



Public Accounts Committee

Performance Management Follow-Up Review

Witness: Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment

Friday, 30th June 2023

Panel:

Deputy L.V. Lyndsay Feltham of St. Helier Central (Chair)

Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North (Vice-Chair)

Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South

Mr. M. Woodhams

Mr. G. Phipps

Mr. P. Taylor

Ms. A. Trudgeon, Jersey Audit Office

Witnesses:

Mr. A. Scate, Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment

[14:00]

Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central (Chair):

Hello, everybody, and welcome to this public hearing of the Public Accounts Committee. Today is Friday, 30th June, and we are holding a public hearing with the Chief Officer for Infrastructure and Environment as part of our review into performance management. I would like to draw everyone's attention to the following. This hearing will be filmed and streamed live. The recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, should be switched to silent and I would ask that any members of the public who have joined us in the room today do not interfere with the proceedings. For the purpose of the recording and the transcript, I would be grateful if everyone who speaks could ensure that you state

your name and role. We will begin with introductions. I am Deputy Lyndsay Feltham and I am Chair of the Public Accounts Committee. The committee will introduce themselves.

Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South:

Deputy Tom Coles, St. Helier South.

Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North:

I am Deputy Max Andrews, Vice-Chair of the Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Philip Taylor, lay member.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Graeme Phipps, lay member.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Matthew Woodhams, also a lay member.

Ms. A. Trudgeon:

Ann Trudgeon, Jersey Audit Office.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Andy Scate, the Chief Officer for Infrastructure and Environment.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Thank you for joining us today. We have about an hour so we will try and get through a fair bit.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Okay.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I will hand over to Deputy Andrews, who will begin our questions.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Thank you for joining us today, Andy. I would like to ask you: what are your personal objectives for 2023?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Okay. I can read them out if you want. So, yes, we are using the Connect system now so we have about 6 main objectives there. Some of them have probably a number of sub-objectives to them, but I am happy to share what ... I can read them out. They range really from, I guess, departmental management and then there are some sort of key factors around making sure that the department is working effectively, but also then delivery of certain things as well. So I am happy to run through some headings if you want ...

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Absolutely, yes. Please do.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

... just to say what they are. The first one is I am the accountable officer for the Government H.Q. (headquarters) delivery, so the project for Government H.Q. That sits with me. It is making sure that we are ready to have the building ready for occupation, so that is one of them. There is the usual ones around revenue and capital expenditure. We obviously have revenue but also substantial amounts of capital, so making sure that is kept to and delivered. There are some things around control regimes, so audit recommendations, governance, data protection. It obviously has hygiene factors on how the department should work. A big one for us is health and safety. We run a lot of things which are operational and we have a big estate in property so health and safety is a key target for me. People and resourcing is a very big focus for us in I. and E. (Infrastructure and Environment) this year around our recruitment, retention and all things people. So there is quite a bit of subheadings to that. Property, which you would not be surprised that I would have, the property estate and our assets and how we do that and the risks associated with property. Quite a host of things in corporate project delivery. That includes things such as sport projects. We have the One.Gov office, as I have just said, but the key one there is the hospital project, which sits with me as the delivery responsible officer, the sewage treatment works, and there are a number of, I guess, capital projects that sit with me there around delivery of those. Then I guess the last one is just really about future thinking, future resilience. There is something in there where there is an objective about planning for the future. We run a lot of assets that have to last for a long time and we have to think ahead, so there is a future resilience objective as well.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

So it is quite the big remit that you have there, so how many people are reporting into you directly?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

So I have 4 operational directors who run operational departments or directorates and I also have a head office function. We call it the head office; it is our support office. So the head of office also

reports to me. So I have 5 direct reports. Obviously they have multiple reports underneath them throughout the organisation.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

As well?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Okay. So how often are you communicating to those 4 individuals or even maybe having meetings, for instance?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes, so practically we definitely have a weekly start to the week. So on Monday morning it is the directorate, the S.L.T. (senior leadership team) for the directorate, is ... the department is together and so we do that weekly. We also have a formal monthly senior leadership team, which is a bit more of a formal meeting, budget management, people management, all of the health and safety issues, that sort of thing. I also have a number of one to ones with the directors. So we schedule a formal one to one. That does not obviously prevent us talking in the meantime. So, yes, just the normal cascade, so weekly, monthly, and then a number of other meetings throughout the course of the week.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

What about your role as a Chief Officer and, of course, you are responsible to the Minister?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

How does that work in terms of then reporting back to the Chief Executive in terms of objective setting?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

So ministerial meetings, we have 2 heads of expenditure within I. and E., so both Ministers for Infrastructure and Environment, so I meet both of those on a weekly basis. They have operational and update meetings on their subject matters, so the Minister for the Environment will have a natural environment meeting, for instance. The Minister for Infrastructure has a transport highways meeting.

He also has a property meeting. So I find myself in those as well, depending on the agendas. Formally, a one to one with each Minister weekly. We have an exec leadership team every fortnight, so that is where the Chief Officers get together. So, yes, feeding back up to the Council of Ministers, I attend Council of Ministers as and when depending on items required, really.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Yes. What about when we are looking at your personal objectives, how has that been formed and what discussions have taken place with the Chief Executive?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Okay, sure. So they are agreed with the Chief Executive as part of the process. A lot of what we do within the department has to happen; it happens in all states of the economic climate, physical climate, political climate. A lot of what we do has to continue service delivery. However, the main set point is that my objectives are agreed with the Chief Executive and signed off. If the Chief Executive has any comments, obviously they can be changed. So they are signed off and then we use those to discuss throughout the year. There are formal set points. So we will have a 6-monthly review, a year-end review. So there are some set points but ultimately they become points to discuss in our own one to ones as things are going.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Okay. Thank you very much.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I am going to hand over to Graeme.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So, on setting those, you propose the objectives and then you get agreement from ...?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Is that sort of how it starts?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

It sort of starts that way. I think some of the objectives, they tend to form themselves as well. We have ministerial objectives. Obviously, some of the big things we are doing in government are not just for me personally. I have a responsibility to deliver those. Some of them find their way to me

due to the fact that that is what we are doing in government, but it is a dialogue, really. I start the process rolling and then it ...

Mr. G. Phipps:

So you would have a number that are ongoing, year over year over year. You add some additional ones and then you get agreement, is that the sort of process?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes, I think what these objectives really focus on are where ... there is an awful lot of business as usual service delivery which, while I am responsible for, they will not find their way necessarily to the top of the pile in my objectives. They obviously do need to be kept an eye on. So these are more the highlights as to what I need to be concentrating on, where most of my efforts should be directed, as opposed to we still have a lot of business as usual which obviously demands some of my time as well.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So how would your quarterly appraisal-related discussions go and how do they compare to those objectives that are set at the beginning of the year and targets? What is the connection and how does that work?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

They are sort of formal headings, really, on what we have ... these are live issues that are working through the Government or through the department. So very regular touch bases on progress on major projects, for instance. The hospital and the office H.Q. are 2 really live ones at the moment, so there is a regular dialogue on those. So they tend to form an agenda for our one to ones because we have to talk about where they are. They will be formalised as we go through the process at set points through the year using the performance management system that we have.

Mr. G. Phipps:

How is your hospital project going? Any comments? That is obviously one of interest.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

It is going, so yes, it is going forward. We have spent a lot of time over the last year evolving it into a programme of projects. So we have made it ... it is more deliverable and digestible, effectively, from where we were. I guess it is a bit like life. Throughout this process we have never truly wanted to make the wrong decision but we are learning from our experiences. We have got to a situation now where we feel we have a more deliverable process or programme for government, more fundable, and it is more digestible from many people's perspectives. So yes, that feasibility is good.

We have got to the end of our feasibility stage and we are now getting into the sharp end of that going into design, consenting and then ultimately delivery, which will start ... well, we start in anger next year doing some works and then the majority of the works will commence in 2025.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So as far as objective setting and performance, that kind of discussion would be a regular item you would carry both upwards and within ...

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes, I would like to say ...

Mr. G. Phipps:

... as an example?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

... it is a much regular dialogue outside of just the one to one as well. Obviously, it is such a big corporate ... an Island-wide programme that we have a number of other governance arrangements around that project specifically. So we have a whole host of other meetings to track progress on that programme, where we are. We have a political board, for instance. We have a senior officer group, senior officer board, for that programme. The Chief Exec obviously finds their way into those meetings as well as reporting through to our Political Oversight Group and Council of Ministers. So while we do have a dialogue at one to ones, there is also dialogue in other meetings as well.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

It is really interesting to see what you do as a function and how it fits in with the Common Strategic Policy because a lot of what needs to happen for the Common Strategic Policy gets down to the wiring with what you are in control of. So obviously the objectives you have are focusing in some ways really on Jersey's risks for the next 20 years.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Or some of them tomorrow or next week or whatever.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

So if you were going to look at the work that you are doing, what are the top 3 risks that you are having to manage?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

So we run a lot of critical infrastructure, so we call it critical national infrastructure, but we run a lot of infrastructure for the Island that has to keep the Island running. That includes the liquid waste system, drainage system, and the solid waste system. So they still maintain ... they would still be one of our top risks, making sure our infrastructure is functioning correctly and is being invested in correctly to prevent failures. So ensuring critical infrastructure risk is definitely one of those top 3. We have a couple of risks ...

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Sorry, just with things like the critical infrastructure, because obviously you read stuff in the press and you are not sure if it is the whole story or whatever, what are you doing to manage each of those critical risks? Because it would be nicer if you could do things more quickly but sometimes there will become crunch points or the unexpected.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

It ties into another risk that we have in our departmental risk register around investment in our critical assets. So we have about a billion pounds worth of infrastructure assets. We have over a billion pounds worth of property assets that are under our management within the department. One of our risks that we have highlighted clearly is the amount of investment we play back into those assets to keep them running. So the risk itself is the balance between something going wrong versus how much we are investing in replacing. A lot of those assets wear out on a regular basis. For instance, the energy facility, we have the energy recovery facility that deals with all of our domestic and commercial waste through there. We spend about £2 million a year just replacing things that wear out, for instance, so that is just an example of that. We spend about £8 million a year capital expenditure on our liquid waste system, pumping stations and so on and so forth, which again just wearing out and pumps break and drains collapse, that sort of thing. The risk in itself is we have a very good embedded, I guess, dynamic risk approach. We have a lot of operational staff running a lot of operational things. I think the strategic risk we face is that balance of ageing assets versus available expenditure to go into them to keep them alive. So health and safety, we have a dedicated health and safety team within the department, so on a day-to-day risk basis we have quite strong processes to adopt when people are doing things for us. The strategic risk really is that longer-term piece of thinking ahead.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

It is whether you can develop what discharge you are getting in the sea and ...

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

It is, yes. We have consents to deliver within. We have waste licences, for instance, both on La Collette and the services that we run there. We have a discharge consent for the sewage treatment works from the environment regulator, so we have to discharge within that. So, yes, from an operational perspective there is keeping things running, keeping people safe in keeping those things running, but also that balance between keeping them alive as an asset and the amount of available funds. So it does feel it is a dynamic process because we are always I think directing available funds to where the fire is first, I think I would describe it.

[14:15]

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Your third risk?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

That might have just been one risk actually. We definitely have one risk there. We have a risk around ... it is a similar risk. It is around our property estate, property risk. We have an ageing property asset. We have over 700 freehold properties. We have a lot of public services running in those properties. Over 40 per cent of our estate is the education estate. Generally, it is ageing estate so again it is a constant battle of keeping assets alive, in use, balancing against fire risk, water risk, radon risk, et cetera, those sort of things. So property risk appears certainly on our risk agenda.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Are those risks rated and ranked?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes. We have a risk register within the department with an awful lot of risks. I do not want to downplay other risks that we have, whether it be in the marine environment or relationships with French regulation on fishing. We have a whole range of risks across the board of our services. I think the things that keep me awake at night - I think that would be my test of what our top 3 risks would be - certainly property risk, infrastructure investment risk and probably our operating environment that we are currently in around inflationary pressures in business. We have a lot of inflation on contracts, materials, employment contracts, et cetera. We are a business and so we are facing some very big pressures because of what we buy and what we can achieve materials wise, but also some of our services are contracted out and they are subject to inflationary escalators as

well. So yes, trying to keep all those plates spinning is probably what I would say is probably our current third risk.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

I am going to do a game of let us be in the future. So 31st December when we are sat down here and we are having a chat and I say to you: "How has your year gone?" and you say to me: "My year has been the best year ever in my job. I have achieved all I wanted to do", what has happened? What happened that year to make that a fantastic year for you?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

The first answer I would be saying is thankfully nothing has happened to our critical infrastructure. That would definitely be up there as one of the key ... we are here to keep the Island running, effectively, so we do not have a property failure, we do not have an infrastructure failure, that is always a success because it means that something good has happened elsewhere.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

The gaffer tape stayed on.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes. We probably hit our budget lines. We have managed the inflationary pressures that we have been absorbing or otherwise. We have a lot of income. About half the department's budget is income, so again that is just another externality that we have a tension on. I think the other one is just around people. We have a lot of good people doing a lot of good things, a happy workforce. Hopefully a lower vacancy rate would be one of the key success points for December, I think.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

So if I talk to you in December now, different future, where you have the issue of understaffing, something has gone wrong, you do not have the income coming in, things have gone through the roof, what are the things that could have gone wrong, that could go wrong, to stop your perfect year and what are you going to do about it?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

So we could have a serious decline of income. We get income from a huge variety of sources, permits, parking, sports uses, people use our services, so income pressure is one of those that can go wrong quite quickly. Infrastructure failures can go wrong quite quickly. So yes, I guess I would refer back to probably my first answer, what keeps me awake really; property risk is one of those. What could go wrong? Plenty of things could go wrong. That is the really honest answer. We cover

such a wide range portfolio. It is pretty much everything outdoors I like to describe it, but it is our territorial seas through to our underground services, our regulatory decision-making.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Do you think you have enough contingency plans in place to get you a little bit to sleep?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

We do have business continuity plans. I think the remarkable thing we have is whenever ... and things do go wrong, incidents happen. We have a workforce who are really able to solve things quite quickly and they pull together quite quickly to solve things. I think we have enormous goodwill within the department. They take a lot of pride in what they do for the Island, whether they are in the natural environment team or in some of the infrastructure or property teams. With us doing our jobs enables everybody else in the Island to do whatever they want to do. I think that is what keeps the department running. We play a part in everybody's life no matter if you want us to or not, from the moment we turn the light on in the morning until the moment we go to bed at night. The department has had an impact somewhere in the Island's running and people's journeys to work, their leisure time, their eating out at restaurants, whatever it may be.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

So you are very reliant on having that good team and, therefore, obviously the process of performance management is good to make sure it is always in a positive place because otherwise you have a challenge.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

So performance management, it is really important to keep people on track. I also think we have a lot of good people who know what they need to do, so motivating our professions and our workforce is quite easy, I would say. I would use that phrase. We have a lot of people who take an enormous amount of pride in what they do. We have so many different professions and sometimes we are the only home for those professions in the Island, so they take a lot of pride in what they do and especially what they deliver for the Island, whether it is a sea wall collapse or it is a country path or a good fishing relationship with the French Government, that sort of thing. A lot of people, a lot of pride, so I think with that basis performance management, we are on an easier step forward because they know what they are there for and they automatically are doing the right things. So I guess performance management is a little bit of a touch here and a bit of a touch there, making sure that the direction of travel is still in the right place.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Sorry, I had one other risk-related question that has come to the attention of the media certainly, and this is security of supply of energy, particularly from France. So how would you assess that risk and how are you mitigating that risk? What are the plans in place to ensure that does not become an issue?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Not all of that would sit with me. We certainly work across government, working with our energy provider, J.E.C. (Jersey Electricity Company), and in that instance clearly they have requirements as a company around resilience of supply and security of supply. So there is dialogue. We play a role in some of that. We are an energy provider. We provide a small percentage of the Island's energy through the energy plant. It is not a huge per cent, but up to 5 per cent a year comes from La Collette. The majority of the conversation, though, or the responsibility sits with the J.E.C. We have interactions with them because we are the property landlord for La Collette power station and we have dialogue as to how we can help deliver future resilience, so if that is a property issue or a consenting issue, those sort of things. So I guess that interaction is there.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Through that process recently it became a political one, so it is not one that is easily managed by ...

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

No, it is not. I think the Island is acutely aware that we are plugged into mainland Europe. There is work going on around our offshore renewable schemes and how future energy can be provided in the Island. Infrastructure plays a role there and also Environment plays a role there, whether it be consenting, working with our policy colleagues. So the Minister for the Environment's portfolio covers us as a department. It also covers the policy department. We work closely as to what does that look like moving forward and various options, various meetings. But going back to the nub of the question, the main issue around security of supply really sits with the J.E.C. and their responsibilities back to the Island and to Government.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So that does not keep you awake at night thinking that it is going to be a problem?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

No, that one does not. I think we have good resilience in our interconnectors and I know the J.E.C. are looking at bringing online future or more on-Island generation to meet peak demand as and when we need to do as well. So I guess I am not losing sleep because I know they are covering that and they are thinking about that.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

We will hand over to Philip.

Mr. P. Taylor:

When Max asked you what your objectives were, you said you had 6 objectives, which seemed to break down to about 35 sub-objectives.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

They do, yes. [Laughter]

Mr. P. Taylor:

Can you give me an example of one of your own personal objectives, not in terms of your own personal development but things ... because you then talked about things that you have to concentrate on this year. So give me an example of a couple of those, can you, just so I can get a feel for it?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

So certainly the hospital programme is probably a good example of that because within the department it is primarily me rather ... there is not a big team within I. and E. that does the hospital programme. We have a dedicated programme team. The programme director for that team reports to me from a delivery perspective, so that interface ... I acutely feel that is more personal to me rather than a ... I do not have teams within the department delivering that. I guess personally making sure that we are ... I have to make sure that we are ticking green ticks across a lot of these boxes, so I have found myself very thinly spread.

Mr. P. Taylor:

I would think that that must be the case, yes.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Mr. P. Taylor:

So how many people have you got in the department, how many thousands are there sitting down there?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Ideally, we have about 750. We have currently got about 650. We are running about a 20 per cent vacancy factor. That is our working number. That does vary. It does change, but that is currently

what the current feel is by what we should have. The good thing is that that was at one point last year 35 per cent, so we have put a lot of effort into recruitment. We have had 100 or so new starters in the last year so that has come down, but yes, that is something we should have.

Mr. P. Taylor:

So we want 750 people ideally; 650. How many of those are in scope for Connect Performance?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

We probably have about half. We have a manual worker and I guess a Civil Service split. At the moment we are having conversations with our union colleagues as to what performance management looks like in the manual worker workforce. So we have had some good conversations. There is an acceptance that we do something in that space. That has not traditionally been an area that manual workers have been appraised in that traditional sense. So we are having a conversation with both of our unions as to what that looks like. There have been some good positive conversations. So we do not have a solution yet but there will be some form of ... we need to get some form of check-in with our manual worker staff. They do a lot of stuff daily so they are very measurable because they do things and you can see the jobs that they do. So they are not covered by Connect at the moment but we do cover the rest of the Civil Service. It is probably about a half and half split, I would say.

Mr. P. Taylor:

So with the 225 you have under employment at the moment who are on Connect, you talked about a box that you have to put green ticks in, some of which will be business as usual, some of which will be delivery on ministerial plans. How do you make sure that each of those boxes you want to tick and the ministerial plans are reflected in people's objectives?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

So it starts with me cascading issues down with my director and my senior leadership team. We are acutely aware of what the ministerial priorities are. I think it is fair to say the ministerial priorities cover some things that the department does. Obviously, there is an awful lot of other stuff that we do as well.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Yes, it is business as usual, yes. That is what I mean, yes.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

So Connect does get rolled down to the people who need to be rolled down to. So most of our staff are in. We have about 7 per cent not covered currently with Connect, no objectives set.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Who should be?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Who should be ... there are a number of exclusions there. Either they are leaving or have just left or they have just arrived. There is a whole host of reasons why some of our staff have not got objectives on Connect. We have about 93 to 94 per cent coverage in using Connect of those who have agreed with our unions to go into Connect. So yes, the expectation is from me down to directors, directors down to their heads of service, and so on and so forth. As we go down into our teams the objectives become probably more generic around business as usual, whether it be planning processing times or whether it be maintenance.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Inspecting the drains.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes, maintenance callout times and things like that. Some of the, I guess, ministerial priorities will sit at either my level, director level or head of service level. I think that is where they would be most obviously seen.

Mr. P. Taylor:

I bet the public sees it when their drains do not work.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes, that is ultimately the true test of our performance. It is complaints. It is people phoning up. It is things getting fixed when they get reported. From an Island taxpayer's perspective, that is what they want to see. They want to know that if they turn up to the leisure centre it is open and the swimming pool is open and it is working. If they report lights that are not working on the streets they get fixed. It is those interactions, really.

Mr. P. Taylor:

So in terms of monitoring performance against the business as usual objectives and the ministerial plan objectives, how do you monitor progress so as you can do appraisals?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

So each of the directors then also have their set of objectives in Connect and they have the same conversations with me that I have with the Chief Executive. As we go down further into the

organisations we have a whole host of performance indicators that we report on. Some of those are only reported corporately. We report on about 15 corporately. In reality, we have about 100, 150, lots of lines of activities that we report on.

[14:30]

A lot of that activity gets reported at team level so that they know what they are doing, and it never finds its way up to any sort of, I guess, corporate publications or government publications. We would be similar to ... we would swamp ... because of the range of activities, it would just swamp the performance reports. We have a dashboard that we report corporately of our performance indicators. Below that there is an awful lot of other team indicators that gives us an idea of how the teams ... what they are up to.

Mr. P. Taylor:

So if I am a team leader, shall we say, on Connect and I have a manager I report to, what would my appraisal process look like? What sort of things will be covered? What information will be used to assess me as a team leader in discussion with my manager?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

It should be very similar, albeit maybe with a more defined scope, than the conversation I have with the Chief Executive or with Ministers. There will be a set of objectives. So if I pick on a team leader of the planning applications team or ...

Mr. P. Taylor:

That is a good one, yes.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

... they will have probably a staffing indicator. They would have a performance indicator on turnaround times for planning applications, probably something there around complaints and compliance. It would be a dashboard of service health, really. Are the team functioning against the published performance indicators? Planning is one of those that does find its way up to, I guess, the top 15. We have a range of other ones as well.

Mr. P. Taylor:

A team leader who mainly has manual workers working for him, so how would that work?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

At the moment we do not have a formalised appraisal system for our manual workers. However, it effectively would be job related. So things are being reported or ... we either have planned preventative maintenance, so there is a whole schedule of things that have to just happen to keep things running, or we have a lot of activities because things are being reported. They are either broken or failing somewhere. There will be a list of jobs and we will have teams going out with a charge hand delivering the jobs for the day. For them, performance management is actually seeing the thing fixed or seeing the pothole fixed or whatever it may be.

Mr. P. Taylor:

The appraisal for the person who ... for one of the 225 people who is responsible for that, that appraisal process would reflect his ability to manage his manual team?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes. So the amount of spend we have on our roads programme, we will have a dedicated amount of money around road resurfacing, reactive maintenance on the roads, potholes and failures, that sort of thing. So the ability to do what we set out to do in the year, that will be judged. Yes, it is practical things such as that. They would have similar things that I would expect to have myself, though, living within budgets, team health, team motivation, physical things being delivered. In my mind it is no different. While my objectives may be broader or have a much broader reach, fundamentally they are the same principle: living within budget, living with a happy team, delivering key things that I am expected to deliver. I think the same principles will go down the tree. They just become more focused to the specific specialised team that we have.

Mr. P. Taylor:

How do you assess customer feedback? Do you get customer feedback?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

We do. We probably please and annoy in equal measure, I would say, because of either what we do or the decisions we make. We use the corporate customer complaints and compliments system. So whether everybody outside of government uses that, but we do use that. We track complaints through that system. We do get compliments. Probably we would like some more but ...

Mr. P. Taylor:

You seem surprised that you get compliments.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

I think most people generally are happy with their lot in life. Most people do not want government to come anywhere near them, really. So we take pride in the fact that, yes, the road is kept open or

the seawall is fixed or people can go out and eat safely in a restaurant, that sort of thing. We do not get people thanking us for just doing our business as usual. We do get complaints when people get a decision they do not like or maybe they do not think we have acted quickly enough on fixing something or making a decision.

Mr. P. Taylor:

So do you get summaries of the complaints? Am I going off-piste here?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

We do. Firstly, we have a dedicated person in our head office ... well, not dedicated solely on this but they look after our ... they are the liaison with the customer services team. We have a customer strategy in that respect about how we want to improve customer engagement, but we get downloads from the customer complaint system if complaints have been logged. They get tracked: have they been responded to? There is a tiered approach to responding to customer complaints.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Is there then a loop back into the processes that you are using to make sure that if there is a theme that you can deal with, that gets fed back into the way that you work on a daily basis?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Ideally. Being honest, I think we probably do not do enough of that. I think there are some times we get complaints because of a process that we cannot avoid the process, it is a legal process. We just have to do it that way because that is what the law requires. We probably do not do enough customer feedback to change and inform future practice, I would be really honest about that. I think we need to do more of that.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Along that same line, are you tracking it in a way that you can look year over year over year, so you do not just look at the year but you can see on a broad context are you actually making a positive impact over time and keeping your ...?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

I think it is probably the same answer. We do have data from year to year. How much that really informs change in practice or change in behaviour, I would question how much of that we really do. Clearly, if it is a big, high-profile complaint, those sort of things will change practice. But we have a dedicated focus this year going into next year on how we can improve our customer engagement and customer feedback. I do not think we ask enough what customers feel. I think we are very much in-tray driven. We are waiting for people to tell us rather than proactively going out to ask.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Being more proactive so you can ...

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Do you get out among your team?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

I try to. It is probably the same sort of answer. I do not do as much of that as I could. I do go out. I try and go out ...

Mr. P. Taylor:

High-vis jacket, hat?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes, some of that. I try not to do like a royal visit type thing. I do not really like those sorts of things. I do go out to ... I call these things an "Ask Andy" or something like that, but go out and talk to people. If I think we need to give an update to people on some things, that is far better to do in person, face to face. Or it is a health and safety visit. I often combine the 2 things together, so it is a bit of a health and safety look but it gives me an opportunity to go and have a look at things. There is a recent example. I went out to look at some road resurfacing at Route d'Orange.

Mr. P. Taylor:

I know you did, yes.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

So I did go out and have a look at that, which was quite interesting, but also we had a drainage scheme over at L'Etacq so I had a look at that as well. So I try and do a bit of that but it is a challenge.

Mr. P. Taylor:

It always is, yes.

Mr. G. Phipps:

There is one more thing, only one. So your customer we have been talking about is the public.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Another customer is all the different departments because they have to compete with ... you only have so many estates and I know in the past we have been aware of some real conflict. Are you comfortable you have a fair process in place that everyone buys into such that when there is disputes over who gets to use this asset that they are comfortable that the process is fair and equitable? Is that in place now?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

We do have a better process. I know with previous ... we have reviews of States strategy previously. The estate strategy is embedding itself now. We do have now regular meetings of our corporate property board, which is really the interface between property as the corporate landlord and service departments. So they occur regularly. It probably scoops up about 90 per cent of property requests. It is not all of the property. We still get the odd one coming in leftfield, really. But there is better rigour now for departments to express their land use and property requirements back to Property Holdings and then we go through that cycle of what do we have available to try and meet that demand. So yes, it is always a journey. The estate strategy is a way of working and it is embedding. It is not 100 per cent perfect yet but it is better than it was if I go a year or 2 years ago.

Mr. G. Phipps:

I know that was an important issue to be put in place a little over a year ago. It is not first in, first out or who you know, now there is a process ...?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes, we have more rigour and we have an elevation point from that board up through political decision-making to the Future Places Group, it is now called. That would take on the Regeneration Steering Group rather than what we have had previously. It does feel more rigorous. It very often still feels that we only have so much gold in the pot so we are still trying to manage expectations through that process more than anything.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So far so good, I guess.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Just to bring us back to Connect Performance and the people that are out of scope, so we talked about particularly the manual workers. Being that they do not have that more structured appraisal process, how do you keep on top of training and development needs?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes, we need to do more of that. That is exactly the conversation we are having with our union representatives and union colleagues that it is not just about ... it is not a stick to beat people with. It is a very positive thing the other way as well around either training development, skills development and, indeed, well-being and things like that. So we probably do not do enough of that at the moment and that is why we are saying that we really need a better process so we can have that 2-way dialogue. Instead of calling it a performance appraisal and that sort of language, we are trying to use language like a check-in or something like that. It just brands it differently but it is about a conversation. Is someone doing what they are being paid to do? That is a quick check. But are they feeling okay to do that? So we need to do more of that. I am hopeful that we will get a solution this year with both the unions. We are having some really positive dialogue so that is good. We have to get, I guess, the messaging and the branding right over exactly what it is because historically performance management or appraisals have been seen quite negatively. We need to change that dialogue and create something more positive around well-being development certainly. A lot of our development gets focused on health and safety requirements and things like that or just direct skills for the job, but this is a way of capturing I think more consistently what that is.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Given that a number of your colleagues in your department are not desk based, they are doing very practical jobs, is Connect Performance what you would consider to be fit for purpose for them?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

It is a computer-based or a screen-based system so it is a way of recording information in one sense. Performance management can be done on a side of A4 paper and it is a dialogue. It is a conversation and it is a recording of something. It is a recording of that conversation and a recording of actions. The Connect system is just an easier way of recording, really. So as long as a dialogue is happening the way of selling the Connect system really is that it is a depository of information that is just easier for everyone to access. So you do not necessarily have to walk around with it all the time but I would expect one of our manual workers from the ops team or someone in our sports centres, they will sit down at some point; hopefully we can sit them down in a place where we could access a screen to just record some things. So I would look at it like that. Yes, it should be fit for purpose. It needs to be tailored to the individual really.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. I will hand over to Deputy Coles.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

You are saying you have a 20 per cent vacancy rate at the moment and it has decreased from 30-plus per cent. Do you see a high turnover of staff within your department?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

It is probably higher than we would like. It was about 9 per cent last year, around that sort of number. We are going to get a turnover in staff. The biggest reason for leaving ... we still have retirement as probably still one of our top 3 reasons for leaving government, or indeed finding another job within government. I guess we poach staff off of each other within government. A big reason for leaving is personal reasons. About 20 per cent of people left for personal reasons, whether that be financial or other reasons. So yes, turnover is probably something ... I think a healthy turnover would be definitely less than 10 per cent, ideally nearer 5, 6, 7 per cent, that sort of thing. It can be good because you get new skills in, new thinking. We do not want to have that too high. So yes, it is a constant challenge, making sure that we retain skilled people with the knowledge that they have.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Sorry, do you ever look at ... somebody else mentioned retirement being an issue. Do you ever look at any measures to try and retain workers past retirement, given the fact that people are encouraged to work later in their lives?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

We do have staff now ... because the rule on you have to retire at 65 effectively has gone within government, so we currently have staff who are definitely over 65. Some of them want to carry on because they love their jobs and we do have that. We do not have anything active to say: "Please stay."

[14:45]

I think very often it comes down to individuals thinking: "We still do not have a replacement, I will stay a bit longer." It is very much those sort of conversations rather than us having something more systemised across the department. It is down to the retiree potentially feeling bad on retiring too early and, therefore, staying with us a bit longer.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Do you think you might like to look at that sort of thing?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes, we should. We also need a younger workforce. Our workforce is ageing so we are focusing on that entry level into our workforce. We have just launched a couple of bursaries to new entrants. It is the first time we have done that in government.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

I think with a 20 per cent gap rate you can afford to keep people at both ends.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

No, I completely agree. I think what we are looking for is we offer a lot of professions which are enriching professions for anyone leaving school, whether it be engineering; we employ stonemasons, meteorologists, marine biologists, a whole range of professions. It is a very viable option to come into government to work for us. We are really focusing on how we get that message out through schools and to colleges to stay, stay and learn with us, whether that be a bursary or whether that be a trainee job and we will pay for qualifications. Because of our age profile we are focusing on the younger end of the workforce. We need younger people in the Island in any case. We need them to stay. Where we have embedded skills and they are the only person to have those skills and they are beyond 65, then yes, we try and keep them. But to be honest, if someone is at 68, 67, and they have probably done their 40 or 45 years, they probably ...

Mr. M. Woodhams:

My father did not retire until he was 79.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Being an old tooth at the table here ...

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Shall we move back on to ...

Mr. G. Phipps:

Just one thought along that line, people retire, they get their pension, fair enough. But there might be ... what about a system where they come back as advisers, as mentors, to fill that little gap? Is there any formal project or ability to do that?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

I guess there is possibilities of that. I think the way the pension scheme is now set up it enables different options for retirement and not falling off a cliff edge. We do see people coming back. I

bumped into someone who used to work in our ... I will not say his name but he used to work in the parking control team and he has retired a couple of years ago. He is now back doing some advice for us in some of our other technical areas.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So that possibility is open?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

There is always that possibility, yes.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

In the matter of retention of staff as well, obviously keeping the ones you have already trained is important. Do you have any mechanisms that currently measure your employee satisfaction?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

The big one is the Be Heard survey. We are just in that and it closes today. That is the set piece, I think, in terms of looking at the organisation as a whole. We have the ability for what they call Pulse surveys or just smaller versions of that in dedicated areas. So we have done some of those in certain areas as well. That would be the most obvious sort of method that we test people's ...

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Do you get a good response to those Pulse surveys or the Be Heard?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Pulse surveys, because they are generally targeted at smaller areas, tend to get a better response. The corporate-wide Be Heard survey, we are about ... I am hoping we are about 60 per cent at the moment. I guess the number will come out next week, the final number. Some people do not like filling those in. There is always going to be a disgruntled workforce; there is always going to be a very positive workforce. We normally hit about a 60 per cent, I think, return rate on those sort of surveys. Some people just simply miss doing it, some people simply just forget. We have to remind people quite a lot. Or they do not think it is relevant. A lot of people think: "Do you know what, I am fairly content. I do not need to say anything." So we do have people like that as well, so it is a bit of a balance.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

You talk about your disgruntled workforce. Do you have any assurances of where your current morale sits within your department?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

I guess I have a sense. We can look at some of our I guess more formalised indicators, the number of grievances we have, the number of formal H.R. (human resources) cases. We have 2, 3, 4 of those, not many at all, across that workforce. If I put my positive hat on, that says 736 staff are entirely happy because there is no grievances. There may well be disgruntlement and people just are not reporting it. I think my honest view ... I generally feel that people are content doing the job, so I think we have a pretty good contentment factor in people's professions. A lot of people do their chosen professions for us and they do like what they do. Disgruntlement tends to be around traditional things around pay and reward, those sort of things, which are out of our hands within the department, so we get a bit of pressure on that. But I think by what we ask people to do I generally get a good sense that people enjoy what they do for us and take a lot of pride in what they do for us.

Mr. P. Taylor:

When you go out and you get out among the teams, there must be those departments where you look forward to going to because they have great morale and they are really enthusiastic, others perhaps not quite so enthusiastic. Is that fair?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

I think that is fair. It ebbs and flows. It depends on what is going on in that team at the time. So if you have a team that is pushing forward a new piece of legislation or a real positive change, then that will often be quite exciting. The engineering team is always quite positive because they are bred to think of problems and solutions and they are always quite positive and they are always looking in that sort of way. You are right, it does vary and in some teams that will change.

Mr. P. Taylor:

If you go to a department and say: "It is all feeling a bit flat here today" do you go and talk to the department manager and say: "Look, it is feeling a bit flat"? Do you do anything about it, what is behind it?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Sometimes, yes. A lot of what our teams do, it has to exist in every state, as I said earlier, of the economy, politics, the proper climate out there, the weather climate. So there is always probably a whole range of factors affecting people in their workplace. It could be personal, it could be cost of living as well as working for the employer, but it does vary.

Mr. P. Taylor:

And their boss.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

And their boss, yes. They may not be happy with me. I will find out in a week or 2's time.

Mr. P. Taylor:

No, that was not about you, it was about ...

Mr. G. Phipps:

Or at a different level. It could be that without knowing it you could have a supervisor who is doing a crappy job. So have you considered 360 feedback process?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

We have, yes. We are doing some 360. We started that with our top-level team, myself and my senior leadership team. So we are live in a process now of doing that 360. The aim would be that we get that out further down into the teams. It becomes more complicated. It is quite an intricate process to do a 360 around someone, so when you magnify that out across 6 ...

Mr. G. Phipps:

Trust is a big part of it.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

We might want to do some form of team 360 or something like that. There are ways of doing that. But yes, we have been thinking about that.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Are you sharing that with other departments? Because this question has come up a few times and some we get a blank look and others a different response. Is there a mechanism? For example, if it is helpful, is there a mechanism where you share that?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

I would hope to share that experience. We have an exec leadership team that meets fortnightly, so that is our forum to discuss things that are crossing more than one department or things that may have worked, may not have worked, for others. We deal with a whole range of other issues there but that would be the forum I would take it to, yes.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

My final area comes after the 2018 One.Gov reforms. How would you describe the impact of Team Jersey on the culture within your area?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

I think it was generally ... we have had quite a good uptake across different services in terms of getting involved with Team Jersey. My honest reading is that a lot of our folk felt positive about it. We had quite a good engagement, whether it be across our manual worker staff or our Civil Service staff. So we did have good representation across that. I think ultimately it was some additional training. People are generally always a bit thirsty to do a bit of training and that, so I think generally people found it interesting. I guess the truth or the proof of the pudding will be if we fast forward 3, 4 or 5 years, how long will that last. You have to keep that cultural change quite fresh. So on the whole I would say we probably have a mixed response if you did a straw poll across our staff, but from where I sit I did see good involvement from our management teams and our team leaders. It seemed to get quite a lot of engagement across our different work groups. If I take that as the sort of barometer, I would say it seemed to be quite well taken by teams. If it makes a difference to their behaviour, that is harder to judge, I think. Does it really culturally make a difference? I think you have to just keep doing that sort of thing to embed behaviours.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

You mentioned in your answer the executive leadership team meetings. I am conscious that as well as being a Chief Officer you also are a member of that executive leadership team.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

What support do you get within that team to help you achieve your objectives?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

So I do not think the team, that E.L.T. as a whole ... a lot of my objectives are quite particular to me. Some of them are more corporate. If I look at the office scheme as an example, there is a number of us working on that and we have an office board. So I would say there is more peer support and discussions rather than practical support to help me deliver my own objectives. I think there is support there for discussions, to try and resolve problems. If I am encountering an issue with delivering something here I can take it there and say: "Look, this is becoming a problem. I need to resolve this. Can you help?" It is those sort of dialogues, I think, which are more helpful.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I think we have discussed as well you seem to have quite a lot on your shoulders, risks that if they become issues they become very public.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

As you said, they touch on people's lives on a day-to-day basis. They can become political. There is a lot there.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

What support do you get from within central government to help you achieve those objectives and help you deal with all of that?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

That is a good question. Obviously, I have a good dialogue with ... the main outlet for me is probably talking to the Chief Exec and those one to one conversations about what is bothering me, what is on my mind, how am I feeling today, those sort of ... they exist, they do happen and I get support there. I do chew the cud with Ministers, some more than others, but there is that ability to have those conversations. Certainly, across my peers, so other Chief Officers, we do talk and share on how do we all feel. It is probably more that sort of dialogue rather than ... I will be really honest, I am probably one not to think about my own self-investment or self-development. If I look at my objectives, if I look at my development or my support plan, it is probably not very ... it is probably as blank as that, really. So I think I probably fall into that trap of thinking about delivering the job and then not thinking enough around self-investment.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I would hazard a guess that there is probably not a day goes by that something that is within your department is not being reported on in the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)*, which is quite unusual for a ...

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

That is probably true and I think I probably ... family support is huge, so you use your own support structures outside of your role as well. I do have good colleagues in work who can ... I have a good S.L.T. and we can talk about things and share stuff, but also my other Chief Officer colleagues definitely do that. Then your social structures, your family structure, and I have good conversations with my dog. **[Laughter]** I will take the dog for a walk and that ... I guess that comes with the role.

I guess it is like with every ... trying not to be too flippant about it, I think you find your support where you need it, if you need it, and have a conversation, try not to internalise things too much but ...

Mr. M. Woodhams:

It is lonely at the top but when you deal with stresses and you have situations, you have that bad year that we talked about metaphorically that might have happened, it is your employer that has to give you the support to make sure you can carry on and develop you, and that you do not face it on your own.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes, I try and keep level-headed and I do not think anything good comes from panicking. You can panic a little bit but you have to get back on to making the decision or giving some calm leadership to other people, so I very much subscribe to that. So yes, I think when we do have issues that lay outside of my bailiwick within the department and it needs others, it is a matter of working with colleagues. I definitely feel that we have those relationships across government that we can do that.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Just looking at that blank page you said when it comes to self-development, you do not put a lot of time, one area that might encourage you to do that is when you think of what capacity could you develop further yourself so you could deliver better results. Because you are pretty obviously results focused, so if you ask the question in that light you might find some things you might want to work on.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes, I guess one of the ...

Mr. G. Phipps:

Without feeling you are being selfish, because I think that is what I ...

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

I guess I take a lot more pride in seeing other people in the team do what they do and it all cascades down. We have a lot of good people doing a lot of good things, which ultimately makes my job a lot easier. I sort of see it as that is the relationship, really.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

We have, I think, the last question from ...

Mr. P. Taylor:

The Chair is very keen on timekeeping.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Okay.

Mr. P. Taylor:

There is going to be somewhere in your wealth of responsibilities where there is a problem. At the moment there is a problem there, do you have the levers that you need to pull to get those problems resolved?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

I think I would probably have ... how big the levers are is a good ...

Mr. P. Taylor:

You can give me an example if you like.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes. We are having some really good dialogue at the moment with Treasury around funding some of our infrastructure. I mentioned that earlier. I do think we are ... I think the quick answer is yes. I would like bigger levers sometimes probably because they create more force, but I do think we do have a good dialogue with Treasury.

[15:00]

A lot of our problems tend to come around financing and resource pressures. We do have a really good relationship with our Treasury team. My approach to that is we just have to be honest about what is facing the business, what is causing it, what we can do about it and what we cannot do about it. So I think yes. Not everything can be fixed, though, so some of it is just about expectation management as well in some of the issues that we face.

Mr. P. Taylor:

But if it is within your control. You cannot control the Treasury.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

No.

Mr. P. Taylor:

If there is a delivery problem in your span of control, if you give me an example if you like of what happened and how you fixed it.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

As I said, I have some good operational teams who do this anyway and I do feel whenever there is ... when something happens, whether we look at the past 6 months, we have had some real serious incidents obviously in the Island. The teams mobilise and do things without really needing to be told sometimes, which is really good. But I do know if there is a problem, if there is a practical problem, if something is broken, it is not working, we will have an answer in the department within a few days and we know what to do about it. That is a really refreshing place to be. That gives me a lot of comfort that stuff gets done.

Mr. P. Taylor:

I read in the *J.E.P.* about enormous delays in the Planning Department, for example. What sort of levers have you got that could deal with ... they may be well-founded comments in the *J.E.P.* or ill founded, but how would you deal with that?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Some of it starts with we review things. We have done a review. We have an external inspection every so often in that service. So we have had one recently. The directorate in that area is definitely aware of what we need to do. Some of it is around performance management. Some of it is a bit of resourcing. Some of it is also expectation management of: it is a complicated process and not everyone gets an answer they want as quickly as they want. It is probably a whole range of issues in planning. They are always going to be thus. The key thing I think for me in planning is around customer engagement, making sure that if you are either complaining or when you are applying you know what is going on. That is the key thing for me.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Then you have the levers going down the chain. If something needs to be fixed in any department you can get it fixed. That is the point.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes, I have a good team who then take that on board and I have confidence that people will do their job. So ultimately that ...

Mr. P. Taylor:

Hold them to account.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I am conscious of the time. So we have come to the end of the allocated time but I am sure that the committee will have other questions that we will follow up in writing with you.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Of course, yes, no problem.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Thank you for attending this afternoon.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Thank you very much.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Thank you to the committee and to the supporting officers. I will bring this hearing to a close.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:

Thank you very much.

[15:02]