

Environment Scrutiny Panel Meeting No. 38

22nd January 2007

Blampied Room

Present	Deputy R.C. Duhamel (Chairman) (RD) Connétable K. A. Le Brun of St Mary (KB) Deputy S. Power (SP) Deputy R. Le Hérissier (RLH)
Apologies	Deputy G.C.L. Baudains (Vice Chairman)
In attendance	M. Robbins, Scrutiny Officer (MR) Mr Nichols, Chief Executive Officer of Planning and Environment
Time Started	2.30 pm

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
1	<p>Business Plan of Planning and Environment Department.</p> <p>The Panel welcomed Senator F.E. Cohen, Minister for Planning and Environment and Mr Nichols, Chief Executive Officer of Planning and Environment. It was noted that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Business Plan for the Planning and Environment Department and the discussion covered the following areas –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first draft of the Energy Policy would be finalised shortly; • The water policy would also be finalised shortly; • The Island Plan was being reviewed. • Plans for the Waterfront should be completed by the end of the year. There was general concern over the use of displaced properties within the town area but it was accepted that other places such as Cape Town had made good use of buildings in just such circumstances. However, it was suggested that modern businesses required modern offices. Places like Hill Street might be best utilized as a residential area in line with the original purpose for the town house style buildings; • The old Ladies College site was to be completely regenerated by residential building. • Money would need to be invested in the public transport system so that people would use it; • Significantly more car parking would be provided on the Esplanade; Some private and some for public use; • There was an acceptance by the Minister that many people living and working in the town area did not use cars as they walked to work and the shops. • It was agreed that there was insufficient integration between the Transport and Technical Services Business Plan 2007 and the Planning and Environment Plan 2007. it was also agreed that the Planning and Environment Department should be involved in the Planning and aspirational issues, and Transport and Technical Services involved in the maintenance of and day to day issues. • Taxing the users of vehicles which use more fuel was 	

becoming a more acceptable idea as the community was becoming more environmentally conscious. Whilst it was accepted that there was only so much taxation would be acceptable, there seemed to be an acceptance towards environmental taxes provided that the money went directly to fund environmental solutions and projects. The Minister supported an increased usage of the bus service and any plan which reduced car usage.

3.15 pm. Deputy Le Hérissier arrived.

- The Fisheries and Tourism Departments were of concern as there was much work to be done with a very small team in each area. There were many financial implications that were current and pressing, which were the responsibility of the Minister for Economic Development. There was a sharing of responsibility with the Environment Minister holding responsibility for the Environmental aspects of Fisheries.
- It was accepted that in the case of a major environmental incident, the Environment Minister would take on responsibility over the Economic Development Minister for the duration of the emergency.
- The merger of the Jersey and Guernsey Meteorological Departments would provide a more cost effective service but that efficiency would provide a less accurate service. The proposal had been made at ministerial level but had not been pursued.
- With regard to the new plant to deal with Jerseys' residual waste and the proposition for an Energy from Waste plant in Guernsey, it was accepted that the Islands should maintain and enjoy their independence and work together in some areas. It was not known if any proposed plant in Jersey would be assessed on Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO). The examination of the application in Jersey was to be from the viewpoint of impact on the environment. The Minister was not sure at that time exactly what Transport and Technical Services were asking him to look at but invited Scrutiny to be involved in discussions and to make all options known to him.
- The Minister accepted that it was unrealistic to say there was no risk of tourism cabins becoming residential properties, as this was difficult to control should the industry cease to require such cabins;
- Delays in the planning application process would be increased because of the introduction of the Design Review Group. However, it should improve the overall quality of design in the Island. It was accepted that the Planning and Environment Department would not be appointing more staff, however, a further two qualified architects would make the Department much more efficient.

At 4.00 pm the Panel thanked the Minister and his Officer for attending and they withdrew.

RD

Signed

Date

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Chairman, Environment Panel

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