

STATES OF JERSEY

Environment Scrutiny Panel Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Transport and Technical Services

MONDAY, 16th JULY 2012

Panel:

Deputy J.H. Young of St. Brelade (Chairman)
Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin (Vice Chairman)
Connétable P.J. Rondel of St. John

Witness:

Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour (Minister for Transport and Technical Services)
Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré of St. Lawrence (Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services)
Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services
Senior Operations Manager, Waste Water Treatment
Acting Finance Director, Transport and Technical Services
Director of Transport

Also present:

Scrutiny Officer

[14:01]

Deputy J.H. Young of St. Brelade (Chairman):

Ladies and gentlemen, everybody, thank you very much for attending this afternoon's Scrutiny session, our second quarterly public hearing with the Minister for Transport and Technical Services and his team. I will just introduce myself for the record, Deputy John Young, Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin (Vice Chairman)

Vice Chairman, Steve Luce, Deputy for St. Martin.

Connétable P.J. Rondel of St. John:

Constable of St. John, Phil Rondel.

Deputy J.H. Young:

If you could introduce yourself, Kevin, and then your team.

Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Deputy Kevin Lewis, Minister for Transport and Technical Services.

Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Deputy John Le Fondré, Assistant Minister, T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services).

Senior Operations Manager:

Senior Operations Manager.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Chief Officer for Transport and Technical Services.

Acting Finance Director, Transport and Technical Services:

Finance Director, Acting, T.T.S.

Director of Transport:

Director of Transport.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you very much, Minister, for coming along and bringing your team. We have prepared an agenda for the meeting, which we did issue in a public statement. I hope you have all got copies of that. We originally set aside 2 and a half hours for the meeting, but we did hear your request to try and shorten it. So, we will try and finish by 4.00 p.m., if that is acceptable to you.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Excellent. Thank you, Chairman.

Deputy J.H. Young:

The Connétable has to go to a royal visit meeting at 3.45 p.m. So, if we are carrying on then the Connétable will be leaving us. If I might go straight into the first item, which is liquid waste, what I really mean is the infrastructure and plant for liquid waste. I wonder, Minister, if you could introduce this, telling us a little bit, in summary, about that, what is working well and how old is the plant, before we lead into the more detailed part.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Thank you, Chairman. My department has carried out a comprehensive investigation into the requirements for liquid waste conveying and treatment for the next 20 years. An assessment of our liquid waste assets has been carried out together with a review of the legislative requirements and predicted population growth. The existing system has worked well over the years, but many of the assets are now 50 years old and require replacement. The main plant and equipment which needs replacing is the sewerage treatment works at Bellozanne. As you have seen, the plant, although still working well, is showing its age and we need to plan now for the future provision of liquid waste in order to maintain the effluent quality and protect our coastal receiving waters.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you, Minister. I wonder if you or one of your team could just elaborate on the elements of the plant that need replacement, or is it correct that all of the whole plant needs replacement, in the longer run of course.

Senior Operations Manager:

Effectively the plant was first built in 1959 and it has been extended over the years. But it is now in the position where the whole plant is ageing and does need complete replacement. We have effectively started that process now with the building of a new digester site. So, that is the first part of it, but the remainder does unfortunately need to be replaced.

Deputy J.H. Young:

The digester is the secondary treatment tank, is it, or is that primary treatment?

Senior Operations Manager:

It is effectively a secondary treatment option. Part of the sewerage treatment process is splitting the liquid from the solids. The solids then go off to be anaerobically digested and treated before it can be put to land as a fertiliser. So, it is effectively where the process splits into 2 and the liquid side is what assets need to be replaced.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Okay. So, the need for replacement is part of a long-term planning project for the new plant. Are there any elements that you particularly want to give priority to in terms of improving their performance?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

The key issue is the treatment standards that we meet. We have a problem with one which is not a human health one, it is one about nitrates. Basically in trying to solve this in the 1990s we have the plant in the position where we can do no more. So, we have basically a replacement strategy which rebuilds the sewerage works on a slightly different part of the same site and allows us to improve the standards into the future.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Right. Is that a nitrate standard or is that decision still to be made, as to whether or not an enhanced nitrate standard needs to be followed for a new plant?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

There is lots of science on this which is beyond my understanding. But, it is something we have had a lot of studies done for. To prove what is the right standard is going to take many years. So, what we have tried to come up with is a strategy where we run the replacement asset builds alongside the testing to decide what standards to meet. It may sound quite complicated, but what it

means is you can build the sewerage treatment works replacement in stages and at each stage you take an environmental view on whether you go to the next stage. Understanding that the first stage will set a very high compliance level. We will have a very small carbon footprint in terms of CO2 emissions. So you start off with a very environmentally sustainable plant, in terms of the construction and the operation and use, and then you assess the effect of that into the bay from the environmental standards in the receiving waters. If that proves to not be adequate, then you move to phase 2, which would be to turn it into a nitrate plant and then phase 3 would be a denitrifying plant.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Is it fair to say, Minister, from what your Chief Officer says, there are choices there ahead of us in those environmental evaluations as to what standards are met in terms of nitrate levels?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

All the changes are being made incrementally so we can take that into account.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Would that be an issue for your Ministry alone to decide or would there be input from the Minister for Planning and Environment or from external advisers?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

We do take advice, obviously, from all concerned. We have external advisers who have been advising on it and, obviously, there is input from the Minister for Planning and Environment.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

The standards are set by the Environment Regulator.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Right.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

The Environment Regulator is part of the Planning and Environment Department. It is fundamental that we work together on this so we set the appropriate standards for the future and we then meet those standards.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Would it be correct, if I have understood correctly, that the plant is meeting the present standards set by the regulator?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

On the parameters about human health, which is particulates and B.O.D. (Biochemical Oxygen Demand) and C.O.D. (Chemical Oxygen Demand), the plant is meeting and is within those standards. On the standard for nitrogen, the plant is failing that standard set by the regulator at present.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Right. So that is something that you are currently addressing? There are choices in there as to how it is done?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

We have come to a position where we cannot address that any more with the existing asset we have. We have tried for the last 10 years to try and accomplish that and we have not been able to do it.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So, resources-wise, in order to help you achieve these improvements, how do you stand on that? Have you got adequate resources to do that or are there resources in the pipeline or are there bids on the table which are important that you get funding in order to deliver this?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Currently within the Medium Term Financial Plan which will be debated by yourselves in November, there is not sufficient funding for a replacement sewerage treatment works.

Deputy J.H. Young:

There is not?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

No.

Deputy J.H. Young:

You have bids on the table for that, have you?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

We have bids on the table for it, but at the moment there is a bid for £15 million, which is agreed. But our budget for replacing the sewerage works is £60 million. So, we have a shortfall of £45 million.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you for that.

Deputy of St. Martin:

When does that shortfall in money start to impact on the replacement of the plant? You are doing the new digesters at the moment. When would you hope to move on to the next phase? In other words, when would you need more funding by?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

The sewerage works is not going to fall over tomorrow, but the longer we leave this the more at risk we are in terms of meeting environment standards. The aged asset is going to become more unreliable, so the ideal for us is to start building the new plant in the next 3 years. However, we can only do that if the funds are available. So, it is very difficult with assets that ... the new one will last 50 years, but we have to find the money now to start building it.

Deputy J.H. Young:

But you have started some works, have you not, with these new tanks?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

The anaerobic digester platform is an asset replacement from the work that was done in 1990. They are the green tanks on the left-hand side of the valley and have been replaced within the valley in a better location. Those assets were designed for 15 years and we made them last just over 20 years. So, again, we have done very well with it, but that was the highest risk in terms of potential failure modes in probably the whole of the waste management directorate.

Connétable of St. John:

Coming in on the nitrogen treatment, you say we have gone as far as we can on the old plant that we put in, what would generally be the life of that plant if it had been working correctly and how much does it cost you annually just to run it at ... obviously you cannot be running with capacities like ... because we need additives to put in there, which are presumably expensive. So, how much is it taking out of your budget annually and would there be any benefit in saying: "Right, let us call it a day. Close that down. We will build a new one." Would there be savings, if you understand where I am coming from?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes. The simple answer is yes. The actual figures for that I would look over to our Senior Operations Manager to see if you have a feel for that.

Senior Operations Manager:

It would be quite difficult. I mean, we have learned to manage the situation over the years and I think we are doing that quite efficiently now. The problem we have is we cannot run the plant to its full potential, putting enough electricity and air into the plant, because it goes out of control. So, yes, to run it properly you would need a bit more energy, but then you would need a lot

less manual intervention. So, I think overall a new plant would be a lot cheaper to run. You would need less revenue expenditure.

Connétable of St. John:

You do not have a figure on what it is costing us at the moment and what a new plant would cost?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

We know how much the existing plant costs, but we have not tried to optimise its operation. The new plant will be more automated. The odour control elements have been resolved. The stability of the plant, which is one of the key considerations for sewerage treatment plants will be maintained and we will optimise on, as we saw on the site visit, the life of the U.V. (ultra violet) lamps. It is quite a hard thing to ascertain, but a replacement set of U.V. lamps is ...?

Senior Operations Manager:

Just over £100,000.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Just over £100,000 and we are replacing them every ...?

Senior Operations Manager:

Every 18 months. They have a 10,000 hour life, the U.V. lamps.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Now, because of the problems with the process, we have to go through U.V. lamps a lot quicker, and again we have to put more air in, which is more energy, and there is a lot more intervention with manual workers. So, there is a huge array of things. The new plant will definitely be more efficient and will definitely save us money. But the actual figure would be very hard to establish at this time.

Connétable of St. John:

How can we help you make sure you get the funding that much sooner?

Deputy J.H. Young:

Perhaps I would like to add to that. If you had the funds today, how long would it take you to design and implement that plant, get it functioning, bearing in mind you have to keep the existing one running in the meantime?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

We have had this discussion, we reckon, including all planning approvals, environment impact assessments and working with the regulator, we could be striking the ground in 2 to 2 and a half year's time, build out.

Deputy J.H. Young:

The completion time?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Completed and operating 4 to 5 years from now.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So 5 years?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

If that is the best achievable, would you be prepared to put on the table a date which would be the very, very latest where by this should be wholly funded and that plant replaced?

[14:15]

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

It is very hard when your plant at the moment is not meeting the standards and further operation of the plant is going to increase the risk of not meeting the standards further.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Perhaps I should refine the question. Say, if the population increased, would that increase the urgency of this task?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Of course, yes.

Deputy of St. Martin:

Do the physical constraints of the site compromise the design or the efficiency of what you would like to do? In other words, would you do it differently if the site was much larger?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

The design of the existing sewerage works which was built in the 1950s was built for the period then and for the people who lived in Jersey. We have squeezed as much as we can into a very small area. One of the big engineering challenges in Jersey is putting processes in a very small footprint. The new design, which is very close to where the existing sewerage works is, addresses those issues and provides us with enough flexibility in terms of space to extend the plant within any sort of parameter we choose. That is one of the parts of the design, to make sure we can do what we could not do with the old plant, which is expand it as necessary, depending on the needs of the plant in the future.

Deputy J.H. Young:

That expansion will be if there is additional population in the lifetime of the plant.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Additional population, additional environmental standards or additional processes. If a manufacturer sets up in Jersey and has an effluent that needs treating, perhaps we could deal with that. So, there are many facets to how you would expand it.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So all those sound to me like they add to the reasons as to why we need to replace the plant, so we can build in the flexibility to do those things.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Deputy of St. Martin:

Can I ask a question about population? We have already agreed, it is quite obvious, that as the population rises there is more work for you. But do you know the numbers on the amounts of foul water and grey water per person? What I am trying to get at, where you can separate, in going on to the future, your foul water and your rain water, where at the moment it is not separated. If, for example, you have 100 people living in an estate and you can separate the water, which is not separated at the moment, how much do you save going into your plant, per person, and obviously how much do you get per person where you have a new estate coming on line and an increasing population? On a per capita basis, is separating rain water and foul water more important than extensions to the population?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

The key thing with surface water separation is it guarantees a few things. It guarantees that the flows to the sewerage works remain constant regardless of the weather. It also guarantees that the potential for any pollution, the other way round, by inundating a system with rainwater, is prevented. You also save on pumping costs, because all that water has to be pumped because the majority of our system is pumped. If you put water through the sewerage works it does not actually cost as much to put it through once it is there. What it does is it potentially displaces other sewerage from the system.

Thereby we are not getting the right stuff treated at the right time in the right place. So, it is essential to get it out ... the reason you get it out is slightly more complicated than saving money by instantly doing that. The key benefit is you avoid any variation in weather to affect the sewerage treatment process.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Following up from that, Steve, please, does that mean there are works needed in the sewerage network, outside of the sewerage plant, to try and manage that better?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

That is correct, yes. The key work we are doing this year at Phillips Street is another area to try and get surface water separation through St. Helier and to improve on that as much as we possibly can.

Deputy of St. Martin:

Do you have any idea at all what percentage of liquid coming into your plant on a normal rainy day in winter is surface water that should really be separated?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

At least 50 per cent.

Senior Operations Manager:

Yes. On a heavy rainfall, yes, I would say up to 50 per cent.

Deputy of St. Martin:

Okay. So, there is still a large body of work to be done in that direction?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It has been on-going for some time and it is still on-going.

Deputy of St. Martin:

Any particular areas of the Island that really need to be dealt with?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

What we are doing is, we have done an area survey and a significant update to the computer model, which models the drainage network. From that, we are now doing actual, on the ground surveys of the sewerage network and looking at where properties have connected on, where businesses connected on and to see if there are any breaches in our system. These all add to the problem. We are currently working in St. Peter and we have done some very successful work around Rozel. It is fantastic work. It is not very visible, but what it does is it makes a huge effect and a huge benefit to what we deal with and how we can control it.

Deputy of St. Martin:

When you say "successful", do you mean you identified a lot of problems that you could fix or you have identified that there are no problems?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Both. But, yes, we have found a lot of issues which we have been able to address. Even on our system, because it is a couple of thousand kilometres of sewerage network, it takes a long time to find ...

Deputy of St. Martin:

Is that cost effective work? Inasmuch as you might spend X thousands of pounds doing surveys and you rectify the problems you find. Do you see a reflection of that in the plant?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Definitely, yes.

Senior Operations Manager:

A lot of reduced flows. The other thing we have noticed recently, on the last survey, is a lot of the infiltration is not on the public network, but on the private network. We need to enforce a drainage law to stop householders or force them to disconnect their surface water systems.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Can I follow up on that? This separation, up until now I had heard that was a public cost, that is a T.T.S. cost.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

What has just been said just now suggests that there is going to be some impact on private property owners. Would that be true?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Possibly, yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Is it something you are considering as to how you are going to take that project forward, of reducing surface water in foul drains right across the Island?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

We administer the Drainage Law, so if someone has connected on and the original requirements were not to do that, then they are breaking the law. So, obviously that is the last resort scenario. But if we can find areas where ... a lot of people do it without knowing and a lot of things have happened in the past where people are not aware of it. So, if we can flag those up then we can rectify the problem.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So, at the moment, you are at the planning stage, thinking about how you might do that?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Rather than actions. But it is an issue for the future?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

It is.

Deputy J.H. Young:

To manage the network.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Which go hand in hand with the changes to the plant?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Would it be crazy to spend money on the plant at Bellozanne and not do these other things?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

No. The plant will always have to cope with some surface water, because in some parts of St. Helier you are never going to separate out the whole amount. In terms of the real big flows, and big flows are coming from St. Helier, because that was a Victorian system that was put in place, the rural elements are more about local issues with local pumping stations and then

the knock-on effect on to other pumping stations. It is not so much the treatment elements of that. It is the effect within those wide areas.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Would I be right, in St. Helier, you have the cavern which helps you manage that at the moment?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

That is exactly right. The more surface water we take off through re-engineering the system, the more effective the cavern is to contain all that in the future.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Then that gets pumped back through the sewerage treatment plant.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

That is correct, yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Okay. Do you want to follow ...

Deputy of St. Martin:

No, I was just going to ask quickly, the old incinerator is still sitting there and the site of that incinerator would be part of the site for the new plant. Could you just outline very briefly the timetable for decommissioning the old incinerator?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes. Basically we have to do an environmental impact assessment, which we have just commissioned and we are looking at the end of this year, all being well, to demolish the plant.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Perhaps there is one other question I have realised I think we should pick up. The outfall, are there any present issues around the outfall that were falling within the plans?

Senior Operations Manager:

The outfall is currently sound. But, it is not, however, common practice to discharge from a sewerage treatment works at the half-tide level, which it currently is. It is only 500m off the wall. So, effectively you would not see anywhere else in Europe where kids or members of the public can go and play in the effluent. We are looking at extending the outfall as part of our long-term plans. The question is what is the most suitable length? We currently feel it is most likely to be the low water mark. But we are carrying out a study in the next 2 or 3 months on the hydrographic states of the bay to see where the currents are and where the best dispersion would be to put the effluent.

Deputy J.H. Young:

If you have to do that, will you be burying the outfall, so it is not visible on the beach? What are your current thoughts on that?

Senior Operations Manager:

I think it currently quite early to say. I would imagine the initial part would have to be above the sand level, as it is now, but as it goes down the beach I would envisage it is then buried. But it is too early to say with any certainty.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Okay. But that is a project you are working on as well?

Senior Operations Manager:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Do you want to follow up any of those questions?

Connétable of St. John:

No, you have covered that. I had put down to ask a question on that, so that is all right.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Steve? I think we ought to move to the next subject. Thank you for ...

Deputy of St. Martin:

Maybe before we move, could I just ask, there is obviously no legal reason for you to extend the outfall?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

No, there is not.

Deputy of St. Martin:

No. So, there is no legal obligation?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

No. It is just good practice and it is something we feel would give us a bit more resilience and a bit more of a better solution also.

Deputy J.H. Young:

You think it is basically an amenity value for the Island to have that and to avoid any problems?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

That is right, yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you. Thank you for that. I am sure we will be coming back to that in further meetings and seeing how you are getting on with your planning. Perhaps there is one other question, are you actively having a discussion, Minister, with the Council of Ministers about securing that funding for this project?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes, that is on-going.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you. So, we will be following that up.

Connétable of St. John:

On-going, but that could mean anything. Is it on an agenda?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Connétable of St. John:

Has a decision been made?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

No.

Connétable of St. John:

If it has not been made, when is it likely to be made?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

We are currently reviewing all options. As you know ...

Connétable of St. John:

I am talking about them, the Council of Ministers. It is on an agenda?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes. They are not as excited about it as we are.

Deputy of St. Martin:

Maybe I could rephrase the question another way. On the basis there is a 5 year lead-in, we have a Medium Term Financial Plan, which is going to take

us 3 and a half years away from where we are now. That is 8 and a half years. How do you feel about continuing to use your existing plant for the next 10 years?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Very uncomfortable.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Right. So, 5 years is the ideal and 10 years would be a disaster?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Without spending millions of pounds on the existing plant, then I think we are in trouble.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So, if we go beyond the 5 years, we would be wasting money and all the inefficiencies that we have just discussed.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Deputy of St. Martin:

Which, to be realistic, with a 5 year lead-in and a Medium Term Financial Plan with no funding available or identified, we are looking at 8 years away from this point anyway. That is best case scenario.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Unless there are some radical options which can be looked at.

Deputy J.H. Young:

I think it has been a very good discussion and you have been very open with us, thank you. We will be coming back to this most definitely. Thank you. Obviously a major subject, which is why we started with it. Moving on to an equally major subject, the bus contract. I wonder if we could perhaps start

this discussion, Minister - you are in the middle of a change to the contractor - perhaps you could just highlight or summarise the main problems of the existing contract that you are looking to overcome in the new one. Not the details, just the main points of where that was deficient and what you are looking for in the new one.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Right. Okay. Change of contract, as you know, I am very pleased to have been able to offer the new contract to CT Plus Jersey and issue a letter of intent. This includes a brand new bus fleet for the public service, which includes 5 double-deckers, to operate on the number 15, which is the airport route. The introduction of the Smart Card Scheme will speed up boarding times and allow for more innovative fare structures. Route and timetable improvements, including more services, running later in the evening and at weekends; smaller minibus style vehicles for use on the Island's rural roads. There are 3 Bluebirds to start with, which are small buses. As part of CT Plus' social enterprise approach ethos, the organisation aims to reinvest a third of profits into the local community, transport for people who find their conventional transport difficult to use. If the operating profit exceeds 3 per cent, the company will split the excess equally with the States to help pay for and improve the Island's transport infrastructure. The value of the contract will be just under £3.5 million.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you, Minister. Thank you for that very exciting summary. I think you probably picked up a number of questions. If I could just flag up a few. You have signed a letter of intent. That means the contract is not yet signed, but you have made a commitment that you will.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

[14:30]

Deputy J.H. Young:

The contract will be from 1st January 2013?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Do you think there is enough time, Minister, to be able to sort out all the implementation issues between now and 1st January 2013?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

There is a shorter lead-up time, but CT Plus are well up to it and they are progressing very quickly. Director of Transport, do you want to ...?

Director of Transport:

Yes, that was one of the main reasons of getting a letter of intent signed early, to allow for the procurement of the new bus fleet. That is the item with the longest lead-in. But that being signed now means that we will be able to be ready to go on 2nd January when the new service starts.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Are there any conditions in there that might be a snag? For example, it is clear there are a lot of implementation issues, a few of which we are going to raise shortly. Is that a conditional letter of intent or an absolute one?

Director of Transport:

There are conditions on the letter of intent. I cannot list them all here. But there are no show stoppers in there. There is nothing that we would foresee as creating any significant difficulty. We limited the value of the letter of intent and have done various things to protect the States of Jersey, as you would do entering into any contract.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Steve, you want to ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Yes. A lot of bus users will only be concerned to make sure that there is a bus at their bus stop on 2nd January or 1st January when they come back to work. In normal years, it is usual to have a winter timetable, published in October, which runs over the course of the winter. I presume that the new contractor is obliged to carry on with, at least, whatever is decided in October or will the new contractor be setting a new timetable in January?

Director of Transport:

No, obviously when you are launching something as complex as a bus service, and bus users are people who run their lives around the actual timetables, so it is important not to disrupt that too significantly, so initially there will not be a huge change in the winter timetable. The big change will come in the summer.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Right.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Summer 2013?

Director of Transport:

Yes. When I say the big change, I mean the changes in timetabling.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Right.

Director of Transport:

Obviously there will be lots of changes prior to that. There will be the new bus fleet, which the Minister alluded to, smart card ticketing. There will be more Sunday services and hopefully more late night services. There will be other things happening in the interim, but the core winter timetable will not be changed.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So the core timetable will be there, there will be new buses but we will have some additions to it, from what you have said, about late night services and evenings?

Director of Transport:

I cannot be absolute about when they will be implemented, but certainly during the summer then you will start seeing more services being run ...

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It will be progressively rolled out.

Director of Transport:

... and then in the following winter timetable you will see more still. So there is a ramping up over that first year.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Because, as I understand it, this is quite a long-term contract, is it not? What is the period of it?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It is 7 years.

Director of Transport:

Yes.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

They have to meet certain key indicators.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So would you expect that the implementation of this would progressively give those gains? More and more changes to services and so on.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Absolutely.

Director of Transport:

Absolutely. I mean, within the contract, for the price we have received, we managed to secure an extra 12 per cent more service miles and we have also created a 26 per cent increase in capacity in the bus service, largely due to the introduction of double decker buses giving you more seating capacity, so we will have enough capacity in terms of buses available to achieve the objectives of the S.T.P. (Sustainable Transport Policy), in fact we will have a little bit more than required.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Right, so the switch in the buses, plus the commitment you have in the contract to give you more passenger miles will allow improvement and increase in timetables progressively from January 2013.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

There has been a lot of disquiet in the public in recent years over the physical size of buses on some of our small roads.

Director of Transport:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Could you just elaborate a bit more on makes and models and sizes of the replacement fleet?

Director of Transport:

Okay, you may have picked on the wrong person here, I am not quite as bus nerdy as some of the people involved in the process, but I will do my best.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

You do not have a bus anorak. **[Laughter]**

Director of Transport:

The double decker buses will be the Alexander Dennis model that you see running on the number 15 service now.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Right.

Director of Transport:

So the style will change but basically the same vehicle. The main bus fleet, which will replace the blue Caetanos that we have got at the moment, will be Optare Slimlines. Now, Optare Slimlines, according to the manufacturer, are within our width restrictions. However we need to get one over here and measure it or get someone over to measure one of those to determine that absolutely, because when we make our assessment of the vehicle size we do not take the manufacturer's word for it. We have to measure what the distance between the widest point of the vehicles will be, whether they be wheel nuts or the hinge on the emergency door.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

But does it make any difference given that you do not put P30s on buses anyway?

Director of Transport:

All the buses are P30.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Will they display P30 signs on the back?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

No. They are exempt.

Director of Transport:

Sorry, yes, that is what I mean. Exempt, yes.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Okay.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Phil, you wanted to get in?

The Connétable of St. John:

Well, the question has just been of course about the size of the vehicles.

Deputy J.H. Young:

What, you mean down St. John's lanes ...

The Connétable of St. John:

No, it is not that so much.

Director of Transport:

For the rural routes, we have these mini buses, which are the Bluebirds.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Could you elaborate a bit on these mini buses? Are they Ford Transit size vehicles? Are they Sherpas or are they ... Bluebirds do not mean much to me, I am afraid. Sorry, I am not a bus fanatic.

Director of Transport:

What would you describe them as, Chief Officer?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Okay, you are suggesting I am a nerdy bus type? **[Laughter]** A Bluebird is the chassis cab off a van. It is similar to the chassis cab that we used as our minibus when the Senior Operations Manager was driving us around. So it is based on a van platform, but it is a bespoke body on the back, which gives you the full bus feel.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

So it is sort of a 5, 6 tonne chassis type ...

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

It is.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

... twin back axle jobby?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Twin back axle but the base vehicle is, I think, based on the Fiat equivalent to the version we were in. So it is a chassis cab, which then has a bespoke body built on the back.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

How many seats would that normally have in it?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

I think it is about 18.

Director of Transport:

Yes, I think it is about 18 to 20 is what the figures ... we can send you the actual spec sheets for the vehicles, if you were interested.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

This is the man with the narrow lanes ...

The Connétable of St. John:

If I can get back in on those vehicles and say we have got 5 double deckers, which are basically just identical to what we have already got.

Director of Transport:

It is 6 double deckers, but one is a spare. So it will be 5 double deckers in service and it is the same with the smaller vehicles, it is 3 vehicles but one is a spare. So there will typically be 2 in service.

The Connétable of St. John:

Right, because now we are getting on to the narrower lanes, given that you tend to be answering the questions in the right direction, you are going down in size and width, because otherwise if we are using by-roads, obviously you need the Constable's permission to take P30s in them. So they are not exempt, per se, when you get off the main States roads. But that is by and by, so I am encouraged here. But what I really need to know now, because of the size of the vehicles, does this mean there is a likelihood we will get some satellites areas? Within the country areas I am thinking of we would have a depot at Les Fontaines, for instance, which I have been on about for years. Because people come into my district from St. Ouen and St. Mary and they park in the middle of the village and leave their vehicles there for the day. I want a depot, or whatever you want to call it, or a satellite pick up area ... a States car park where they can park, like at Les Fontaines on the North Road or at Les Platons and there can be a pick up point where people can park their cars there for the 12 hours or 8 hour shift that they go into town, without us having to be supplying prime sites right in the middle of our villages.

Director of Transport:

Can I answer that one, Minister? We have done the negotiations with the contractor now, CT Plus, and so we have established how many bus miles we can procure. We have also got a notional timetable and set of routes, which we will be working towards changing the current schedule. But CT Plus are very much community focused and so what CT Plus want to do is to come out and meet with all the different interest groups and to meet with all the parishes and to find out what their needs are and to try as much as possible, within the constraints of the funding, to meet those requirements of those communities. Because the bus service, particularly with CT Plus, will become a very community-focused bus service. So that is the long answer. The short answer is, I think CT Plus would be open to suggestions and to discussion.

Deputy J.H. Young:

When are they going to do that, can I ask? Coming in to the Island that sounds a good thing, well it all sounds a good thing, but the consultation on the particular routes, in answer to the Connétable's question.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, we have a briefing for States Members ... Thursday?

Director of Transport:

Thursday lunchtime.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Thursday lunchtime and we will present it to all States Members and we are looking forward to everybody's input. We also want to roll out a bit of a road show to go around the parishes and see what the various parishes want to know.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Do you know when that will be yet? Bearing in mind that the contract starts in January.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Everything is in train now, as it were. The buses are being ordered, et cetera, and everything is being worked --

Deputy J.H. Young:

Are they bringing the management over to the Island, sort of now?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

They will be, yes.

Director of Transport:

The management team is coming to the Island on Thursday to meet you all and then there is going to be a programme of meetings starting off at a political level and then going down to the main consumer interest groups ...

Deputy J.H. Young:

Okay, that is fine. Okay.

Director of Transport:

... and then to the parishes. The person who is going to run the local operation, that job is being advertised at the moment.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So that is a local appointment?

Director of Transport:

It depends. We need someone who ...

Deputy J.H. Young:

Okay, but you are advertising locally now, sorry, wrong question. Okay.

Director of Transport:

... has significant experience in running a large bus contract.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Can I just switch to fares? What is the situation there? Will the fare structure stay the same?

Director of Transport:

The main change between this contract and the previous contract is the shifting of the risk of the operation to the operator. So, with Connex, the States of Jersey had basically a minimum cost contract, whereby we paid a certain amount for the mileage to cover the cost of the drivers, the fuel et cetera, but the States of Jersey retained the fares. In this contract, we are shifting that risk over to the contractor. He has to meet performance targets in

terms of increasing his patronage to meet the objectives of the S.T.P. So with the shift of that risk, the fares now move over to the operator and he has to use his commercial judgment as to how to apply the fares to incentivise travel. Now, the Minister retains a veto over those fare levels, but it is likely that there will be a whole new fare structure which will be launched, not initially but some point in because the smart card ticketing allows you to provide a much more innovative offering.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Fare concessions; are they going to carry on? For example over 65 bus passes? It is not an interest, but lots of people have got them. I ask for the public. Are they going to carry on?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

That cannot be yours, surely?

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you, Minister. That is a nice thing to say. But seriously, your plan on concessions, what is the ...

Director of Transport:

The concessionary fares were priced into the contract.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Part of the contract.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So that will continue?

Director of Transport:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Can I ask about technology? Obviously it moves on apace and I am aware that in London buses do not go over zebra crossings over, I think it is 5 miles an hour or 10 miles an hour. Buses slow down to a very slow pace, regardless of whether anybody is on the crossing or not. Do you have any ideas in place to use technology to monitor the speed of buses and how fast they travel through certain areas and stuff like that?

Director of Transport:

Within the buses themselves is a G.P.S. (Global Positioning System) tracking device, but also I do not know exactly, but I assume it is with some sort of inertia principle ... is a device that measures how the driver drives to ensure that he drives sustainably so that the acceleration is smooth, braking is smooth. So we are going to have 2 methods of basically monitoring how the vehicle is driven. One is the G.P.S. information which shows where the bus is at what time but in particular the device which will be in the cab will be used by the operator to give drivers the award of the month to encourage drivers to drive sensibly, smoothly and to reduce the amount of fuel used as much as possible in order to meet sustainable transport objectives.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

At some time at the end of December and the beginning of January, you are going to have 2 fleets of buses on the Island at any one time, presumably you have got space to put them all at La Collette? Not having to park them on the Constable Crowcroft's roads? **[Laughter]**

Director of Transport:

We have got contingency plans in hand.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Okay.

The Connétable of St. John:

Are the buses ours or will they belong to the bus company?

Director of Transport:

They will belong to the bus company. We have done studies as to what is the most cost effective method of procuring the buses and they show that is definitely to have the company own them.

The Connétable of St. John:

The transfer of the employment of the drivers, is that going smoothly? Obviously the unions must be involved, et cetera.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think it was in part of our contract that T.T.S. will use its best endeavours to smoothly transfer staff across.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

The correspondence with the new operator has not started yet. One of the reasons we want to get the contract in place is to enable a lot of the negotiations to happen this year prior to commencement on 2nd January and that dialogue will be opening up in parallel with the dialogue with Constables and with politicians.

[14:45]

Deputy J.H. Young:

So the contract says, let us just get it right, that the new operator and yourselves will use their best endeavours to secure the transfer of existing drivers?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Correct.

Director of Transport:

All staff.

Deputy J.H. Young:

All staff, on existing pay conditions or is that open?

Director of Transport:

It is on the pay and conditions at the point we went out to tender.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Which was when?

Director of Transport:

December 2011.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Getting back to the technology. You mentioned the smart cards for the buses. Would it be your intention to be able to use those cards for car parking and other various modes of transport like they would do with an Oyster card in London?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It would be nice if we can do that. We are, as you know, experimenting shortly with the A.N.P.R. (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) facilities in the Sand Street car park, so if those could be brought together, that would be good.

Director of Transport:

I know you want to speak about A.N.P.R. later on.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Yes, we do.

Director of Transport:

For the purposes of the trial, no, that will not be possible during the trial period of the A.N.P.R. but we will certainly look at that longer term.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

But the advantage of a smart card would be that one, I presume, could pre-purchase a bulk amount at a discounted rate.

Director of Transport:

Yes, the difficulty we have come across with that - and I am not saying it is insurmountable but we are really exploring it at the moment - is basically a smart card can have as many different purses on it as you like and you can charge up your various purses with different amounts. So your money is held virtually. The problem is to start holding money for lots of different organisations; you have to start operating like a bank.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Could you explain all the different organisations? Surely you put credit on a card and it just sits there and it does not matter who uses it, does it?

Director of Transport:

But you would credit the CT Plus account on the card or you would credit the T.T.S. account, you see ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Oh, sorry. I am ... sorry; I see where you are coming from.

Director of Transport:

... so your card has different ... so it becomes complex and it has to be held ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Yes.

Acting Finance Director, Transport and Technical Services:

It does not work in quite the same way as a debit card would do. It depends who has access to the back end systems that determine sort of what the balances are available. Certainly with the A.N.P.R. trial, the balances are held both on the card and centrally on a server that is held by the operators of

the system, so you can reconcile the cards to the system and you can also refund people if they lose their cards. The downside to having the balance held purely on the card and accessible by other operators is that if somebody did lose the card with a significant balance on it, you would not be able to ...

Deputy J.H. Young:

I wonder if we could ... have you got a target date for that smart card? You said earlier you expect it to be in the new contract?

Director of Transport:

The smart card for the buses?

Deputy J.H. Young:

Yes.

Director of Transport:

The smart card for the buses, we anticipate from the beginning of service.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Good, thank you. Do you want to come back, Phil or Steve, on this before we move on to another subject?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

No.

The Connétable of St. John:

No, that is fine.

Deputy J.H. Young:

I wonder if we could move now to parking in town and by town I mean the St. Helier conurbation. So, Minister, I think we spoke about this in our last meeting. We did ask you if had any information on the number of car parking spaces that you have available as operator of the States car parks and if you

could indicate how many of those are shopping and how many of those are for commuters?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, we aim to provide an appropriate and adequate level of parking. Our sustainable transport policy has a target reduction of 15 per cent peak hour traffic for commuters, therefore, over the coming years we hope to see a reduction in demand for commuter spaces, which currently meet demand at about 300 spare spaces. For shopper parking, we currently meet demand. We have 150 spare spaces in Sand Street, but this is an area of change and needs continual monitoring of new developments. Do you have the update on that, how many spaces?

Deputy J.H. Young:

Can I just check? There is 150 ... you are meeting a demand for shopping?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

There is spare capacity in the system, as it were.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

150 spaces.

Director of Transport:

There are typically 150 spare spaces in Sand Street; there are other spare shopper spaces around. Typically shopper car parking is a problem at peak times like Christmas, et cetera, is about ... I just want to be certain, I think it is somewhere between 50 and 80 per cent utilised. So shopper car parks are rarely full all of the time. In terms of commuter parking, we have got 300 spare spaces within the ring road.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

So at the moment you would say the official line is there is space. Regardless of what you are coming in to town to do, there is more than enough space in the system.

Director of Transport:

I would say, as the Director of Transport, there is sufficient parking spaces within the town ring road for the Island's parking needs. The issue is not necessarily of number of spaces, it is location of spaces.

The Connétable of St. John:

All these spaces, you are talking about 300 odd spaces, then we will be losing 500 odd spaces on the Esplanade possibly if we go ahead with the finance quarter, which means if you are running a loss of spaces, apart from the ones they would be wanting to take away at any police station they might put east of ... on the Green Street end, which would be another X and then we will be running ... we will run out of car parking spaces. Is that not correct?

Director of Transport:

Well, with regards to the Esplanade car park and the Esplanade development, those spaces will be replaced within that development and they have got the reclamation site there where they can ...

The Connétable of St. John:

Only 200 will be replaced. How many have you got there currently?

Director of Transport:

I have got ... my note is that: "The Esplanade master plan proposes that 1,420 space underground car park replacing the existing 320 space car park and providing an additional 900 private spaces."

The Connétable of St. John:

I do not think those are the numbers I heard this morning.

Director of Transport:

It says: "The original master plan will require the following subsequent approval of the Sustainable Transport Policy. Either in the more immediate future plans are being finalised by the States of Jersey Development Company for first place in the master plan, which will provide approximately 188 private spaces associated with an office development and reinstate the existing 522 spaces on the car park below ground."

The Connétable of St. John:

So there will be a reinstatement of the Esplanade car park?

Director of Transport:

Yes and because they have got the spare piece of ground over by Cineworld, there is an overflow area while you are doing your construction.

The Connétable of St. John:

So, I would assume from what I think we heard this morning, there is not sufficient space in the overflow area to accommodate all at once ... all the car parking, if it were all displaced in that car park at once.

Director of Transport:

No, no. We could not do that.

The Connétable of St. John:

So it will be a mixture of phased development and the overflow area?

Director of Transport:

Yes

The Connétable of St. John:

So that will maintain the capacity. Obviously from what you have said, presumably you would not agree with the comments of the Chamber of Commerce that lack of ... I think they are reported as said that lack of car parking in town is one factor in the declining retail shopping in St. Helier.

Director of Transport:

We were in discussions with the Chamber of Commerce and we have also been participating on ... you might know the group, Chief Officer, with your ...

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

I am not sure what it is called, but there is a group to look at this issue. The fundamental problem that town is facing is the challenge from the Internet, from the recession and there is also a perceived issue with car parking. My understanding of the car parking issue is it is one of convenience and one that is being driven predominantly by a lack of on street spaces and not a lack of spaces in the car parks. We are looking at some innovation in there and looking at, particularly with the A.N.P.R. trying to incentivise shoppers to go into town and park, but it is ... our view is it is a small element of a bigger problem.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So the feedback you are getting is that people want to be able to park immediately close to the shops and therefore they are less likely to park on multi-storey car parks that involve a bit of a walk?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

As it was 10 years ago, where you could always find somewhere to nip into town and park up, I think that has gone because there is a bit of change to more residents' parking zones and there is more structured elements of parking around St. Helier.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So it is some of the loss of the on-street car parking that has caused this reaction, perhaps.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

That is our view, however the Chamber are very vociferous in perhaps putting another view forward, which is, it is all our fault.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Could I just go in ... the residents' car parking is a thing that "interests" me. In the old days, you know, these roads were available for parking and nipping into town whether you were at the doctor or whether you were going Bath Street or whatever, and now we have these ... especially in the north of town, roads where we have residents' parking schemes. It is very new to me, but could you just go over the process that transferred one ... we stopped doing normal and we ended up with residents. Are these roads States roads or are they parish roads? If there are fines given out on them now, who receives those fines and you know, what impact has that made to the T.T.S. budget?

The Connétable of St. John:

While you are answering that, also, who gets the revenue from these schemes? Is it the parish or is it the States?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

The parish.

Director of Transport:

The residents' parking zone came before I arrived in the post, I cannot give you the whole history, I am afraid. But my understanding is that they are parish roads and that it is a parish initiative set up and administered by the parish. The fines for on street parking within any parish go to the Constable. We only receive the fine income from off-street parking.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Sorry, who was maintaining those roads before they went to residents? Were T.T.S. maintaining those roads or were the parishes maintaining them?

Director of Transport:

I believe they are parish roads. I could not tell you that definitively.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So there was no on-street car parking on States main roads?

Director of Transport:

No, there was on-street car parking and there still is on-street car parking on States main roads.

Deputy J.H. Young:

There is?

Director of Transport:

Yes, so if you take Broad Street or the Esplanade, there is still on-street car parking provided there.

The Connétable of St. John:

But Stopford Road, is that not a parish road? Is that a States road?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

St. Mark's Road, Stopford Road, that area.

The Connétable of St. John:

The Parade, outside of Cyril Le Marquand House?

Director of Transport:

We would need to check ... as I said, I cannot be definitive, but my understanding is that it is a parish initiative and they are generally parish roads but I am not absolutely certain on that. We would have to come back to you.

The Connétable of St. John:

Yes, if you could. I would appreciate that.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So just going back to the big picture, if I can, for a moment. Your position is that we are adequately meeting the need at the moment with the provision.

Director of Transport:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Commuting, I think you said that there was a surplus space, is that correct?

Director of Transport:

We have got 300 spare spaces for commuters, typically within the town ring road.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So does that mean you fully ... that you have been able to absorb the loss of the spaces in the town park, for example?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, we have Ann Court, which is a temporary situation because the property is owned by Housing, but we have Ann Court's car park, that has taken up some of the slack and we have ... is it Le Croix, directly opposite now.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So that will be just a temporary change, will it not? When you lose Ann Court for its development, your shortfall ...

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

There are plans for underground parking there eventually.

Deputy J.H. Young:

In Ann Court?

Director of Transport:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

For the public?

Director of Transport:

Yes, yes. The North of Town Master Plan allows for 185 public parking spaces in Ann Court and then puts planning obligation agreements on 3 major developments, the Gas Works site development, the Le Masurier site and the Ann Street Brewery site and then they, between them, would replace the parking that was lost during ... the Town Park, bringing back 753 spaces.

Deputy J.H. Young:

The loss of Green Street if it goes ahead as the police station? How many spaces do we lose there?

Director of Transport:

91.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Can you accommodate that as well?

Director of Transport:

There is sufficient capacity to accommodate those spaces in spare capacity at Pier Road. Interestingly, just sort of an aside, just down the road there at Route du Fort, there is typically 20 spaces available there. So it just goes to show that while Green Street is a very popular car park, people do like to park as close as they can to where they want to be. Understandably.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

As the Director of Transport just pointed out, there is capacity there but it is not necessarily where people want to be. There is always spare capacity in Pier Road car park, but it does not appear to be a popular area to park the car and walk down hill.

Deputy J.H. Young:

No, I understand. So that is the location issue; that people want to park close.

The Connétable of St. John:

Would you say T.T.S. are good at running car parks?

Director of Transport:

Yes.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I like to think so.

The Connétable of St. John:

So you would have no problem in taking on the car park on the waterfront which is operated now by W.E.B. (Waterfront Enterprise Board) ... Sorry ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

S.O.J.D.C. (States of Jersey Development Company)

The Connétable of St. John:

S.O.J.D.C. because I was told this morning that they were far better ... they were far more skilled at operating their car park then what T.T.S. was.

Deputy J.H. Young:

It was said by the Minister, but ...

The Connétable of St. John:

Oh, the Minister ...

Deputy J.H. Young:

The Minister for Treasury and Resources.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

The Minister for Treasury and Resources stated that?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Well, thanks for that vote of confidence.

The Connétable of St. John:

I know, that is why I put the question, because I always thought you were doing an excellent job.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

One of the key greater good elements of, and it is hard to hear for a community of confirmed car parkers, is we provide parking control officers, which I know people love to hate but they do not hate them when we have got a fire on the ring road and they do not hate them when we are trying to keep ambulances being able to go through town and keep businesses going and allow tradesman to work in town, allow jewellers to have their security vans there at the right time. There is a huge amount of benefit and good that is done by these people, which people never see and they are funded completely by the off street parking provision we provide.

[15:00]

The Connétable of St. John:

So you would be in a position to take over the car park opposite Maritime House without any problems or without probably additional staff?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

I think that is a political answer. [Laughter]

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I am sure we could accommodate it.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Excellent, thank you for that, Minister.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

When we talk about parking control officers, it is not a question of handing out tickets. It is managing the traffic in town, which they do very well.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Absolutely. Steve?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I think this is one for the Minister. To have a sustainable transport policy, you really want to get as many people on buses as possible. Given that the effect of parking ... the pricing of parking in town has a direct effect on the amount of people who would travel on a bus, do you think that parking in town should be made considerably more expensive and make more people use your new bus contract?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I would rather go for more the carrot than the stick. I am sure when the new bus contract is operational and the new bus operator is here, people will see it from a financial point of view that it is much easier and quicker and more efficient to use a bus.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

So you are hopeful that the new contracts will provide a lot more buses and more regular and people will want to go on buses and not want to take their cars to town.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Absolutely. In association with what the Constable of St. John has just said; if we have satellite areas where people can park and ride and come into town I think that would be far preferable.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you, Minister. I just want, before we close that subject, I would like to ask you about your progress on getting rid of the pay cards in the car parks. Can you just give us an update, please?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Work has started on the A.N.P.R. system ...

Deputy J.H. Young:

That is the number plate recognition ...

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Sorry, automatic number plate recognition and that will be rolled out in the not too distant future.

Director of Transport:

Beginning of October.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Does it work?

Director of Transport:

We have seen a demonstration.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, I hope it does. I would be very disappointed if it does not.

Director of Transport:

I mean the technology ...

Deputy J.H. Young:

Excuse my sort of disbelief, it is just I ... you have been checking this out for a long time?

Director of Transport:

Yes, we went Welwyn Garden City and we saw a site in progress there and parking control officers have been to other sites ... sorry parking sections have been to other sites to view systems that are working.

Deputy J.H. Young:

But how do people pay? How do you get the money out of people?

Director of Transport:

It is going to be with a ... well, basically with a smart card or a decremental card. So you can buy a smart card you can charge up or you can buy a pre-charge card so if you do not want to go online and charge cards up - like you buy a packet of parking tickets at the moment - the only difference is you will just buy a card which is a bit like the old telephone cards, if you like. You know you buy a telephone card and you slot it in and you would pay for your parking with that.

Acting Finance Director, Transport and Technical Services:

The system has a number of cash or credit terminals, you will pay when you return to the car park and then you just drive out.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Right, so it is pay on exit.

Acting Finance Director, Transport and Technical Services:

There are no barriers.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

That is the same as Sand Street, you can actually pop into the office downstairs, pick up your charge card, pop them in and away you go.

The Connétable of St. John:

So what about the elderly people who are not really into card technology? How are you going to cover that?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think we are going to have people there for a while actually monitoring machines, obviously, as people come out and explaining exactly what is what.

Director of Transport:

Until everyone has become familiar with it we will have people on standby to go and help people and especially in the first few weeks we will have people standing there to assist people using it for the first time.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Anything new it does take a while to get used to but I am fully confident it will be a success.

Deputy J.H. Young:

What about the car parks in the beach areas, the summer car parks, will they be in on this as well? Will it replace all smart ...

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

With Sand Street we are going to roll out initially and then if it is a success, which I am sure it will be, then other multi-storey car parks will come online with a similar system, if not the same system, and then we just take it from there really.

Director of Transport:

Basically when we go out for ... if the system proves to be a success and this approach proves to be a success, when we go out to tender for the 5 multi-storey car parks with a full contract we will be asking tenderers to submit ideas for other areas which we will identify. Not every car park will be able to benefit from this type of technology or this type of approach.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Perhaps you can make them free, perhaps, yes? The ones that do not ... it is just that the thought occurs to me is if people have to have 2 sets of systems, i.e. a card and then they have to have pay cards as well, that strikes me as being an issue.

Acting Finance Director, Transport and Technical Services:

You have got on street parking in town as well that will help them certainly in the short term.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

That will remain as scratch cards, the on street town parking.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So you will have to have 2 systems?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Initially yes. The thing is it is all done with a camera. As you enter the multi-story car park the cameras there will read your number plate and it will read your number plate on exiting the car park so it knows exactly how much to charge you. So it would not be really practical to have that as part of an on street car parking system.

The Connétable of St. John:

How are you going to help these visitors who are only here for a day or 2 with a hire car?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

There will be people on hand.

The Connétable of St. John:

Yes, in the beginning but what about when you say: "Well, this is working fine", 6 months down the road, the season has ended, a new lot of visitors coming into the Island from wherever, they would be caught out within 12 months, surely?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, as I say, we will have people there monitoring and they will be monitored in the office as well.

Director of Transport:

The systems we saw when they are up and running and people are used to them, they have got very clear messages on the screen; you can provide

leaflets to explain to people how they work and where they can purchase the necessary cards from. But also when enough people become familiar with it, what you find is that people help one another where people have difficulties but they are not complicated to use.

The Connétable of St. John:

I am not saying to use them, I am just talking about if I am a visitor I am going into Paris, for instance, and they are using one system and I am going to Lyon and they are using a different system, surely you want something that is universal?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

That is an ideal but currently they have a different system in the Waterfront Car Park as we do on Sand Street Car Park and on the street.

Deputy of St. Martin:

Well, we do not use that car park, John, because we are ...

The Connétable of St. John:

We make sure we put money in your coffers.

Director of Transport:

What I would say is there are a lot of other technologies that have been developing and are coming up to speed in parallel with this. I think that after we run the trial we may not have exactly the same system after we go back out to tender because the technology is moving on at such a pace.

The Connétable of St. John:

What about all these other car parks we have? Like I went this morning to Maritime House, there are proper spaces laid out for Dick, Tom and Harry but none for P.J., shall we say. Who gets the revenue from all these?

Director of Transport:

Those are ... Maritime House would be part of the Harbour Department's land and so that is their car park.

The Connétable of St. John:

So they would get the revenue for that? What about the ...

Director of Transport:

If they charge.

The Connétable of St. John:

So what about if I am going to the Customs, there are about 5 units in there?

Acting Finance Director, Transport and Technical Services:

There are 3 spaces outside for public use on a 20 minute disc there otherwise the Waterfront Car Park for that area.

The Connétable of St. John:

So all those car parking spaces are ... there is no return in real terms because they are all going to staff.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I would imagine so.

Deputy of St. Martin:

I am sure you are aware of Boris' Bikes in London, Minister. Has anybody in the corporate world approached you to do something similar in St. Helier?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

We looked at that, I think, about a year ago.

Director of Transport:

It is probably a couple of years ago now. We looked at a scheme and we had some people come over and do a little study. We were unable to fund it at the costs that they were looking at at that point in time. Even with what we

thought ... we were getting corporate sponsorship we were unable to fund it. It was too expensive. I think one of the problems for it ... 2 things I say is, (1) is the people who came over and looked at the scheme, came over in the summer time, and every bike rack in town was full. They said to us: "Well, you have not got a problem with cycling to start off with. It is not often you go to such a place where there are so many bicycles going around." But I think one of the issues is for those Boris Bike type schemes in St. Helier is it is often probably quicker to walk than it is to get on the bike and go around the circulatory system to get to where you are going.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Not the cyclists I see. I can assure you.

The Connétable of St. John:

So you are fully in agreement then to have this one way system against the traffic for cyclists? I have dealt with most of them somewhat because I go up Oxford Road and the traffic comes this way and the bicycles are going that way. Are you happy with that, Minister and the C.E.O. (Chief Executive Officer) and yourself, I suppose, Director of Transport, as a traffic engineer? How can that be really justified when you have got bicycles coming against traffic?

Director of Transport:

I will not answer the question directly as of yet. But we have just been over to France to St. Malo and we have been looking at the French cycling codes and how they are utilised and they certainly permit that in certain circumstances and they demark that lane differently depending on the levels of the traffic.

The Connétable of St. John:

It is demarked. Yes, a demarcation, yes.

Director of Transport:

So we are looking at what the French do at the moment and when they permit it and when they do not permit it and that will probably be in our active travel

strategy when we come to take that forward which is being drafted at the moment.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

So you will take into account that the French drive on the other side of the road, will you not? **[Laughter]**

Director of Transport:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So we will not be seeing Kevin's Bikes for a while yet?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Not for a while, no.

Deputy J.H. Young:

But maybe you will not rule it out for ever?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, I, myself, am a born again cyclist. I know the Director of Transport is, the Chief Officer is.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Well, speaking as a cyclist I have ...

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, we are very pro bike and we are trying to put as many bike shelters as we can and that is ongoing.

Deputy J.H. Young:

While we are on this, before we leave the subject, improvements of cycle ways in St. Helier generally, linking up say the cycle track coming from the west of the Island, is that in progress?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It is ongoing at the moment. You can cycle from Corbière all the way round past the Hotel de la Plage and Hotel Le Coie.

Director of Transport:

The routes, Harbour Heads, all the way through now to Havre des Pas.

Deputy J.H. Young:

But you cannot easily cross the road at Gloucester Street, you have to take your life in your hands when you cross Gloucester Street there.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Oh, coming into town?

Deputy J.H. Young:

Yes.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

You dismount and use the pelican crossing at the moment. **[Laughter]**

Deputy J.H. Young:

That would be helpful.

Director of Transport:

That actual travel strategy is going to look at the permeability of towns particularly if you are coming in from the west and you are trying to get to the schools. That is a concern we are going to ... we have some ideas for that.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So you will be addressing this issue of helping bicyclists get off the track into town; across the traffic flow.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

You can come from Corbière, is it, Fort d'Auvergne Hotel, Havre des Pas on one cycle track and we are connecting up the 2 sections by French Harbour and English Harbour to give a continuous route but coming into town is something that is under ...

Director of Transport:

With the Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services we have been exploring all different permutations of routes from the east of the Island on our bicycles.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So the Minister will be leading this one I gather?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, the Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services is on his bike, literally, on the eastern cycle track to promulgate that.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Excellent. So that is good news. Do you want to ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Just one last question, you had some interesting stats on car parking and car spaces, do you have the same for bikes because I am aware that every time I walk past a motorcycle park it is full?

Director of Transport:

On motor cycling?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Yes. It is 100 per cent all the time, full, pretty much during the day.

Director of Transport:

Motorcycle parking is incredibly popular. Over the last 2 years, I think, we managed to increase the motorcycling parking facilities by about 50 per cent.

I do not have the figures here. Largely on the Esplanade is where we have done it. We have achieved that.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Those places are full.

Director of Transport:

It is location again and you are right, where we provide them they fill up and we are working all the time to try and find additional motorcycle parking spaces.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Are you going to lose that space?

The Connétable of St. John:

There is nothing around Midvale Road, is there?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Well, Midvale car ...

The Connétable of St. John:

No, there is a car park because every time I go to my doctor there is nowhere to park a motor bike. I look around and think: "Where the heck is there one around here?"

The Deputy of St. Martin:

On the basis that you have got these spare car parking areas, you have identified some space; could you change some of that over to motorbikes?

Director of Transport:

We have been discussing it. There are certainly discussions. One thing is we always require some spare capacity in the parking because if we have got to do some concrete degradation work on one of the ... sorry, concrete repair

work on one of the floors of the car parks we need somewhere to displace those vehicles to so we cannot take out all of the spare capacity.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

You are going to lose a lot of motorcycle parking capacity when you do away with the Waterfront Car Park, are you not?

Deputy J.H. Young:

Are you? That area in front of the ... by the Esplanade, are you going to lose that?

Director of Transport:

I am not sure what the actual final footprint is and how that falls within that grassed area but that grassed area is a very popular area for motorcycle parking.

Deputy J.H. Young:

It is important to keep it? Yes?

Director of Transport:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Good. Thank you.

The Connétable of St. John:

I wonder if we can close with just the north of town, give that some more thought. I know there is some in Stopford Road. After that if you are trying to find something a bit further north to that there is nothing.

Director of Transport:

We have provided a few extra at Ann Court. We have managed to get some in there on the Ann Court site.

The Connétable of St. John:

Yes, but I am talking about north of that.

Director of Transport:

Yes, I know.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Anyway so from what you have said it is an ongoing project. You recognise the popularity of these and bikes and the sustainability if we move people off cars so more spaces will be a possibility?

Director of Transport:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you. I wonder if we could move, also on the transport, to the subject of taxi regulation. You can see I have brought along the copy of this very impressive document you published, Minister, in March. I wish I could say I have read every word but I think I have read your summary, it is a consultation so we should ask questions. Hands up how many people have read every word of it. But, Minister, could you perhaps tell us how the responses are going? What type of enthusiastic responses have you had so far?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I am pleased to inform you, Chairman, that the consultation on the Taxi Regulatory Reform is proceeding well and T.T.S. is in the process of compiling all of the returns. There have been in excess of 750 questionnaires returned by the public, which is very encouraging. In the region of 150 taxi driver questionnaire returns and written responses from the Consumer Council, Chamber of Commerce, Jersey Hospitality Association and taxi companies and drivers and associations.

[15:15]

In addition to the questionnaire and written responses there have been workshops with taxi drivers, industry representatives, consumer representative organisations and other N.G.O.s (Non-Governmental Organisations) as well as States departments.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Well, that is very impressive, Minister. You have taken the wind out of my sails.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Can I just go straight in and ask, of the 750, were the 150 taxi driver responses included in the 750?

Director of Transport:

No.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

So that is in addition to it?

Director of Transport:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. John:

So they are all positive, I presume? **[Laughter]** Including the Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority reports?

Deputy J.H. Young:

You did not mention them.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

They are all being collated at the moment.

Deputy J.H. Young:

No, you did not mention the Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority submission, Minister? Presumably you have seen that one?

Director of Transport:

Sorry, that is my error.

Deputy J.H. Young:

But the Minister has seen it, yes?

The Connétable of St. John:

What do you say about the report that they have ... have you got any comments to make, Minister?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Not at the moment.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

It was very frank.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Frank and to the point.

Director of Transport:

It did not change their view.

Deputy J.H. Young:

I think we have just ...

Director of Transport:

There is not anything new then.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Would you agree with the contents of their report, Minister?

Deputy J.H. Young:

Perhaps give the Minister thinking time. For the sake of members of the public this response was received today. It is public. We were given it and it basically says that this subject has been going on for a very long time. The first consultation was in the 1990s and that the J.C.R.A. (Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority) previously wrote a report at the end of 2010 and here we are again on the same subject. They basically put forward a view that they think that the interests of the travelling public should be paramount in taxis considering what is done about taxis. They raise certain issues in their letter, which I think is on the website, about the consultation. Have you formed a view?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

What particular ones are concerning you?

Deputy J.H. Young:

Well, some of the things they have said is that they say, if I can read the phrase: "There is an issue of taxi pricing" and the report from the J.C.R.A. says that they feel, for example, that the evidence suggests that there is a very high cost of taxis in the Island and they have flagged up the issue of quantitative controls which they feel serve to maintain the costs arbitrarily high. Therefore, one the phrases in the document they pick up is that they are not convinced by the document that you have issued that says: "The relationship between maintaining a healthy market where drivers are able to make a reasonable living and the service which customers experience should be the principle." They are saying they believe that the customer service and the price should be as a result of more than open market position. That is what they are saying. So they are sort of querying some of the basis of the consultation in there.

Director of Transport:

We are aware of the J.C.R.A.'s stance and in lots of respects we are quite closely aligned to them with what we want in terms of the outcome. I do not have my documents here to run through them point by point. But what the

stance of the department has been in the consultation, in terms of the policy consultation, was that in order to provide ... I mean Jersey is effectively the size of a large market town and has quite good taxi numbers for the size of the Island. In order to be able to provide a good taxi service and a sustainable taxi service then it has to be a taxi service where people earn enough money to be able to reinvest in the vehicles and to be able to provide that service. However, we are in agreement that taxi regulation is only for 3 purposes really and that is to enhance the customer's experience and so we regulate to ensure that there are taxis available, that those vehicles are safe and that the driver who drives those vehicles is properly trained and is of good character and that is our principal ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

But when you get to a part of the document which says: "Taxi pricing is not transparent and fares may not be predictable in advance."

Director of Transport:

That is the result of the J.C.R.A.'s previous intervention in some respects because before the maximum tariff was the same for all taxis and you knew what you were going to pay.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

So when you got into a taxi at the airport you always knew how much it was going to cost you to get to St. Helier?

Director of Transport:

Well, approximately within reason.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Within £10 or £15 probably.

Director of Transport:

I mean what we are saying and the J.C.R.A. agrees with that, once you pick up a taxi along the street that you should be able to ... that they should all

charge the same tariff and that the Minister has set that maximum tariff because those people are not in a good position to renegotiate a price.

The Connétable of St. John:

That is all well and good, picking up a taxi on the street. I have got real concerns now; we are seeing in the social media with the young people having their own type of taxi service and given we have got to take into account that there is obviously no ... there are insurance infractions and everything else that is going on, but obviously now the young people have started it and they are still doing it, no matter what the police will do, they are going to still find a way of getting backwards and forwards around the Island because we have got poor taxi service - that is the only way I can describe it - you try and get a taxi out to St. John to go to St. Mary, for instance, or to Trinity, you can forget it. You can make a dozen phone calls and it will not happen. So, therefore, the youngsters have found a way around it, through using the Internet. Surely, this must be really raising concerns with you, Minister, and your department that we have got unlicensed ... we have got operatives there who are not carrying the right insurance and their vehicles may not be fit for purpose. We do not know. This must really flag something up in your mind that this urgently needs sorting out not just for the youngsters but the taxi situation, per se, on Island.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Absolutely. I have been on the radio twice concerning this, also made a statement to the (*J.E.P.*) *Jersey Evening Post*, pointing out the dangers and the illegality of this. While I appreciate that money is very, very tight, especially among youngsters, to get into a car that is unlicensed is potentially very, very dangerous indeed. There is no way of knowing has the driver been drinking, has the driver been taking drugs and they do not know the character of the person giving them the lift. There are no background checks on the driver. It is potentially very, very dangerous. What I would suggest is that youngsters get together and pool their money and share a cab from A to B, which is perfectly acceptable.

The Connétable of St. John:

But if they have to queue at the Weighbridge for 20, 40, 60 minutes because there is insufficient taxis and they have to have taxi marshals to control things, young people are young people. They are not worried about risk until that accident happens. You know that is what you are when you are 16, 17, 18, 19; you do not worry about the risk. It is like walking across the road and as far as they are concerned, they want to get home and they want to get home as reasonably as possible and they will share, 2 or 3 of them, one of these social media type taxis. I do not think we are handling it the right way. Yes, I can understand what you are saying you have been on the media, this, this and this, and telling them where we are going wrong but we have got to deal with it in a totally different way. You have to think outside the box on this one of how you are going to deal with it and the only way is to either deregulate and make things easier for people to get a licence, to pass the police test. It is all very well that they can say: "Yes, I can operate as a taxi driver" or delivery of people around the Island because: "I have passed this bit of a test. I have got no police record. I have got the police clearance. I can go and do it and therefore I can offer this service at £10 a shot", whatever it is they are doing it for and where they are making themselves quite a few bob, I understand, some of these young people. Because you are not going to stop it happening and the only way is dealing with the whole picture, including the young peoples' end of it. This is something that has come about, obviously, because of modern communications. We need to be up there with them and I think you should be talking to the young people themselves and finding out their needs so you can put those needs in place.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, there are 2 elements to this. Obviously, it is the service to the public, which I agree is paramount, but we are also dealing with peoples' livelihoods with the taxi and cab drivers and private hire drivers. If we do a complete deregulation, as they did in Dublin a while ago, it was complete and utter chaos. People lost their houses. It was just chaos. So what we have to do, we have to work on this very, very carefully.

The Connétable of St. John:

No, you are being played up, Minister. I have been in the House now for, I think, about 18 years and I have seen every 3 years somebody looking at the taxis. That went on long before I even came into the House, somebody was looking at taxis. Nobody has got up there and run with it. I thought the previous Minister was going to get around to it because it was on his agenda but the poor chap lost his seat and I thought he was really going to get to grips with it. That is not happening. We have to get to grips with this one. We are dealing with a 75 year-old law when the old Model T Fords were around, not what we have today.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think it has changed quite a few times since then but we

The Connétable of St. John:

It has been amended.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

So all the questionnaires are in and the team are collating it now and we are working on it.

Deputy J.H. Young:

What is your timetable, Minister? What are your thoughts? Obviously there are some conflicting issues there. You have got a lot of responses from the public. Would I be right in assuming the public are saying that the taxi fares are too expensive?

Director of Transport:

You would guess right. A lot of people think that ...

Deputy J.H. Young:

Are they saying that there are not enough taxis available when they want them?

Director of Transport:

One of the issues is people find the taxi fares confusing because they catch a private hire vehicle out to the airport, it cost them £20, get a rank taxi back to home, it costs them £15.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So they do not understand the difference between the 2 types of taxis?

Director of Transport:

They do not understand the difference and so we are in the process of collating all of those responses.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So they are telling you that? Are they saying it is too much money to go to the airport, for example? Is there any case coming across for set fares on set journeys?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Can I ... States departments get criticised if we jump to conclusions. States departments also get criticised if you spend too much time finding out what the best solution is. We are just in that middle bit here that the process of that report which does take a degree of fortitude to read through but it is a very informative part and it gives you a good context of where the issues are. The work that we are doing in terms of consultation is imperative because it gets you the real picture and hopefully out of this we will get some actions which will make the taxi industry sustainable for Jersey. I really like the concept of deregulation but there are risks to that and the risks to that are as problematic as some of the perhaps restricted practices we have seen. So it is just finding and meandering through that. We are going through it in a proper consultative process so when we are challenged politically, and we will be, no matter what the outcome is, we have got a good defensible position.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So you are going to stick with ... Minister, you will stick with this, yes?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I would say it is a work in progress at the moment.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So your timetable? Obviously, there are some conflicts in there as we have heard.

Director of Transport:

Can I answer on the timetable, if that is okay?

Deputy J.H. Young:

If the Minister is content.

Director of Transport:

We have got the responses in now and we are going to have to work through them. I believe that we are going to have to go back out and speak a little bit more to the industry to get some more information about a number of issues to finally resolve the policy position and quite how we frame our White Paper. So I think that is going to take us a little bit longer than expected. Originally we said we would come back to the States in December, or the end of this year. I think it is likely we will have a paper ready to return to the States in the spring.

Deputy J.H. Young:

The spring of 2013?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

That will not be a proposition that will be another paper looking to move forward to another stage.

Director of Transport:

No, this will be the Minister's White Paper.

The Connétable of St. John:

Can I come back in on something you said, Minister, about the livelihood of those people in the industry? Now, I have got real concerns because across the Island we are seeing people on a weekly basis at the moment losing their employment, et cetera and nobody's doing a great deal for these people and yet you are trying to protect one group of people who can do something to help themselves and do not appear to want to help themselves. I have seen it time and time again over meetings with them, the industry themselves have a body to represent them, as soon as they do not like what the committee say they get rid of their president or their secretary, who is making the comments, and they elect somebody else. That is how they have managed to go for so long without having anything really done within the industry and that is what really worries me.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

No, I did say at the beginning that obviously the public is paramount but we must bear in mind we are dealing with peoples' livelihoods. Obviously the taxi drivers, the cab drivers and the private hire car drivers.

The Connétable of St. John:

But they are no different to a plumber, a gas fitter, a builder, a carpenter or anyone else running a business, a hairdresser, they have all got commitments to the public and if they cannot make it go then they go out of business and that is exactly what would happen with these. If they cannot work within whatever we put in place: "Sorry, if you cannot work within it you go and find something else to do."

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, I think it is a bit more complicated than that. As I said, looking at the Irish experience with Dublin it was just a disaster. Deregulation is a complete disaster. We have to do things slowly, incrementally, and make improvements on the way.

[15:30]

The Connétable of St. John:

Well, how slow have we got to be? As I say in my 18 years in the States we have not dealt with the issue.

Director of Transport:

One of the problems is here that we have not, or the Minister has not, spelt out what the policy proposals are in terms of regulation, deregulation and what aspects and what timetables. We would be in a better position to speak about this once we have formulated some of these ideas and got them down on to paper and it is ready to be scrutinised.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Will there be a stage when there might be a point to have that dialogue because obviously I have let the discussion go on because I think it has brought out the issues. Plainly, we have got issues about complete deregulation, the J.C.R.A. say: "A single tier regulation, regulation of drivers and so on", there are lots of permutations in there but you want to go to the States in 2013 with a White Paper. Would there be a stage in-between now and then, because that is a long time away, where there can be a dialogue. It strikes me as being this is ... I think the point I am picking up from Members and what people are telling us is that there is urgency behind this.

Director of Transport:

I would suggest this winter we would have enough detail to make it an interesting and worthwhile debate and not to just be about semantics and possibilities but we hear about the situation in the Island.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So by the end of the year. Minister, would that seem to be doable from your ... you are the one who has got the kind of poison chalice on your plate, as it were?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

That sounded doable.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you, Minister.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Can I just add one more question? Minister, I have always been under the impression, you go to London or Paris or wherever, and you get in a taxi and the meter starts ticking and I was under the impression that meters are calibrated by a central body. I have been made aware, recently, that in Jersey the taxi drivers, themselves, are in a position to calibrate their own meters. Could you confirm whether that is correct or not?

Director of Transport:

The companies can charge what they wish and so we do not set the tariff or inject the tariff into the company meters but we do check the meters when they come in, that the mile that they measure is the correct mile. You see what I mean?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

But cabs as opposed to taxis?

Deputy J.H. Young:

I am confused, Minister, I am sorry. I thought you set the tariffs.

Director of Transport:

Only for the controlled vehicles which are the rank vehicles which is why they are cheaper than the private hire vehicles.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Taxi cabs.

Deputy J.H. Young:

The other firms who are not in that can charge what they like?

Director of Transport:

Yes, that is why they are ...

Deputy J.H. Young:

When you sit in a cab and you look at a meter, how do you know the difference?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Well, you need to know whether you are sitting in a cab or a taxi; that is the first thing.

Director of Transport:

That is the issue, yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

The numbers look the same except that they are more in one type.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

If it says "taxi" on the roof then you know what you are getting into.

Deputy J.H. Young:

But they do not; they say ... there are yellow ones, white ones, green ... orange ones, whatever, that says: "Controlled or regulated", does it not? It does not tell you.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, it said "taxi" or a "cab" on the roof.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Does it?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

There is a new initiative for rank taxis to have a sticker. I do not know if you have seen the adoption of that. It is part of the new group there and the new leadership of that group are far more proactive in terms of promoting the benefits of a rank taxi as opposed to a cab hire.

The Connétable of St. John:

So you could have 2 private hire vehicles doing the same run, one is charging, I do not know how much, is it, shall we say, £1.50 a mile and the other one is charging £1.70 a mile, running for the same distance, in private hire, and then you have got your taxi charging £1 a mile so you could have 3 different fares or as many different fares ... apart from the, shall we say, the States controlled taxi, all the remainder you could have a dozen different fares to get to where you are going?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Would you not agree, Minister, that if all taxis were painted bright yellow, like they are in New York, or black and a certain model, like they are in London, that the travelling public would have a much easier job to do to decide whether they were getting into a taxi or a cab?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, as the Chief Officer has just stated, that the rank taxis now are going to have a checkerboard taxi logo on the side so that they are easily identifiable that you are getting into a taxi. But the taxis, we regulate the maximum fare, they can charge under that if they wish.

Deputy J.H. Young:

That is the rate per mile, is it that you regulate for that group?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

I mean you have helped us out. I have learnt a lot here because it does explain why people are saying taxis are expensive but we do not know which of those groups of people they happen to be making those comments about.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think you are quite right, Chairman, that the general public are not totally aware whether they are getting into a taxi or a cab. As has been pointed out you could go in a taxi to the airport and pay one fee, get a cab somewhere else, it is completely different.

Deputy of St. Martin:

But you could also go to the airport, Minister, when there are no taxis available and find a private hire car sitting in a taxi rank, would you not accept that?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Correct. That is permissible, yes.

Deputy of St. Martin:

It is permissible but it is confusing for the public, would you not accept that?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

If there is no taxi there, a cab is allowed to pick you up.

Director of Transport:

They should charge the controlled tariff for that work.

Deputy J.H. Young:

One last question on this, Minister. Under the present law, because obviously at the end of the day you have got to come ... is it possible under the current

law for a journey, irrespective of the type of vehicle or group that does it, say from the town to airport, for you under the current law to say, that is the maximum charge? Can you do it now under the current law?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Under the current law I do not believe I can do that.

Director of Transport:

I would need to check.

Acting Finance Director, Transport and Technical Services:

I believe that the tariffs are set on a rate per distance and a time stopped as well. So if you were stopped in traffic during that journey then that would still keep the meter increasing. So it would be difficult to set an absolute.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Okay. But I suppose the point I am getting at is you cannot control the prices of the people who are not taxis?

Director of Transport:

At the moment the Minister controls the tariff of the rank taxis. The proposal in the Green Paper was that the Minister controlled the price of all taxis, so all the taxi cabs.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So that is in a Green Paper now. That is in there.

Director of Transport:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Obviously we have got comments on that and if that survives into a White Paper and that gets approved by the States that is what it will be.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Director of Transport:

That is supported also by the J.C.R.A.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Maybe, Chairman, I could have the last question for the Minister? Minister, after all your consultations and Greens and White Papers, et cetera, would you agree that maintenance of the status quo at the end of this process will not be acceptable?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I do not think the status quo would exist. There will be changes.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Thank you very much.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Minister, thank you for that session. Obviously, it is a fairly robust one but I think we have got some key issues there. Thank you for your co-operation with that. I think now we would like to move to the subject of D.V.S. (Driver and Vehicle Standards) and Road Traffic Law. Steve, do you want to pick this up first please?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Well, yes, I was going to start by being amusing and ask the Minister if he knew how many vehicles were on the road in Jersey in 1937 but I think that seeing as we are pushed for time I will not.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Before my time, I am afraid.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

We are obviously dealing with a very old law, Minister, when it comes to motor cars on roads. I am concerned that if we do not start to make some serious changes to the Motor Traffic Law soon that we are going to get ourselves into deeper and deeper water. My concerns are being heightened by the addition, most recently, of a vehicle at the West Show, made by the Renault Motor Car Company which is now an electric vehicle which is going to be licensed, I believe, as a quadricycle and it is going to be exempt, it will be P30. I think what I am coming to is the fact that if Renault is making this type of vehicle now means that in the near future we are going to get other serious motor manufacturers coming along with similar. I feel that we really do need to start tackling a major root and branch rewrite of our motor law. I must ask, when do you think we can get into this because all I can see is us getting into deeper and deeper water and confusion over this and other issues?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, the majority of D.V.S.' work is statutory and driven by customer demand. D.V.S. has clear customer service targets and these are set out in the department's business plan. Since 1997 D.V.S.'s staff has been reduced from 21 to 16 by successive reviews including the Law Review Officer. There is now no further scope to reduce current staffing levels and that has been demonstrated by the organisational stress caused by recent long term illness within the team. However, D.V.S has continued to meet its customer service target by prioritising its statutory obligations as you would expect. This has left little or no capacity to undertake discretionary tasks and business improvement work. A strategy is being devised to address this and will, in part, be implemented over the next 12 months. The strategy will also consider how a review of the road traffic law can be undertaken and provide for the considerable specialist resources required.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Okay. Thank you for that, Minister. I note that you do not want to make any further reductions in your staff levels at D.V.S. Would there not be scope for better or different utilisation of the existing staff if we started to move to a

more automated system of registering and things like that and particularly the use of the Internet for the registration of motor cars, for example?

Director of Transport:

We are, at the moment, introducing new software to hopefully help streamline and support D.V.S. I think we would be open to doing more work online where possible and I think that is the type of thing that has really got to come out of the review of D.V.S.; how the business can be improved and where the investment is required.

The Connétable of St. John:

Are you talking to the garages and the people who register vehicles regularly because that is one of the biggest complaints that I receive, people go down there to register or reregister a vehicle and they can lose a morning or half a morning to go in a office with form filling and all the rest that has to go on. So you are talking to these people?

Director of Transport:

Yes, I mean D.V.S. is in regular contact with all the main ...

The Connétable of St. John:

Yes, I mean the D.V.S. maybe but whoever is doing the research are they ...

Director of Transport:

We have not started the research yet. We have really got to ... at the moment within D.V.S. there is not the capacity to do that work to re-engineer the business, to look at how it is going to go forward in the future. The first step is to say: "How can we provide some resource in there to review how the current systems work? What works well? What does not work well? How we can streamline them and improve them going forward?" But that said, I mean D.V.S. does hit its targets in terms of turning around the documentation.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Can I just come in there? One of things we were told throughout the public sector is the public sector transformation programme. All of that needs investment and effort to be able to secure changes. From what you have said you have not got the resource to do this. You know it needs changing, you want to do it but you have not got the resource. Would that be correct?

Director of Transport:

We were struck by some ... long term illness is one of the issues within D.V.S. Because of the nature of the work it is very difficult to ... you cannot find people off the street to do this work.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

One of the problems with law changes is we accept the laws are outmoded and we have lots of issues with the laws and trying to make the laws fit is going to be a bigger challenge as new vehicles - as you have said, the Twizy is a good example of that - come online. The difficulty is we need high calibre individuals who have this as a specialism, or the law as a specialism, and in Jersey these people are very expensive. We have not been able to secure the funding, which is sort of 6 figure funding, to do this sort of work, which means taking that money out of infrastructure or taking that money out of roads resurfacing, if we undertake this work at present, or even find the right people of the right calibre to do it.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Do you not have access to money or resources for this public sector reform programme, presumably there is a budget for all that, to draw from it?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

There is a 'spend to save' budget. I am not sure if you can define savings and certainly in the political timeline of the savings and the C.S.R. (Comprehensive Spending Review) savings I do not think this would punch out ... the business case does not work in that time period.

Deputy J.H. Young:

I thought you said you had made the savings already?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

No. We are just running with too few staff but we are not making savings. We are just prioritising the work that we do because of illness and problems we have had ...

Deputy J.H. Young:

So how can we help you to get you the extra funding that you need to make this happen so we can get this department working as it should and being brought up to 2015, shall we say, standard?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

What we are hearing we have got an old law, 75 years ago, when there were horses and carts, we have got all sorts of modern vehicles. You have got lots of opportunities I.T. (Information Technology) wise and systems wise, that all require investment and expert knowledge. You have got the knowledge but you have not got the resources.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

It is a difficult thing to prioritise in terms of spend within the States of Jersey. We accept the issue ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

But you accept the fact that the motor car has come on an awful long way in 75 years and we do not seem to have kept up with it in our laws.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think in one ... I mean the Smart Car for instance, it did not meet the original spec but that was researched and gone into. The Renault Twizy has now been accepted. I mean that fits in with our transport policy which is fine. But there is an awful lot of work to do, we accept that.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I am not going to get too controversial but I think the Twizy is going under quadricycles but yet we do not allow quad bikes on the road.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Correct.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Is that not the same thing?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Quad bikes have been brought up a few times.

[15:45]

Quad bikes, as such, would not fit in with our road system because obviously being 4-wheel drive and obviously permanent 4-wheel drive they would not be safe on the roads. There are some with split differentials which you can use on roads but it is a long way off yet and it has been thought not desirable.

Director of Transport:

Can I just add to that? We did consult, I think it was last year, with the Comité des Connétables and there was no appetite to allow quad bikes, per se, to circulate on our roads. However, D.V.S. ... if someone needs it for a specific purpose be they a lifeguard or doing something in agriculture then, of course, they will be granted a licence to operate one.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I only asked the question because I think that people get put in very difficult positions when - how can I put this delicately - one person is allowed and one person is not. It is much easier for civil servants and officers to have something in black and white where they can say: "No, you cannot do this and yes you can do this" because it makes life difficult for everybody when you have a bit of both.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Maybe it is an issue, would you agree, listen to this, this is an area of acknowledged need but you do not have the resources. There is not a system to provide it. The priorities are not going to be there to give you that. Maybe it is an issue we should be taking up with the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel as this is about public sector reform and so on and there should be funds for this.

The Connétable of St. John:

Would there be any merit in looking at things under regulation instead of law? Would you be able to move any faster in getting things done? You talk about vehicles at the moment. If you did it by regulation, would there be any merit in going down that road instead of having to do the whole law?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

I think there is a legal answer to that question. It appears that that, from my personal position, would be a far more pragmatic way and more flexible way for the future. I think there is a legal reason and a better reason than what I can give you on that answer. In dealing with grey, and I think you highlighted the point very well, it becomes very difficult to make a decision and then be able to back a decision up when the laws or the regulation are not there to accomplish it. You can go through P30 vehicles, you can go through overweight vehicles, you can compare it to tractors and agricultural vehicles. You see lots of areas where there is a perceived unfairness which has been going for many years. All that needs to be addressed but it is a big piece of work. We would never underestimate the time it would take or the calibre of people to do it.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

The tractor law in particular is a classic example of getting yourself into very deep water because the tractor law was passed, 16 year-olds, et cetera, and that was designed for a very different generation and tractors were very small and low horsepower.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

When we were all youngsters and everyone drove the old Massey Ferguson on the farm, it was not a problem but now they are huge pieces of machinery.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you very much.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I was just going to say could we move on to our last one you will be delighted to know.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Yes, I was just about to do so. I suppose our starting question is really quite simple. It is about the implications of the incident at Jersey Gas for T.T.S. operations at La Collette and I suppose it is also not just T.T.S. operations but it is private companies who are there. What I would like to know as a starting point is who is the responsible authority for that site, who deals with setting these safety restrictions and so on?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, obviously, the Energy from Waste Plant comes under T.T.S. but the rest of the site ...

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Comes under me. I am the Chairman of the Hazard Review Group which takes a strategic view on La Collette and the safety case for La Collette. That includes the fire-fighting system down there and the proximity of the fuel farm and the gas site to other operations.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Excellent, we are speaking to the right person then, excellent news.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

I did not volunteer for it.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Just for the record, do you report to the Minister or do you report in to some other body?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

I report to the Chief Executive on that.

Deputy J.H. Young:

The Chief Executive of ...

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

The States.

Deputy J.H. Young:

The States.

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Which then goes to a ...

Deputy J.H. Young:

The ministerial responsibility goes to the Chief Minister?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes, I believe so, as part of the Safety Steering Group.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Would you let us carry on with this, Minister, bearing in mind it is not your responsibility...

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Please do.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Can I just ask then, Chief Officer, what additional facilities will be required by Jersey Gas at La Collette, given that they are obviously now closing down their gasworks very quickly?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

They had entrained a plan to and they are constructing now a replacement for the gasholder which is a gas production facility at La Collette. The timings have changed a touch, the time to accelerate that, and the handover commissioning period is going to be a lot quicker than they were planning because I think they were planning to decommission the gasholder next year. So that is basically another module, another unit, within their site within their boundary which is being planned.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

They have space for that work?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

The work is commissioned and is being undertaken at the moment so yes, it is there and it is within their site boundary.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Is there any planning consents necessary for that or ...

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

That has all been given and granted and done.

Deputy J.H. Young:

It has all been done?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So there is no reason from your point of view why that migration of that facility should not proceed in terms of logistics?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Absolutely. The key thing it is not a gasholder; it is a new gas production plant. It is quite a small compact unit, smaller than this room, which just produces gas as a standby plant to the existing gas production plant.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

But it will not change any restrictions that are in place at La Collette at the moment? It will not make them more onerous?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

We do not believe so. We have just commissioned a domino effect study which is to review the effects of a problem on the gas company on the fuel farm, and a problem on the fuel farm on the gas company, and basically we are hoping that study will finally secure where the zones and rings and security and risk and hazard envelope is at La Collette.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

When do you hope to have the wrapped report completed by?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

That is about 3 months away. We are currently going through a consultation and talking to the gas company and fuel farm.

Deputy J.H. Young:

That includes the private businesses that are operating?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes, the majority of risks obviously I think by inspection come from the gas company and the fuel farm and the real study is quite simply if one blows up, what happens to the other and vice versa, so that is the key

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Although safety, of course, is paramount for the public, are you hopeful that this report will allow you some discretion in the planning abilities that you can have on La Collette?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

I hope so, yes. What I think the Island should take stock of, is hazards like we had and the issue we had last week in a very built-up area is something which we should not be faced with in the future. La Collette is not as far away from everywhere as we would like but it is quite a resilient place for those sorts of issues. If you look at the issues of evacuations and the issues of getting people out of their homes who live very close to the site, it was a very successful undertaking but I think everybody realised how grave the situation was last week or the week before.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Will the gas company have any storage at all down at La Collette or will they just produce on demand?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

My understanding is they will produce on demand. There is no storage of the scale or quantity that we saw.

Deputy J.H. Young:

The group that you are reviewing, the effects on La Collette for the future as a result of this move, is there planning input into that from the Environment Department?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes it is a multi-agency group so there is the Fire Service, the Health and Safety Inspectorate, Planning are represented, Environment are represented and the key stakeholders at La Collette are represented.

Deputy J.H. Young:

So in 3 months you think we will be able to get some clarity about what the longer term restrictions are on the zones and so on and what can and cannot be done in that area?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

That is what I am hoping for. We have had these reports before that have not quite provided that clarity so I will wait until the reports are released before I guarantee that, but that is what we are trying to strive for.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you for that and there are no effects at the moment, immediate on T.T.S. operations yourselves in terms of the operation of the Energy from Waste Plant or the solid waste operation you have got there?

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:

No.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Are there any more questions?

The Deputy of St. Martin:

No, I am fine.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Well, I think with that, I think you have more than adequately covered the scope of that question. Thank you, Minister, for allowing us to carry on accepting it is not ... do you want to add anything on that, Minister? Do you have a view on that you want to cover while we are together?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

No, obviously I am delighted that the operation in Tunnell Street is winding down now and that should open up the area for development.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Excellent, thank you for that, Minister. Thank you for bringing your team in full and helping us so very much and, thank you, my team.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Thank you, Chairman.

Deputy J.H. Young:

Thank you and with that, I will close the meeting 5 minutes ahead of time.

[15:55]