

2020.04.21

**6 The Connétable of St. Helier of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the provision for walkers and cyclists on the Island's roads: (OQ.106/2020)**

Given that creating extra space for people wishing to exercise while observing social distancing is becoming the norm the world over, how, if at all, is the Minister planning to make better provision for walkers and cyclists on the Island's roads?

**Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour (The Minister for Infrastructure):**

In the short term during the coronavirus crisis, we are focusing on limited resources on essential services such as maintaining safety, critical infrastructure, providing facilities for essential healthcare workers and ensuring emergency service and delivery vehicles can carry out their functions. We have kept open the parks and beaches to provide exercise space, which has not been the case in some other jurisdictions. In the longer term, we look forward to working with key partners such as Parishes to deliver the outcomes of the Sustainable Transport Policy.

**3.6.1 The Connétable of St. Helier:**

In the short and medium term, will the Minister look positively at any schemes brought forward by Parish Roads Committees or in the case of the capital by the Shadow Conseil Municipal, to restrict vehicular access in certain residential streets in order to promote active travel on a trial basis?

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

Always keen to promote active travel. People have been very good at the moment when they pass each other in the street keeping a good social distance apart. However, in some of the narrower streets it is more difficult and people are forced to walk in the road to keep a safe distance from the person coming the other way. So something we are more than happy to look at with the Roads Committee on Parish roads.

**3.6.2 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

Does the Minister see hopefully the rapid end to this contagion, does he see us just returning to normal, as in the congestion and the problems that we have, or is this an opportunity that he is willing to grasp, to change the way in which we travel?

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

I think this was well ahead of itself, in the sense that we had the Sustainable Transport Policy to do that very thing. Nobody saw the coronavirus coming. It is one of those things. As I say, we are very keen to promote active travel.

**3.6.3 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

There has been a distinct change in mode of transport. Will he commit to add to the Sustainable Transport Policy to take on board these changes that have been made by individuals and try to encourage them into the future now that people are experiencing them?

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

Things have changed dramatically. Just a few months ago I was encouraging people not to use their cars but to get on the bus and now we are saying: "Please do not use the bus unless you have to." But as there is less traffic on the road we encourage people to get the bikes out of the bike shed,

make sure it is serviced properly and to use sustainable transport. More than happy to encourage that.

#### **3.6.4 The Connétable of St. Helier:**

The Minister appears to be suggesting that work has effectively stopped on practical schemes to reallocate road space towards walking and cycling. I understand how busy it is but does he not agree with me and with Deputy Ward that the current reduction in vehicle use provides an ideal opportunity to put in place traffic management schemes that will make walking and cycling practical alternatives for many journeys, including school trips, and the commute once the lockdown is over?

#### **Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

Indeed, more than happy to look at it on a road by road basis but we must keep the Island's arteries open, which are the roads, but there are some roads that are not completely necessary, and more than happy to look at that with the Parish.