

Scrutiny Matters Feedback - Ash Scrutiny Review

Sir,

In response to the Environmental Scrutiny Panel review of the issue of waste disposal from Jersey's Energy From Waste (EWP) Plant I would like, in my capacity as Chair of both the Jersey One World Group and of the Jersey Chamber of Commerce Sustainable Business Forum, to add a few observations to the consultation.

As with some others who have made submissions I do not feel it relevant to open again the issue of the EWP, "we are where we are" and therefore of prime concern now is to do all possible to control the dangers of toxic materials from the plant entering the environment, either marine, atmospheric or terrestrial.

TTS have assured me that the EWP is "best in class" in terms of limiting emissions and is quantum leaps ahead in comparison to the old plant at Bellozanne, and not being an expert I will take their word here. In these circumstances we therefore need to concentrate on ash disposal and the limitation of harm to the environment from same.

On the premise that prevention is better than cure it seems to me what is vital is to do all that is possible to ensure waste that contains harmful pollutants such as batteries etc. don't make it to the incineration process in the first place. What is needed is a robust attack on the whole issue of recycling. TTS with the help of the Parishes (cost should not be the dominant issue here) should do all possible to boost the levels and nature of recycling (kerbside collection et.al.) to prevent as much as possible of waste of a toxic nature, eg. heavy metals entering the stream thus removing as much as is practical in the way of pollutants from the residual ash. This will then leave a residual product capable of use as aggregate for road building etc. with minor pollutants locked into the same.

If as seems likely, we are to import waste from Guernsey (I have no problem with this in principle as they are "streets ahead" of Jersey in recycling) then the same rules should apply. This will enable us to generate more energy through the process, earn revenue towards the cost of the plant and we can negotiate to return the appropriate proportion of the residual to them for their use. This should prove beneficial to all Channel Islanders and their environments.

In conclusion what I advocate seems a sensible approach to where we are now, it avoids as far as possible major threats to our atmosphere, the marine environment and the general Island ambience. It makes sound commercial sense and limits impact on vital areas like agriculture and tourism.

I hope these limited observations prove of use in the process.

Jim Hopley.