

2.8 The Deputy of St. Mary of the Minister for Transport and Technical Services regarding the processing of items collected for recycling:

In view of the persistent rumours which circulate from time to time that items being separated for recycling are in fact sometimes going to the new incinerator to be burnt, can the Minister give the Assembly an absolute assurance that this is not going on, whether systematically or from time to time; and if it is, give a full explanation?

The Connétable of St. Brelade (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services):

Well, first of all, I am not sure if the rumour can be as persistent as it only circulates from time to time, but having said that I can categorically reassure Members that these rumours are untrue. All waste material collected through my department's recycling schemes are either processed on-Island for local re-use and recycling or are exported to the U.K. or French re-processors to the same end. The only very minor exception to this will be where during the handling of these materials some items are identified as being too contaminated to recycle and are thus removed. These materials would end up in residual waste for incineration but represent a very tiny proportion of what is collected overall. My department has worked hard since the implementation of the solid waste strategies published in 2005 to expand recycling and has achieved the key targets set of 32 per cent recycling and composting. The strategy is currently being reviewed and is part of that work on an analysis of black bag waste arriving at the E.f.W. (Energy from Waste) has been carried out. This showed that many of the key target materials such as glass, green waste and paper and card are being successfully diverted but there is still work to do on raising community awareness and improving collection schemes to further increase recycling levels.

2.8.1 The Deputy of St. Mary:

I thank the Minister for that reply. That is reassuring. Could he, in view of his comments on the waste composition survey, and he highlighted glass and paper and card and the fact that they were being largely separated now, could he comment, in particular, on whether that survey has shown problem areas, for instance, batteries that are ending up in black bin bags rather than being separated out? Are there any specific areas that are of concern? And also, how is it that these rumours - it bothers me that the rumours are persistent and they are intermittent, they can be both - and why is it that they come? I mean, it is a puzzle for me, I can accept his assurance ...

The Bailiff:

I do not think the Minister is in a position or has responsibility for rumours.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I can work on that one. In practice, in terms of the analysis of waste coming through, that work is presently being undertaken and as Members will realise it is not a terribly savoury task, but I can assure Members that there have been several consignments from St. Brelade I am aware of that have been dumped on the floor and analysed by officers. That work is ongoing and I hope that results will enable the department to target their strategy and improve the recycling percentages. In terms of working with the community, it is an uphill struggle. I brought a proposition to the Parish of St. Brelade - to a Parish Assembly - to undertake a recycling collection in the Parish. It was only narrowly won and I hope that my successor will progress that as time goes on. There is a lot of work to be done in terms of perception and my department, I

think, are competently doing that at the moment. There are areas, particularly with glass, where the public perceive it all to be thrown in to the waste and I can say that in certain Parishes glass is collected on the normal round and the vehicles have different compartments in the back and it does look as though it is all being flung into the same thing, but in fact, in practice there are 2 different compartments. So all I can assure the Deputy is that we continue to work in the same direction, I think we have got the same philosophy on this and I hope that, as I say, my successor in Transport and Technical Services will continue the fight.

2.8.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

Specifically in relation to glass, I have been told by a reliable source that certainly a big percentage of glass, if not all of it, while it does get separated and the separation is primarily done by the homeowner, it is put in landfill. Is that true?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Yes, it is crushed and used in engineering applications at La Collette. There are 2 areas particularly, one is performing new road bases and if any Members have been down to La Collette and driven towards the reclamation pits they would be driving on glass, dare I say it, albeit made up with the appropriate mixtures. In addition, it is used as an outer wall lining for the walls around the La Collette reclamation area thereby displacing the stone aggregate which would have been used otherwise.

2.8.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

That is really quite informative but the point I am making is the Minister seemed to start by saying: "Yes, it is put in landfill" and then has mentioned that it is used for building aggregates but it would be helpful to know is the vast majority just thrown into landfill and not used for recycling or construction purposes and does he have any rough figures as to what proportion that would represent?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Well, it is not used in landfill in that sense, it is used to back up the sea walls and so I suppose it can be suggested that it is used for targeted landfill. I have not got the figures in terms of differences, but where it can be used for aggregate for road use obviously it will be, and where it is needed for backfill for the exterior sea walls it will be used for that.

2.8.4 The Deputy of St. John:

Given that card and paper, *et cetera* are shipped off the Island, most of the time, would the Minister agree or otherwise that given that our new energy from waste plant produces electricity is there any merit, Minister, in using the card and paper, or some of it, instead of having to subsidise it, in producing electricity by burning it?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

The Deputy raises a good point. In practice, while the residual price for newspaper, high-grade paper and card is good, is worth exporting, I would suggest that if that price were to reduce to the lower level where it would be more beneficial to burn it and recoup the value through electricity generated it would be worth considering. But I made the point earlier in response to the Deputy of St. Mary, if we were to do that we need to be absolutely upfront about it. It would be absolutely, I think, wrong for the department to be collecting any materials, saying they will be collecting for

recycling and they will not. So that is an exercise which will have to be done in the future depending on the economies of the day.

2.8.5 Deputy S. Pitman of St. Helier:

Could the Minister inform Members what percentage of our waste we are now recycling since the operation of the new incinerator?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I mentioned 32 per cent before, that sort of figure.

2.8.6 Deputy S. Pitman:

Supplementary? Would the Minister tell Members where his department are with the idea of Guernsey giving their waste to Jersey?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

The department is always open to negotiations with Guernsey regarding the waste disposal and use of our E.f.W. plant as we are with Alderney. Negotiations really depend on the policies in Guernsey and it will also depend on the views of the Members of this House because any policy change with regard to that would have to be approved by this House before being undertaken.

2.8.7 The Deputy of St. Mary:

Firstly, a big thank you to the Minister for the reassurances he has given and in particular that if there was to be any change in the future that the department would be upfront about it. I think that is very important indeed and I am glad he shares that view. The final question really is about this matter of card and paper going off the Island and being recycled as opposed to being burnt and he says that if the price changed then the department might have to look at that again. Will the department, and can he give an assurance or hopefully an assurance for his successor now, that the department's considerations would include the CO₂ implications because there is a saving in recycling versus burning for electricity and that is an important matter, and the Island should not be seen to be on the wrong side of the fence on that. So, could he give some kind of assurance that that would be included in the considerations?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I agree there is far more to it than just money and I think all the CO₂ implications and negative implications of burning do need to be taken into account, and also the onward disposal of ash waste in the pits of La Collette of course do form part of the consideration.