

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE
BY DEPUTY K.F. MOREL OF ST. LAWRENCE
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 8th OCTOBER 2019**

Question

Will the Minister advise whether, when agreeing to the trial by Liberty Bus of an electric double decker bus, the Department ensured that the operator undertook appropriate due diligence with regard to the vehicle's service history and if so, did the vehicle have any history of breaking down?

Answer

Under the Contract, LibertyBus as the bus operator is responsible for procurement of the vehicles. It is their responsibility and risk to ensure the vehicles are fit for purpose. This recognises their experience and expertise in bus fleet maintenance, management and financing

LibertyBus had approached several manufacturers for use of a demonstrator electric vehicle and Optare, a nationally recognised reputable manufacturer, was the first to offer a double-decker vehicle to showcase its technology. Reviews of other potential vehicles and manufactures continue.

LibertyBus is familiar with operation of Optare vehicles, their performance and reliability, as they already provide 35 single-decker vehicles within Jersey's bus fleet. The demonstration bus was two years old and had previously been used in London, under the Transport for London franchise. Two years old is relatively young in terms of a bus's service life, public service vehicles (PSV) in the UK are subject to rigorous maintenance regimes and independent inspection, as in Jersey.

It is not in the interest of the manufacturer to provide a demonstration vehicle which might breakdown. From Optare's perspective, the provision of a demonstration vehicle is part of a marketing pitch, similar to when a domestic dealership provides prospective buyers the opportunity to test drive a car. While the appraisal of specialist trade and technical literature form part of the due diligence for commercial fleet investment, requesting the service history of the visiting demonstration vehicle would not, unless the vehicle itself was under consideration for purchase.

Offering excellent customer service is something LibertyBus pride themselves on, it would not be in their interests to engage with a manufacturer if they considered the vehicles to be unreliable and risk reputational damage through poor customer service.