

STATES OF JERSEY



BUS SERVICE CONTRACT: HOPPA (P.156/2011) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 27th October 2011
by the Minister for Transport and Technical Services**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The contract for public (including school) bus services is currently out to tender for a new contract commencing in January 2013. First stage tenders will be received by 14th October 2011. The first stage tenders are based on an improved “model” network which will enable preferred bidders to be selected for the second stage of the tender process, leading to an appointment by May 2012. Details for a town bus service will be developed with the preferred bidders during the second stage, along with other further requirements of the new bus service beyond the improvements within the model network, including a doubling of peak hour bus capacity and a 20% increase in school bus use, by 2015. Although the principle of a low or zero fare town service is an aspiration of the Sustainable Transport Policy, the fare structure for the town service will need to be considered in view of the level of integration the “town” service may have with the wider network. Low (hybrid) or zero (electric) buses would be beneficial in the town centre but a commitment to this needs to be mindful of the financial implications, which are largely unknown at this stage, but likely to be significant.

Although costs of the new bus contract will not be known until the tender process is completed, a detailed review of the existing service has identified that efficiencies should be possible enabling many improvements to be provided at no extra cost.

TTS therefore considers part (a) of the proposition to be unnecessary as the town service will be part of the tender process, and part (b) to be premature, as final costs of providing an improved comprehensive island wide (including town ‘Hoppa’) bus service will not be known until the end of the tender process. To “prioritise” a low or zero fare, low or zero emissions town service (at a cost of up to £500,000 per annum) implies that a lower priority will be given to all the other elements of an improved service. TTS is working to deliver all the aspects of an improved service as detailed in the Sustainable Transport Policy and would therefore advise against such a prioritisation.

The proposition if accepted could result in an annual commitment of £500,000 of States funding for a town hoppa service commencing in 2013.

For these reasons the Minister for Transport and Technical Services cannot support the proposition as currently framed.

The Amendment by Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier of St. Saviour (P.156/2011 Amd.) is considered non contentious.