pay?" Well, a parish secretary should know and the answer is that the owner pays regardless of whether the property is occupied or not. He was a long-standing parish secretary and did not know a simple thing like that, which to me was amazing.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You talked about a full professional re-evaluation of all properties.

Mr. E. Trevor:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I think you suggested that that should be done every 10 years?

Mr. E. Trevor:

If you go around the world the U.K. is currently 5, lots of countries are 3. At one time the U.K. was going to come down to 3. I do not think it has yet and I do not know if they are going to do it but they were talking about. I suggested 10 years in Jersey because I think the changes that are likely to take place are over that sort of period and to do it every 5 years, especially when most of the people are still presumably going to be volunteers, is too much work.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. That re-evaluation would be done on a parish basis?

Mr. E. Trevor:

No. I think it should be done overall each time.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

It should ... on an Island-wide basis each time?

Mr. E. Trevor:

On Island-wide. As soon as you say it should be done on a parish basis you are going to get 12 sets of how they do it, 12 different levels, and it does not work and I think if we come back to telling people that it is assessed at so many pounds they will understand it. If you tell them that it depends on the number of bedrooms, which is the way it is done at the moment, generally, and a standard one is 2 bedrooms, one reception room, a kitchen, bathroom or an open plan and that the assessment is going to be so many pounds, they know if they have got 5 bedrooms it is going to be so many extra pounds. You can explain it to them. To give you an example of years ago, when the Royal Yacht was rebuilt, the assessment was vastly changed. I do not remember the figures either then or now to be honest. But the current leader of the States, the Chief Minister, came and saw me and asked me if he could discuss the assessment. So I gave him a typed valuation of the way in which it had been worked out to which he replied: "Oh, I have never seen anything like this before in any other property." And I said: "Well, we do it for all properties." And he then said could he have a reduction? To which my answer was ... well, some of the rooms are conference rooms and they are not there for ... like offices occupied all the time, so asked me if you can have a reduction of 15 per cent I think it was, might have been 20, on that part of the building. To which he replied: "Can I

ask you that?" To which I replied: "Yes, ask me." Which he did. So I reduced the conference areas there and then in order to be fair, did it to the Pomme d'Or which also had conference areas because you cannot be unfair. You have got to have fairness throughout.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

One of the issues that we have come across, we have done a rates survey and we have asked people what they understand about the rates and I think some of those views are reflected in what you say. But I think one of the things that is difficult is that it is very difficult to compare across parishes. So you would expect that if you have a 3 bedroomed house in St. Brelade you would be paying broadly the same as a 3 bedroomed house in Grouville. But it is very difficult for the public to find out that information. What would you recommend in terms of the parishes being more transparent about their rates assessments?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Yes, you have mentioned 2 things. Firstly, the assessment and, secondly, how much they pay. They are different. The assessments, according to the law and in common sense, for similar properties should be the same regardless of where they are on the Island and in which parish they might be. How much they pay depends on what the parish decides it wants to spend.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes.

Mr. E. Trevor:

So a standard 3 bedroom detached house in one parish could well pay a lot more or a lot less than a similar house in another parish because parish A might decide that it wants to spend a lot more than parish B does, so the 2 things are different.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

In terms of the ... you talk about the assessment of the property. What are your views on paying more for a sea view as opposed to a country view, for example?

Mr. E. Trevor:

That is what they call an attribute.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes.

Mr. E. Trevor:

Now, my view is that people pay a lot more for a sea view in rent, therefore the assessment should be higher. Some people like a country view so, again, you might have a slightly higher rent which would be an assessment on a country view. But if you are in town with a town view you would not like it so you would be paying slightly less rent. Therefore, the assessment should be lower. To give an example, if you take the flats called Horizon, my last year as an assessor those flats were being built and I was asked if I could give an assessment of what the ... sorry, I have even used the word again, of the assessments for the flats. On the grid, which I think I have supplied, the normal flats were C, because that is what we put all new flats at and we agreed would be C, but the ones with a sea view I recommended D. Now, they were not completed until after I had finished and I cannot tell you whether the new people used the figures I had suggested but that was the way I did it. So the town view was C and the sea view was D.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Was D.

Mr. E. Trevor:

That is how we did it. Now, I am told that the committee decided after I had gone with ... and it was all new people, that new flats and houses should be based on D rather than C because they were new. Which went against what the Appeals Committee had said in another parish.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Right.

Mr. E. Trevor:

But because the differences are relatively low, or are very low, nobody has appealed. But they would have won if they had.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So, that will continue with them being on D.

Mr. E. Trevor:

They have put D on. We used to put ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

And they will not be new anymore.

Mr. E. Trevor:

Sorry?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

They will not be new anymore will they, and they will still be in that category?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Exactly, and that is why the Appeals Committee said you should not put them up because you would for ever be doing it otherwise.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes. Honestly.

Mr. E. Trevor:

As you are well aware, as an assessor, we used to put C on all the new ones.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Did you have any more questions?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes. I just wanted to ask a bit more how this re-evaluation process might work. So, if it is an all Island, all properties all over the Island, do you think that would need to have a special team come to do the work or would the rates assessors themselves be doing a lot of the work, or, what do you think?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Because as far as I am aware there is no qualified assessor anymore and no Constable has ever been a rates assessor whereas in the past they were. I was asked when I became an assessor and Chairman of the Committee whether I was going to stand as Constable next. And I said: "No, I was not." But my predecessor, as chairman of the Island, was the now late Silva Yates. I took over from him and while I was there again, the late Peter Hanning of St. Saviour, they were 2 Constables who had been rates assessors and I was told that it was often the case that the person who led ... because at one time there was no chairman, became Constable. Which they asked me if I was going to do it and I said: "Absolutely not." I was only there to do rates.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes. So, without that knowledge among the Constables ...

Mr. E. Trevor:

The Constables ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

... would it have to be a special professional ...

Mr. E. Trevor:

They have no idea at all.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes.

Mr. E. Trevor:

They are like the public. They just do not know. They know the money is collected and that is about it. The problem that we have got is that the Secretary to the Constables does not want any change at all and she tells them that they must have no change, and they just follow because they do not understand it.

[13:15]

She is an expert on the law and understands the law more than anybody else but has not the first idea on how to assess a property. This is what concerns me and if we are looking at fairness, how can the Secretary of the Constables, or the Supervisory Committee, which is the same, also be Secretary to the Rates Appeal Board?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Right.

Mr. E. Trevor:

That again, I think, leads to it being suspected that there is unfairness. I am not saying there is.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes.

Mr. E. Trevor:

Because I do not know. But you have to appear to the public to be totally independent and in my view that is not shown.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Right, I think that is ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is there anything else you want to tell us in relation to parish rates or parish matters more widely today, while you are here?

Mr. E. Trevor:

Yes, I was told I could ... I think I had a note saying that if I wanted to I could. Yes. A small number of things. Firstly, I think that there are many jobs that the parishes do that should be done by parish A. For instance, blue badges are currently only issued through St. Helier, which is fine. Driving licences are issued through more than one parish.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Twelve, yes.

Mr. E. Trevor:

Dog licences are parish specific. Why? Why should parish A not do dog licences, parish B do driving licences, and so on? It would be more economical, it would be more sensible and people would understand what they were doing. I think that those should be done. I also think that it is totally stupid that in most parishes the rubbish collection is done by the parish or the States, depending. In some cases they have merged. Why is there not one system for the whole Island? It would be cheaper if all the rubbish collection was done on Island basis so it did not have to keep within the parish and where it was sensible it would go outside the parish.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

We have been asking about that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

We have been asking questions ...

Mr. E. Trevor:

Sorry?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

We have been asking questions of the Minister for Infrastructure and the parishes about that and there will be a section in our report about refuse and recycling.

Mr. E. Trevor:

Again, recycling, why is it not the same all over the Island?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes.

Mr. E. Trevor:

It is stupid.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes.

Mr. E. Trevor:

There are many things ... they can still be controlled by the Constables if that is what they want but they should be Island-wide and if each parish had a specific thing in which it was expert it would be done better.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes.

Mr. E. Trevor:

Rather than a small number of employers in some of the parishes having to scatter what they do.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes.

Mr. E. Trevor:

Also, I am not saying where obviously, a parish secretary told me that they were bored at times because there was so little to do for them in a country parish.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay.

Mr. E. Trevor:

I think that was all. It was just to give a general idea.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

We are looking particularly at the refuse.

Mr. E. Trevor:

I have, in confidence to your Clerk, given the names of 2 parish officials, the only 2 on the Island I think, who know rates and it might be worth talking to them.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Speaking to them.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That would be good.

Mr. E. Trevor:

But it would have to be confidential.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Of course, understand that. Okay. On that note, thank you very much. That has been about 50 minutes. Thank you very much indeed for your time.

Mr. E. Trevor:

Thank you.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

As I say, there will be a transcript prepared of the hearing which will be published and put on to the States of Jersey website and we will be publishing our report in due course, so thank you very much for attending today and I declare the meeting closed.

Mr. E. Trevor:

Thank you. I would love to see the report when it comes out.

[13:19]