

Environment Scrutiny Panel Meeting No. 40

2nd February 2007
Blampied Room

Present Deputy R.C. Duhamel (Chairman) (RD)
Deputy G.C.L. Baudains (Vice Chairman) (GB)
Connétable K. A. Le Brun of St Mary (KB)
Deputy P. V. F. Le Claire (PC)
Deputy S. Power (SP)

Apologies

In attendance M. Robbins, Scrutiny Officer (MR)
J. Richardson Transport and Technical Services Chief Officer. (JR)

Time Started 11.00 am

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
1	<p>Business Plan of Transport and Technical Services</p> <p>The Panel welcomed Deputy G. de Faye, Minister for Transport and Technical Services (GdF) and Mr J. Richardson, Chief Officer of the Transport and Technical Services Department. It was noted that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Integrated Travel and Transport Plan for Jersey 2007 to 2011 and the Business Plan for the Transport and Technical Services Department. The discussion covered the following areas –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Panel noted that a letter sent to the Minister on 10th November related to the use of Non-Petroleum powered vehicles had not received a reply. Mr Richardson apologised for the lack of response and ensured the Panel that they would receive a reply. • The section of the Integrated Travel and Transport Plan numbered 2.3.1 entitled ‘Rickshaws’ was raised as the Panel considered it to be short on detail. The Minister advised the Panel that the process was at the consultative stage and the document was in draft so he would consider any amendments put to him. Overall, hybrid and electrical vehicles were to be encouraged. • Details of the priorities of work within the Business Plan are within the ‘Summary of Key Objectives and Priorities’. • Car parks had a fund allocated by a previous Committee, of which the States agreed a £150,000 spending on a traffic related matter. Other than that one withdrawal, the fund was ring fenced for use on the car parks. Work towards suicide prevention came out of general maintenance funding. • The Sunshine Hotel Site was not ideal for a further car park due to its access and location. • Minden Place was due for renewal and was to be demolished. Although it was the most popular car park due to its location, it was old and narrow and considered insufficient for today’s needs. Part of the St Helier regeneration Scheme is to replace Minden Place and Gas Place car parks with one new one in the same area. 	JR

- The Minister confirmed that control of the car parks was to remain with the Transport and Technical Services Department and that although there had been dialogue with NCP, there had been no interest in the company becoming involved with Jersey car parks due to the low charges currently in force for parking. The Minister would not entertain the concept of handing over control of parking to the private sector, however, there were no problems working with people who wished to provide private parking.
- The cost of building parking spaces in Jersey was approximately £10,000 to £15,000 per space above ground and £20,000 plus per space below ground. People in Jersey still seemed to believe that parking should be free. The Minister intended to move forward in relation to charging with consideration to holding or reducing charges in low use areas.
- Parking cards were considered inflexible and a greater variety of charges can be used with other systems.
- The Department were to examine the wheelchair access signs in Pier Road Car Park. The Panel noted that the car park had been built some time ago and was not designed to wheelchair standards.
- The Department had looked at 'Sky Parks' where vehicles are parked in vertical stacks but they tended to be very expensive and the Panel accepted that delays were a common problem at peak periods.
- Relating to the consultation between the Ministers for Planning and Environment and Transport and Technical Services, it was noted that both Ministers were part of the same working groups for the regeneration of St Helier and spoke regularly of all matters pertaining to regeneration. Deputy de Faye was particularly satisfied that there was now a more holistic approach than had been the case in the past.
- The Esplanade Car Park was to maintain 525 public spaces during the regeneration process of the area although there was also to be some private parking.
- The Minister was considering environmental taxes such as the possible replacement of vehicle registration duty with a CO emissions tax. Any money so gained would benefit the transport area such as new bus routes or safer school routes with consideration also to spending on other environment matters.

Deputy Power retired from the meeting.

- Concerns about the quality of discharges in to St Aubins Bay led the Minister to explain that in general terms he was very content with the quality of such discharges, however it was noted that there had been occasional pollution incidents mainly caused by mechanical breakdowns. The Panel also noted that test procedures were carried out which followed open wastewater procedures and EU protocols of levels of discharge. 20 to 30 tests were done on a weekly basis with a Regulator attending at regular and random intervals. Further that the Regulator was to be notified of any pollution incidents and had been so notified in the past. The Regulator then decides on any action such as closing the beach or public signage and reports to the Attorney General who decides whether a prosecution is required.

- The Panel were reminded that the Minister had enormous powers in relation to the taxi industry. With powers to regulate fares and to add any conditions he saw fit, he had the power to reorganise the industry in a very dictatorial fashion. However, the Minister was of the opinion that a more suitable way forward might contain an element of reasonableness from both sides. He would like to resolve these issues within his tenure. There would be time for both Scrutiny and the Industry to be involved in the resolution process.
- The Minister welcomed the Environment Scrutiny Panel examining the high level policies such as the Waste Policy which is understood to be at report drafting stage and the Transport Policy. The Auditor General will be looking at the buses during the summer and the Panel may consider that a suitable time to also be involved. The Panel noted that the department would be re-examining the Liquid Waste Strategy in April and some solutions for that may be radical. There is also a recognised problem with regulations regarding tight tanks. This has created some disparity and the tankering operation is being heavily subsidised at this time.

The Panel thanked the Minister for his attendance and the Minister and Chief Officer retired.

At 1245 the meeting ended.

RD. GB. KB. PC. SP. GdF. JR. MR.

Signed

Date

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Chairman, Environment Panel

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