

2024.11.12

3.2 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the upgrade of the Island's electricity network: (OQ.207/2024)

Further to Jersey Electricity's announcement to upgrade the Island's electricity network, will the Minister advise what conversations, if any, he has had or plans to have with J.E. (Jersey Electricity) regarding the costs of the required roadworks and resurfacing of roads?

Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John (The Minister for Infrastructure):

I thank the Deputy for his question. Infrastructure maintains a continuous dialogue with all our utility companies about planned works on our road network in order that we can continue to assess the impact on traffic and road infrastructure. We also publish our own planned highway maintenance for the next 6 years on the government website up to and including 2030. In relation to the J.E.C.'s (Jersey Electricity Company) announcement big upgrade programme, an initial briefing took place in April and meetings have since taken place to ensure the newly resurfaced roads, part of our highway maintenance programmes, are not dug up as a result. In terms of the cost, that will be down to the utility company and not to the Government.

3.2.1 Deputy T.A. Coles:

As there are improvements and upgrades required to our sewage network, some of these areas might coincide. Has that also been given any consideration?

The Connétable of St. John:

What we do is there is a monthly call between all utilities, including our drainage team, and we also look annually about what is planned coming forward. We will continue to discuss not only with the electric company, but also water company and telecoms companies to see where we can share resources.

3.2.2 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf of St. Saviour:

In the context of the previous question and this one, we are asking the Minister to deal with the consequences of a company that is investing in our infrastructure for the long-term life viability. There has been a lot of debate in the United Kingdom and elsewhere about N.I.M.B.Y.ism (not in my backyard) and short-termism versus long-termism. Would the Minister agree that this is a really good initiative by the J.E.C. to improve our Island-wide network for the clean power that we are getting from France, and would he actually balance the issues of roadworks short term with the long-term issues, and is he doing so?

The Connétable of St. John:

Yes, I welcome the investment into the infrastructure by the electric company and, of course, it is not only the Government's roads but also Parish by-roads. In fact, I believe Parish by-roads will be impacted as much, if not more, than the government roads.

3.2.3 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:

Is the Minister considering any change to the carriageway resurfacing policies to ensure that sufficient full-width reinstatement of roads occurs when a significant amount of trenching is done, as we have seen a lot of works where the resurfacing of trenching is going to cause long-term issues to the quality of certain carriageways?

The Connétable of St. John:

We already have the ability for the full width to be reinstated. We also have the ability to do test holes core to make sure that the road is being reinstated properly and there is also a 3-year period where that road is guaranteed and any repairs done in the 3 years also carries a 3-year guarantee.

3.2.4 Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Just to confirm, will the Minister feel comfortable that his department will use, where appropriate, that power they have to request full-width reinstatement where it is felt it is justified and appropriate for an operator to do so?

The Connétable of St. John:

We will, sir.

The Bailiff:

I just remind Members that it is never the policy during questions with notice to offer a second supplemental question to any Member.