

STATES OF JERSEY

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel Policing of Parks and Beaches Sub-Panel

THURSDAY, 25th NOVEMBER 2010

Panel:

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour (Chairman)
Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier

Witnesses:

Connétable M.K. Jackson of St. Brelade (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services)
Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour (Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services)
Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services
Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services
Assistant Recycling Officer, Transport and Technical Services.

Also Present:

Mrs. E. Liddiard (Scrutiny Officer)

[15:47]

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour (Chairman):

Good afternoon. Right, if we could start recording. Before I do that, in fact, has everyone here been before Scrutiny before? I do not know if this has been sent to you but just in case you have not seen it already, if you could just read the statement before you which basically says: "As long as you do not tell us anything that you know to be untrue, you are protected by privilege and therefore you cannot be prosecuted." Right, in which case, Rebecca, are we ready? Yes, okay. Welcome to this hearing of the sub-panel of the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel which is looking into the policing of parks and gardens. Before we begin, may I express the apologies of Deputies De Sousa and Montfort Tadier, unfortunately they are both ill today and so cannot be here. For the recording, I would ask you to introduce yourselves and I will begin. I am Chairman of the Panel, Deputy Jeremy Maçon of St. Saviour, hello.

Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier:

The Constable of St. Helier.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Constable Mike Jackson, the Minister for Transport and Technical Services.

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Deputy Kevin Lewis, Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services.

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:
Director of Municipal Services, T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services).

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:
Chief Officer of T.T.S.

Assistant Recycling Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:
Recycling Officer of T.T.S.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you for coming. We have our Scrutiny Officer here with us, Liz Liddiard, and Rebecca, who is doing the recordings for us today. Minister, if I may begin: is littering and the consumption of alcohol in public places seen as a problem by your department?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I am going to say in a word, no. On the whole we have very little problem with the policing of beaches and parks in litter terms, in that where we find that litter or debris is left on the beach the tide tends to clear most of it on the spring tides and, in the parks, the presence of the T.T.S. staff and the general goodwill of most of the people using the parks, most gets cleared away. Having said that, neap tides leads to some debris coming from the sea on the midway on the beach, broken off fishing gear, et cetera. In the parks, if you get an event in an evening, perhaps after-school exams or such like, there would be an increase in litter that is apparent at those points.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Then there is the consumption of alcohol as well.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

From our point of view, bearing in mind our staff tend to be there probably more during the working day than at night or we would pick up in the morning the detritus left by bottles, our feeling is that it is not the issue, from our point of view, that it might be a policing issue. I am not saying it is not an issue but I think in terms of clearing up we do not have the same concerns. Maybe you can ask Chris just to enlighten us on that because I think he is more in touch with the park keepers than I am.

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

Yes, the parks and gardens and the cleaning of beaches comes under my section and in terms of consumption of alcohol, but particularly for that, there are occasions where someone might sometimes after exams, where there are bottles and stuff left on the beach, but it is a relatively rare occurrence. Most people pick up and take away, if the truth be known, I mean we do have small occasions. In the parks, if there is a specific event, then we would have people on board or lined up to clear up after the event so it is not there and in these sorts of parks, open spaces, countryside areas, it is a small problem but it is really not something which we consider to be a general problem. In Jersey we support consumption. If we see that it is for the benefit of the Islanders to use the amenity spaces and the majority of people who might enjoy a

glass of wine or a beer on the beach or at the park, or whatever, normally act responsibly and take that away with them. We see it as a very small problem.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Is that not a littering problem, in terms of the amount of glass left around the town in particular, that there are a lot of people drinking the alcopops?

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

The town itself is particularly sort of dirty at 5.00 a.m. or 6.00 a.m. and the gangs go out and clear up and the majority of people do not realise what is cleared up. But that is cleared up in a relatively short amount of time by a relatively small amount of people. In terms of how you would prevent that happening, you would have to have a significant amount of policing out at night to prevent that. You are trying to stop anyone who is anywhere around the town who has got a drink or some fast food in their hand, to stop dropping it and I think it is very unlikely it will ever get to that. Reduction in publicity campaigns or more people out on the street will help but I do not think it will ever stop it.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think in all practicality, but I would be the last to condone littering or breaking glass in the town, but from a practical operational point of view if we have got crews going out first thing in the morning, whether they clear up a bit of broken glass or a chip paper, does not make a lot of difference. But, having said that, this is something I do not think we should condone and I think the route is down the educational side to try and encourage people not to do it. But on the other side of it of course is the cigarette ends scenario these days; because of the smoking ban you have got smoking debris outside most public houses and that is an issue which we have to overcome, possibly once again by education.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you. How does T.T.S. work with other key bodies such as the Economic Development Department, Home Affairs and the Police and the Honorary Police to address these issues?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, I suppose I can wear 2 hats to a certain extent in that with regard to activities on beaches, generally people will apply either to the parishes or to E.D. (Economic Development) for permission perhaps to have a barbecue or have an activity on the beach. But of course those are the bodies with whom we do not have any trouble, if they have taken the trouble to apply. We tend to, within my parish, respond to suggest: “Yes, fine, have your barbecue or party and make sure you clear up afterwards and leave the beach in the way in which you found it” and that is normally copied to Economic Development with whom we have a close relationship. Likewise, in terms of T.T.S., we have the responsibility for cleaning the beaches. That is worked in during the summer periods when they have their cleaning machines going through the summer period to prepare them for the summer tourists and also to empty the bins. Once again, in terms of the beach bins, there is a policy whereby, during the summer, larger bins are put in place and they are replaced by smaller ones during the winter with the object of preventing flight and that system generally works but it is open to adjustment here and there because it is dictated by need, really.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Can I ask about beach cleaning because quite a lot of our written representations were about the state of beaches: litter not only dropped by thoughtless beach users but brought in by the tide? Is the C.S.R. (Comprehensive Spending Review) process going to make it more difficult for you to provide ... what beach-cleaning service do you currently provide and is that going to be a threat in the future by the Comprehensive Spending Review?

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

The beach cleaning change is all to do with the seasons. In the summer months we have a sort of 12-week 7-day-a-week intensive beach cleaning and that includes the emptying of the bins, going down to the beach and clearing any sort of visible litter. Also we have what is called a surf rake which is basically a very small machine; it is like a little tractor and it has got a spinning bar on the back which has got tynes on it which picks up little cigarette ends and bits of paper and it almost manicures the top of the beach. We have only got one of those and it goes around what we consider to be the priority beaches. During the summer months for 12 weeks we do that. If we are getting to the end of that 12-week period and it looks like it is still warm we will do an extra week or 2 and that generally works in the summer. Outside of that period, we do not go on to the beach, as such, unless there is a specific callout or something. So during the winter months and outside of that 12-week period the beaches are generally left to themselves unless there is a report of problems. In terms of seaweed, again, we have been fairly lucky over the last few years that we have not had a huge amount of seaweed come in. I mean, that is completely out of our control. The mechanism for that is we collect it from the high water and the high part of the beach and we just cart it down to low water and let the tide deal with it. As I say, we have been fairly lucky, we have not had a huge amount of that coming in recently, so the ...

The Connétable of St. Helier:

That is not classified as litter either because it is outside our remit.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think you almost have to differentiate between sea lettuce in St. Aubin's Bay and weed generally in the other bays because sea lettuce can be a problem, certainly when it mounds up and if you get a neap tide it all gets a bit whiffy. Whereas normal seaweed on a beach, normal wrap on a beach, really is part of the beach and cannot be classified as litter but I know there are those who expect that to be cleared up as well. In terms of C.S.R. (Comprehensive Spending Review) I do not think it warrants spending money on clearing it up.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

I am just interested because at the start your suggestion was that it may be cheaper and more cost-effective to deal with the litter after it has been dropped, say early morning, rather than spending a lot of money on the policing of late-night litterers. But if the C.S.R. process means that your staffing levels are going to be cut in future, that could obviously have an impact on the amount of litter across the Island.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes. If the police do their job effectively there will not be, shall we say, the littering behaviour, or the loutish behaviour, which tends to result in littering and we would be very pleased about that because, clearly, if we can reduce the number of teams that are on the road, so much the better. But in all practicality, I think the public expect the streets to be cleaner in the morning and there is a detritus which appears on the road throughout the day and it is not just about glass very often, is it, or drinking?

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

Just in answer to your question, Simon, we are not making any reductions to any of those teams as part of the C.S.R.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

Just to clarify, I think in terms of the best value for money it is prevention, so it is not the policing; it is before that to do education, which Emma organises with the recycling hat on, with schools. So I think the earlier you get particular children to make sure their behaviour is about being a decent citizen, this is part of that, and respect for others. So the more we can promote that the more effective that will be long term.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

That is quite a helpful thought because if people see litter as a resource rather than as something to throw away, then they are more likely to put it somewhere responsibly.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

It has more value, yes.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Can I just ask then, what does the department do with regards to the promotion of public awareness about the regulations: about (a) littering and (b) anti-social behaviour in parks, as we have jumped to promotional work?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Perhaps we can ask Emma to answer about the programme she is undertaking.

Assistant Recycling Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

Yes, that, as John has just pointed out, has more of an education focus.

[16:00]

We are working with children as young as nursery age to encourage citizenship and empowerment so that those are the values that they should continue through the education process with and that should lead them to not be dropping litter as they go into adulthood. Our public awareness campaigns are focused on those values and then focused on, as the Constable has just pointed out, seeing waste as a resource in regard to recycling and in regard to the environmental benefits. So metal can be recycled again and again and the energy that is saved and the resources that are required.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

So just to check, the department does see itself as having a role with promotion of raising the public awareness around, in particular, materials, but if I could specifically ask about the regulations of littering.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well that goes back to a policing matter which is a rather more challenging thing to put into practice. I think records will suggest there have probably been very few charges on it, if any.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Today we had a representative from the police and from the Honorary Police and the police confirmed to us that there have been no prosecutions in the last 2 years from their end and the Honorary Police commented that, though there may have been some at parish hall inquiries, it certainly was not a prevalent thing that they did.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think if I can wear that hat for a moment. In practice, getting a charge is the difficult part because if one is going to make a charge, they have to make it stick at the Magistrates Court which means providing sufficient proof and that is quite a challenge. I think unless one catches someone red-handed, I would find it difficult to prove that charge and I am sure the Magistrate would have the same problem. So, how much resource can we put on the policing side or how much resource do we put on the Education side and I think my money would go on the Education side every time.

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Also with regards to prosecutions, if it is dealt at parish hall level it does not get the media coverage that a Magistrates Court would have, so there is no deterrent value there.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Again, in our terms of reference, Minister, you would notice, we are specifically looking at the promotional aspects to try and prevent such behaviours and the point I want to make is, does it best fit with the partnership between the police, T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) and Education to promote behaviours as well as the legislation behind it, or does it sit perhaps just with Education or just with T.T.S. or ...?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think it has to be a partnership arrangement. You may have done research. There is a suggestion that Singapore was very hot on this sort of thing and it may be worth looking at these sorts of areas to see how they deal with it. There are laws in place, I do not think there is any question about that, which one can use in terms of littering and ... what is it? There is certainly ...

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

It is policing the parks, policing the beaches but I think the point to make is it is not T.T.S.'s role in terms of policing. If, for example, someone drops litter in the park or on the beach, T.T.S. has to call a Centenier and we are unable to do anything about that to challenge that person. So we would have to call a Centenier, he would have to

come down, he would have to decide what action he was going to take. Our staff cannot hold on to the person, and they are advised not to, as well. So from T.T.S.'s point of view, we do not do the policing. You are at the point where perhaps one of our guys would see someone dropping litter, they would call the Centenier down and he would come down. If he can find the guy and catch him, he would then have to decide whether he is going to take him to a parish hall inquiry. He would have to, as the Constable said, demonstrate a burden of proof that he had done it to enable it to be taken forward to the court to be charged, and that is a very difficult chain of events that enacts that.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

The P.C.O.s (Parking Control Officers) that come under you, you have P.C.O.s on the streets dealing with parking issues, is there not scope for widening their brief so that they could also look at litter?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes, although they are not policemen or sworn in as such, so they are limited to purely fines, but might they do that? Certainly.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

They have cameras as well, which is handy.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Oh, indeed, yes. Just going back to the policing side, I do recall an incident last year in terms of working with E.D. (Education Department), if you like, from a policing point of view. I know my Honorary Police have had occasions to go down to the beach and disband unruly gatherings, if you can call it that. So if you get a massive party on the beach, they can be quite disruptive; some you will get loud music and all the rest of it. You know full well that there is going to be littering coming out of that, so if they do not have prior permission they will disband those parties certainly and take action if necessary. I know there were instances where youngsters were inebriated and they had to be carted off to hospital, so that would certainly be on record.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Would you support your civil staff, like the park keepers and the P.C.O.s, having greater powers to deal with these sorts of things we are looking at?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Or do you feel that the legislation is sufficient?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It is not working at the moment, I think. There is no point in having legislation if you cannot apply it, so clearly there is room for improvement. I am not sure in park-keeper terms what the situation in other countries is with regard to powers. I suppose it is not inconceivable that a park keeper could have a role within the park or have powers to keep order. I am sure that is probably the case in other places.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Yes, I thought they did have that.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

I think there is a danger, depending on the type of person. I think a P.C.O. is possibly a better avenue for that because they are used to dealing with the public in more challenging issues than a park keeper generally does, although some of them are very good at dealing with the public and some of the behavioural problems we have. It is a difficult move to move to that sort of regulatory and policing position.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

One of the things that has come out of the interviews for the hearings we have done is that there is a problem with staffing levels, particularly in the police, who are dealing with higher-priority crimes. We need to really find some appropriate bodies to enforce the existing laws perhaps and the P.C.O.s seem to me to be ... they are in the streets, they are often in pairs, they carry cameras.

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

If you take the P.C.O.s, they are on duty in town during the day and that is not when most of the littering happens. Mainly people do not drop litter when other people are around, generally. In terms of park keepers, we only have 3, and they are mobile between only our formal parks. Now, that is a very small percentage of the areas we look after and the park keepers are there to manage the park and they generally keep their parks tidy; if they see someone they will tell them to pick it up. It is catching someone doing it. You can normally embarrass people into picking something up or not doing something wrong if they are there, but it is when people are not there: the early mornings, the late at nights.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

But there is quite a lot of litter being dropped, particularly in town, but not just in town (so our submissions tell us) by youngsters who are coming out of school. They go to the shop and they leave a trail of wrappers with them. Where Emma's department has not reached them yet, and they still do not regard it as a resource, they just throw it on the ground. I am sorry to harp on about P.C.O.s, but how many do you have? Quite a lot? Twenty or so?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think 17, I seem to recall.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

At the moment, presumably a P.C.O. seeing a child or anyone throwing litter on the ground will not say anything.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

There is a community support officer model then, like in London. It is something we have started to review for actual defects on vehicles as potentially another option, again, because of the issues with policing so that a P.C.O. could have it as part of his remit to look at bald tyres, dangerous vehicles and have an action there. People using mobile phones is another example. So it is something we are looking into but there are a lot of steps to get to move on to that, but it is something we would like to look at.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think it links in, going to the school approach side, and I am aware of issues there as I am a member of the Stop the Drop group, because they have been focusing on that. One wonders whether the lollipop ladies, for want of a better word, or lollipop men, can be brought into that. But it goes back to the education in schools which I think is quite fundamental so that there is a mindset against dropping litter from the first instance, so you just learn that you do not do it. There seems to be that link missing at the moment. Just going back to our own terms, we have a trailer which goes round which can be used as a recycling trailer that is generally towards these sorts of things and it was up at the Ideal Homes Exhibition. Where are you going next?

Assistant Recycling Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

We are now taking bookings for the next term for schools and we spend quite a lot of time going to schools, both primary and secondary, community groups which target children, also outside of the school environment, so Brownies, Cubs and youth centres, things like that. Where the Constable has pointed out there is potentially a problem with secondary-school students particularly, and I would agree with that, I think nationally that is a hard-to-reach group, particularly with litter, as they may see it as a form of minor rebellion. There are a number of reasons that they could drop litter and it is quite complicated. The Keep Britain Tidy national campaign has done quite a lot of research into this and still does not have any answers, although they have fantastic resources that we can obtain posters and activity kits, things like that, which we can adopt locally. What does help us as a working group with our departments, Education and Planning and Environment, we are now pushing schools to become eco schools which is a worldwide accreditation scheme. More and more schools are joining every month and that gives us extra access into schools and particularly litter is one of the doorways, as they call it. It is one of their focus points so we can use that to our advantage going forward and to do more targeted workshops with the Key Stage 3 group which is where I think we are struggling in regard to getting those messages on citizenship across. It is quite easy working with lower age groups and we have been doing that for a number of years. So I think in time we will see the results of that but there is an opportunity for us to use fairly immediately.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

If I can just go back to the question that I asked regarding anti-social behaviour in parks, does the department see it as a problem specifically in conjunction with the consumption of alcohol?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I suspect it is linked. I do not think there is much doubt about that. Yes, I think I can speak for the Winston Churchill Park at exam time. There have been issues there where the departments have to pick up the tab and tidy it all up; plants pulled out and all the rest of it. It is very disappointing for others that use the park in a proper way. You get things flung in the various water features and inevitably ... I do not know, Chris, are you aware of other issues?

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

In answer to the question, I would say we do not see it as a ... it is a minor problem. While some of the parks are not locked up, people do come into them, but generally there is not a massive problem. Mike described there the last few years you have had

problems in St. Brelade. Everyone seems to head down to the beach at the end of G.C.S.E.s (General Certificate of Secondary Education) and A Levels but that sort of passes. It is a minor problem compared to ... we do not have people hanging around there all the time. It is once a month, maybe once every 6 weeks, you might find a few bottles around or something, so we do not see it as a huge problem at all.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Although it is interesting that in a public submission with regards to People's Park they allege there is a significant amount of time people who do consume alcohol hanging around in People's Park. I do not know ...

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

That is one of Simon's parks; not one of ours.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Touché.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Shall I answer that one?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

One of the things we are doing with the Town Park is to provide a lovelier vehicle - with the Friends of the Park - to get the local people to buy into the ownership of the park. It is something I think as a department we would like to roll through all our parks. I think Kevin borders on one of our parks and he could be a key stakeholder.

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Practically in it.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

So there is a bit more ownership and more understanding which, perhaps again, if there is a small group of children or teenagers causing problem, it can be solved locally as opposed to with legislation and laws which are not really fit for purpose.

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Obviously, Howard Davis being a warden park, it is not a big problem at all but, as has been said, after exams you do get a few youngsters there trying to sneak into bushes with a few cans of beer and such like and a few plants are pulled up, but the gardeners and keepers clear it very quickly. It is not a big problem.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Moving on to our next question, then. There is discussion about the early hours of Saturday or Sunday morning after the pubs and clubs have closed and the streets are filled with beer, polystyrene chip containers, et cetera.

[16:15]

Have you thought about introducing a levy on those who bring packaging into the Island?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Not an easy one. From the point of view of polystyrene tubs that tend to appear around takeaway outlets, I think it is incumbent on the operators to clear up and, I am not sure about Simon, but certainly within St. Brelade I have encouraged the takeaways to do that and it seems to have worked. It is probably more difficult in town; we have so many of them.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

They tend to buy their food and then walk home which a lot of ...

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Hence the trail.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

You cannot really expect the proprietor to guard all spokes of the wheel; to pick up all their containers. Even if you identified the containers it would be particularly onerous on the proprietor of a takeaway, would it not, to be out there at 4.00 a.m. hunting down all the packets?

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

People like McDonald's, I think, are moving away from polystyrene now. I think they are using cardboard because it is more friendly. I think they have their own ...

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Yes, the environmental aspect of polystyrene is once they get destroyed by vehicles, pellets fly everywhere, do they not?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Perhaps they ought to go back to newspaper and fish and chips, it might be more ...

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

I preferred that.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Of course, our related question is around the bottle bill in the U.K. (United Kingdom) which has not come here yet but there is this notion that since we gave up deposits on bottles and the value in cans ... I know in Scandinavia you can post your things into a machine and it chucks out vouchers for the supermarket, do you think there is any mileage over here in those kinds of initiatives?

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I did look into that machine quite a while ago. It looks a little bit like a one-arm bandit where you can put an old cola can in, pull the lever, it compresses it and you usually get money coming out or a voucher for something. It is something that is ongoing; I am still researching that.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

One could consider bottle banks around the town but the difficulty is they are noisy. It would be a good idea from the point of view of cleaning up - there would be somewhere for them to put their litter - but having said that there are bins and they

will not use those. But bottle banks are noisy things, especially when you have a residential area.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Yes. On the subject of bins, do you think there are too few bins around the town in particular? I am often told there are too few bins and that is why people drop the litter.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well you have had discussions, Chris, what are your ...?

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

I think, if anything, we have reduced the number of bins over the years, not just in town but around areas. If people are going to use the bin, they use it, is the reality. The thing is, what you need to do is make sure the bins are emptied, they are not overflowing and then people will use them. I think the simple answer to the question is: I think they are sufficient.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

For example, there are not any litter bins in Gloucester Street and I understood from my staff that there is far less litter in Gloucester Street since the bins were removed.

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

I think the person who is going to not drop it will put it in their bag until they see a bin or they will hold on to it. The person who is going to drop it will drop it if there are 2 bins, 3 bins or 4 bins.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

If there is a bin anyway, yes.

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

I think it goes right back to the education issue.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Yes. What about recycling bins, because we are getting contrary views. Cardiff, for example, all their bins have the plastic bottle, the paper and the general litter option but I am hearing that a lot of councils are giving up on them because people cannot be bothered to separate their litter when they are in town.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

We have a suite of bins for events and what is remarkable is how people do not differentiate between a bin that is for recycled products and a bin that is a normal bin. Having physically sorted this out myself on a few occasions, I just cannot believe people do not understand if it says: "Drinks cans only" why you would put a piece of pizza in there but people do it. It is very odd.

Assistant Recycling Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

Extremely frustrating.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

It is.

Assistant Recycling Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

I think with the way we are focusing on our recycling strategy, we have done quite a lot with householders, we are doing some work with businesses, we are doing quite a lot of work with events organisers in conjunction with Tourism. I think there is a gap what we call “on the go” recycling. You know, you can recycle at home, maybe you can recycle at work but walking downtown with a can of drink, you could not recycle that easily. But I think where we are looking is there are still waste streams and tonnages that we can improve on. Whether we would see those increases in tonnages and therefore our recycling rate by putting recycling bins through the town precinct, there are probably other things that we could do to improve our recycling rates on-Island more. But it is certainly something that is on the radar - a noticeable gap in lifestyle recycling - and it is something we will continue to look at in conjunction with your staff as well.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

Also in the airport, in the harbour terminal, in Liberation Station, those are the places you would start off with it to try and prove concept and then you would go out on the street. But I assume in St. Helier with some of the more urban and more high-density populated areas it might be a preferable solution to some of the kerbside when that rolls out which I have certainly seen in Westminster. So, it is about education again, is it not? It always comes back to that, really.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Just to get an answer, has the department thought about introducing a levy on packaging?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

Can Emma answer this one?

Assistant Recycling Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

To answer that in a word: no. To expand on that is continually we are looking at it because it is something that potentially we could raise initial resources to support other initiatives; perhaps education, public-awareness raising. There are already these initiatives in other parts of the world, noticeably the Courtauld agreement in England which the Waste Resources Action Programme is supporting. Although it is optional, you have big players that have signed up to that that operate on the Island, such as the Co-operative Group, Marks and Spencer, Waitrose, which ought to be a bit interesting in the future months and that is already operating. So having something additional on the Island when we already have those companies agreeing to those benchmarks is one issue and also the administration of the scheme on a local level would be another. What we are more focusing on is we have our Eco-active Business Scheme that the Planning and Environment administer and we can try and use things like the Courtauld agreement’s best practice and get other groups which operate just on the local areas, such as Sandpiper, to use those as benchmarks and best practice for the Island.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

What about a specific levy on something like gum which is such a nuisance and is clearly costing the public to remove? Is there not a good case for putting a levy on chewing gum?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

That would be easier to administer.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

To stick, yes.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I suppose it would have to be done through Customs probably because it would have to be charged on import. It is the only way I could see that it could work.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

As an import duty.

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I thought many years ago Wrigley's were working on a non-stick gum but I do not think much has come of it yet.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

I know it has been done elsewhere and places have either banned it or they have put ...

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

As you quite rightly point out there is a huge cost for yourselves and ourselves to clean it up and it is unsightly.

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It tends to dry black in terms of concrete which is a bit of a nuisance.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Do you support that if we were to put ...?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

It would not be a huge amount because it would only be a penny or so on a packet of gum but it would ...

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I do not know how much is sold in the course of a year. It would be interesting to know that.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

What are the most offending items that have been cleaned up in parks, even if it is a minor problem?

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Whose question was that?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:
Deputy Tadier, I believe.

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:
The most offending item is the dogs' mess, I think, by far. If you take parks as a sort of broad description as open spaces and not just the formal parks, the majority of dog owners, certainly in the last 10 years, have improved and a lot of them do pick up after themselves but there are some who do not. The beaches are not too bad; you have the tide coming in and out but if you are wandering around in any spaces ... some of the open spaces like Portelet, Noirmont and Grosnez; they are probably the worst, I would say. But we provide dog mess bins but if people do not clean up after their dogs and put it in, there is very little we can do about it, unfortunately.

The Connétable of St. Helier:
You do not provide the bags that you see in many European parks for people to ...? Would that ...?

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:
No, they sell them in all the ...

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:
They are very cheap, to be quite honest, in relative terms.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:
Nappy sacks.

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:
Yes. I use nappy bags when I have run out. I have a small West Highland terrier. I have to say, dog mess is a personal hatred of mine. I think it is very unfair for people in wheelchairs, wheelchair users, even people who are blind and partially sighted; they tread it in their house. It is a personal hatred of mine.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:
There is a debate over dog waste bins but in practice if you talk to the guys in the Municipal Services they do not really mind where it goes because it all goes in the same place, so whether it is a specific dog bin or not, it does not matter.

The Connétable of St. Helier:
But it may raise awareness, I suppose, if ...

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:
Yes, I think there is a psychology to it. Whether the resource in putting out the bins, as you say, you see it in France with the bag, would not be inconsiderable. I think one would need to factor that in before you went down that route but there has not been a public demand so far but it is something we could consider.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

From our public submissions, some have suggested perhaps having designated areas or beaches for dogs. Has the department considered this option?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes. I know that Deputy Le Claire was about to make a proposition to that effect. I do not think I can really support it. It just concentrates it all. Someone has to clear it up and I do not think ...

The Connétable of St. Helier:

That was more for dog toilets though. I think the submissions have been a suggestion that some of our beaches should be completely dog free.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

You have that as well.

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

I think the issue of policing would come into it again. You would have to have someone down there permanently to make sure ... people walk their dogs fairly early and very late at night. To make them dog free, you need to police it. Very, very difficult.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Really, in practice it is not an issue on the beaches when the tide is washing it twice a day. The public areas are more of an issue, I would suggest.

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

Yes. Cliff paths are problematic as well. The formal parks are generally okay. You are not supposed to take your dogs in there and yet the gardeners and the park keepers will chase people away. It is where there is no one, you are out there on your own and you are walking your dog and you ...

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

In Jersey we probably have more responsible dog owners as a percentage than any other place I have certainly lived in terms of the normal is to pick up your dog mess, and that is a brilliant situation which we have to keep promoting. I think there is a minority, as there is in any society, in terms of any behaviours. But the majority of people do it and do the right thing so, again, I do not think it is the issue that ... it is worth a trip to other places to see. France is probably the most ... you cannot walk on a cow's pat in France.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

You highlighted how you have noticed that there has been a change over 10 years. It is interesting how previously one of our witnesses said something to the same effect; I noticed that time period. What has changed in order to cause that change, if that makes any sense? What do you think has caused the change in that behaviour? Is it greater awareness, is it ...?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think it is awareness. Clearly, someone's dog fouls and it is spotted by another member of the public, that is enough of a deterrent, and people do not like to be the

guilty party. I think the worst times are probably early in the mornings, as Chris says, or in the evenings when there are not too many people about. But generally speaking because of previous public awareness campaigns, the message has obviously got through and that has resulted in an improvement.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Do you think that there is a certain peer pressure element to it as well?

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

Certainly, yes.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Highlighting what you just said how someone will turn around and point something out regarding dog mess or something, do you think that that extends to, say, littering behaviour or do you think that is something perhaps we have to work on?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It is a bit of a challenge for someone to challenge someone else because they are likely to get a mouthful of abusive language very often, especially with ... unfortunately, it tends to happen so people are reluctant to. There are always of course some that will. If they are prepared to stand up to be challenged or take what comes, then good for them.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Some of our visitors have said that there should be more signage to tell people not to drop litter. Do you think that is necessary? Do you think people really do not realise it is wrong to drop your cigarette ends and ...?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

We live in a beautiful Island, do we not? You do not need signs to tell people we live in a beautiful Island.

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

The thing with signs is people stop seeing them after a while. They become just part of the background and the reality is that if you are going to drop litter, you will drop it whether there is a sign or there is a bin.

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

If you have that mindset, like the old signs we used to have, which we still do: "Leave nothing but your footprints on our beaches" it says it all.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I do not think the Women's Institute would be very happy about them ...

The Connétable of St. Helier:

That is true.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

To turn to the legislation, do you feel that the current legislation is satisfactory? Where do you think it is particularly strong and where perhaps are the improvements that need to be made?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Probably in the linkage from sighting an infraction to prosecution; that is where it is broken.

[16:30]

If there were to be a more satisfactory linkage there and one could prosecute, I think it would have quite a dramatic effect. But I am not sure what the answer is. Although I am sure, as I have just thought of that as well, something would have been done by now. I think one has to look to other jurisdictions to see how it is done. There must be ways of dealing with it.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Do you think it would be unreasonable or heavy-handed to prosecute someone for dropping a litter, for example, if they are caught on a C.C.T.V. (closed circuit television) outside a pub and they throw their cigarette out? There must be plenty of evidence of people doing this so it is not lack of evidence. We know the offences are being committed.

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

If you look at high-profile prosecutions in the paper and what not, it might have the desired effect. Focus people's minds a bit.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Would the public see that as unreasonable or would they be generally supportive?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

It is a difficult one, is it not?

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

I think the majority of people would see it as the right thing to do.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

Also you have to have the right category of C.C.T.V. to be used in evidence, so it is not quite as simple as that. Probably the street C.C.T.V. will be acceptable for police use.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

The legislation is in place but it is getting the policing to catch someone and then to use the legislation.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

At the moment with the legislation we have the cameras in place, we have a number of different authorities with albeit strained circumstances, but there are the officers to carry it out so it is just curious to know why this has not happened.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

We have had quite different issues at Bellozanne, for example, with our chemical waste receiving area where people, when it is locked, have just dumped stuff there. Very inappropriate behaviour and behaviour which then puts the general public at risk if the containers are not dealt with properly. We have had that on C.C.T.V. The problem we have had in terms of taking prosecution to that was that basically C.C.T.V. was not of the standard which could be used as evidence. I personally would have thought it would have been very beneficial to put that picture in the *J.E.P.* (*Jersey Evening Post*), for example, and it showed that this behaviour was not tolerated and was not acceptable in our modern society.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

So do you think the issue is around enforcement?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

I think it is more about social behaviour, is it not? I think once you get into enforcement you would then be coming to a legal process which then costs you a lot of money, a lot of time and a lot of resource when it is more about the social and citizenship elements of what they are doing, not the actual offence. So it is getting the measure right, I think.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

If you took the issue perhaps of a Centenier having to take somebody to court for dropping an item of litter, the time involved and the process is very, very onerous and maybe that is an area where an on-the-spot fine should be considered; something terribly simple to be achieved.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Well, funnily enough, we are coming to that. We want to ask you, has the department considered on-the-spot fines or have you had discussions with other agencies regarding on-the-spot fines?

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Because you effectively do that with parking, do you not, in car parks? Excess charge notices to be paid quickly.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Quite frankly, no, because we have not been involved in the policing side but I think it is something that should be explored, possibly. But, once again, if any of our staff would be in a position to do that, and maybe it is the P.C.O.s, then it is an area to consider.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

But you have all the infrastructure to issue an excess charge notice in a car park through a P.C.O., do you not? It would just be a matter of it relating to a dog-fouling incident or a litter-dropping incident instead?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Getting an individual to cough up there and then is not so easy as a car. A car you have a number plate and it is easier to deal with.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Yes, that is true.

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

P.C.O.s are only at St. Helier generally, as well.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

One of the submissions talks about cigarettes being thrown out of car windows and that is a classic example of where you do have ... I suppose, you have the car; you do not necessarily have the culprit but the same argument can be applied to a parking offence, so it is not inconceivable that that could be worked up into some kind of ...

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

You do get a phone call from a member of the public saying they have just watched somebody throw a cigarette out of a car window, and what is the process after that? There is not really a satisfactory process and it is something that maybe the panel would like to work on.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Yes.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Moving on now, from some of the public submissions some have suggested and encouraged perhaps a ban on alcohol in public places such as parks and beaches. What would the department's opinion of that be?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think Chris mentioned earlier on we do not really have a firm opinion. Clearly, while we do not condone drunkenness in the parks, or excessive alcohol consumption, there is nothing wrong with somebody going and having a picnic and a bottle of wine. It is a shame one has to tar everyone with the same brush and take disproportionate reaction. People do come to the park and that is what it is all about and we do not want to discourage that. So, while on that one hand we would like to discourage excessive alcohol consumption, we do not really want to discourage people coming to the parks.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

So do you think that the wording of the Policing of Parks Regulation 3(1)(a): "A person must not indulge in any behaviour in a park that unreasonably interferes with the comfortable convenience of other users of the park, or causes them annoyance or interferes with their enjoyment of the park" is that perhaps the best way ...?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Absolutely. It has been well thought out that.

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

As you probably know, Howard Davis Park has been promoted by Tourism quite a bit with the bandstand there; had Status Quo and a few other people there and the drink sales obviously help with the revenue, et cetera. But regarding refuse, extra eurobins

were put in place to cope with that. At the bottom end of that, if you like, doing my own film festival, people will turn up with a bottle of wine, et cetera but I think where it is, it is within reason.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

The Beer Festival would have to move as well, would it not?

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

You can get one-off licences, of course, for that but certainly there has not been a lot of support for the idea of an alcohol ban, even though it is accepted that in certain parts, particularly Parade Gardens where there is a kind of a group of street drinkers, that it can be a serious deterrent to people from going into the gardens.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I suppose there are probably some areas where you could, such as Parade Gardens, but less extensive parks where people probably do not tend to picnic. It is probably more of a “sit on the bench and have a sandwich” type park. That might be worth considering.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

One of the submissions talks about possibly extending the Parks legislation to the pavement outside the park for the simple reason that while you may not be able to do something in a park, you might be able to do it on the pavement.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

You are into the Policing of Roads legislation, which is pretty similar. In fact, it might be even more onerous. You cannot drop anything on the pavement, so I think that is probably covered very ...

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay. No, that is fine. Thank you. Then moving on now, how much money does T.T.S. have to spend in delivering the service with regards to cleaning up litter in parks and beaches?

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

I do not have the specific breakdown of that now. In fact I think Kevin mentioned our cleaning gangs all clean generally so we do not have the breakdowns to the individual beaches, bins or whatever. But I can certainly provide what breakdown we do have to yourselves.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

We all know there has been rationalisation of street-cleaning services with parish employees. Do you think there is scope for a further rationalisation of services in the Island or ...?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Absolutely. Yes, we have done it in St. Brelade as well and where we have different authorities cleaning similar areas, there must be synergies and I think you are silly not to take advantage of it and normally that is developed.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Although, I suppose there is a potential risk that service provision will be transferred from the taxpayer to the ratepayer which in a way has happened in St. Helier because you can hear the evening street-cleaning gangs are out and we now have quite a lot more deployed later in the evening which, of course, ratepayers are paying for rather than taxpayers.

The Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

With the transferring of that, obviously T.T.S. took care of things outside of the ring road for St. Helier but I think ...

The Connétable of St. Helier:

But there was an overall increase in the staffing required from the parish side to carry that out. I am not saying that is necessarily a bad thing but I suppose we have to be aware of it.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

But it may be a result of changing social behaviour. Obviously you have a strong evening culture, a night culture, in town and it seems sensible to shift the workforce probably from the morning to the evening. I do not know if that is the case but that is dictated by that sort of thing and I suppose you have to move with the times. Just to keep them 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. or 8.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. it is probably not going to fit in with social behaviour.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

They have to start early of course to get to all the chip packets we were talking about earlier.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

Just on the price of T.T.S. transferring the town cleaning to yourselves, we had a cut of nearly £300,000 in the 2004 Fundamental Spending Review which took the level of service down. That was accepted by the politicians at the time as an acceptable cut and that level stayed as it was now. Since it has transferred back to you and you have increased those levels, then you are probably getting back up to the levels prior to those cuts in the town areas, in truth.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Yes, sure.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

In our discussions with the Minister for Home Affairs and the police, there was much discussion over possibly the encouragement of the third sector, of the voluntary sector, in schemes and initiatives such as: "This is my street; This is my park" et

cetera and so forth and mention was made of the Conservative Big Society idea where people have a role within that. Does the department have any opinion on such initiatives?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think they are always to be encouraged but I am going to qualify it a little bit in that these efforts tend to be spasmodic, whereas we have people out each and every day - perhaps not Sunday sometimes - but in practice it is an ongoing problem. Yes, we have the regular beach cleans. There is a little bit more motive to it, because a lot of institutions have an obligation to do something socially, do something environmentally. I think they find it an acceptable thing to do and we would not want to discourage that and we will put on extra bins and help them along with it. But the day-to-day stuff still has to be done: the bin emptying and so on. There is a limit to what you can expect the third sector to undertake. But in terms of adopting a road, that is a good idea if it enhances a pride of ownership, which can only be to the good, I think.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Department:

Just to finish on that, the Conservative's view of the Big Society I think is Jersey is already there and probably way ahead of what the U.K. could ever try and muster in terms of a big society, whereas people care about politics here, they care about the environment here and they care about the place we live. That is what they are trying to strive for in Britain and we have it here. So, I think you can take it steps further with Friends of Parks groups and adopting roads but they are a long way behind us in that sort of social responsibility.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Is there not a concern that it is a way for the Government to perhaps pass on its responsibilities if it manages to get in volunteers when in fact people are being taxed in order to make sure that a service is provided?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, yes, you could do it that way but I do not think so because of my original comment. It is not a day-to-day thing; it is spasmodic. You cannot expect volunteers to just turn up every day and do that job. It is just not going to happen. But they have the advantage of putting effort in and pointing communities in the direction of awards which both St. Helier and certainly St. Brelade has been successful at. I think that helps, as I have indicated, for developing a pride in your community and that is self-perpetuating to a large extent. Because if people have pride, you will not find people dropping glass and litter around there because they will have a great sense of guilt. The public will tend to police it far more because that whole community has pride in its surroundings.

Director of Municipal Services, Transport and Technical Services Department:

If I could just put that into context to give you an idea as to how many volunteer groups come to us. In the summer you might get 5 or 6 offering to do beach cleans, something like that, and that will be for a weekend or a day. We have not had any volunteers to street clean, that I can think of, or pick up dog mess or empty bins, but you do get a couple of ... some of the finance institutions will go and clear some of the open commons and the area. I think what Mike said, it is very spasmodic and the

reality of that taking over anything which we do day by day is never going to happen, I think.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you. Simon, is there anything you ...?

The Connétable of St. Helier:

No.

[16:45]

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

One question about cigarettes in, say, business doorways and things. I appreciate that that is going to be a mixture between the parish and T.T.S. to clear that up, does the department feel that there should be more of an onus on perhaps a business or a property owner with regards to making sure that perhaps cigarette butts are cleaned up?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes. In a way, we could never do it 100 per cent. I am not sure what Simon does but certainly in St. Brelade where we have shows with deck areas or al fresco areas, one of the conditions of the parish granting the licence is for the owners to keep the area clear. We do push that quite hard and it works, so it is the pubs generally that are the problem. But having said that you cannot control the bits of street in between. You cannot expect those businesses to be sweeping up the street outside their particular area, but at least they can contribute to the whole effort, which I think is important. I do not think there is anything wrong with encouraging officers or those places of business where you see people hanging around outside to do the same.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you. We have come to the end of the questions that we have. Do you feel that there is perhaps anything which we have the wrong end of the stick of? Perhaps you have not emphasised ...

[16:47]