

STATES OF JERSEY



ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN 2009 (P.113/2008): ELEVENTH AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 2nd September 2008
by the Deputy of St. Ouen

STATES GREFFE

1 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (a) –

In paragraph (a)(vii) after the words “pages 26 to 28” insert the words –

“except that in success criterion (i) in Objective 3 on page 26, after the words ‘public realm’ there shall be inserted the words ‘to include a funding mechanism to help extend the mains drain network.’ ”.

2 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (a) –

In paragraph (a)(ix) after the words “pages 31 to 32” insert the words –

“except that after success criterion (ii) in Objective 2 on page 31 there shall be inserted the following success criterion (with the subsequent success criteria renumbered) –

‘(iii) In conjunction with the Planning and Environment Department and other interested parties, funding options brought forward to extend the mains drain network brought forward and considered by the States by end of 2009;’ ”.

DEPUTY OF ST. OUEN

REPORT

Amendment (1) – Planning and Environment Department

Many might ask, why is this amendment necessary and what benefit can be derived from it?

The present success criteria mention the use of planning policy and planning gains to secure improvements to the public realm. The wording is quite ambiguous although it is clearly designed to deliver additional public benefit. The question left unanswered is what might the words “improvements in public realm” describe?

For many Islanders the provision of main drains in rural areas would most definitely fall into this category. It is totally unsatisfactory in this day and age that access to an essential service like mains drains is not available to householders, especially where relatively large groups of dwelling exist in rural areas.

In recent times much emphasis has been placed on planning gains and obligations to provide much-needed facilities in areas of development, including the provision of community facilities, road improvements, and even an albeit voluntary contribution to art.

Percentage for art is a recognised funding mechanism where developers are encouraged to allocate a percentage of the capital costs of any new building(s), refurbishment or landscaping scheme towards the provision for art. Members should note that a specific success criterion is included under Objective 5 to encourage the delivery of public art. This ultimately raises the question, if planning gains and obligations can be used to obtain money from a developer and include actions which encourage the delivery of public art, then why cannot the same apply to mains drains extensions?

New developments, in areas where mains drains are present, benefit from being able to access the drainage network for little cost, so why not seek some form of contribution from the developer of property that falls into this category to help fund the provision of drains in areas where they currently do not exist?

On occasions, proposed new developments outside of the mains drains network are at times requested by the department to help provide mains drains in the immediate vicinity, so one could argue that a form of precedent has already been set. Why not extend this to all new developments?

Any hope householders had regarding the provision of mains drains to their area disappeared when funding for mains drains extensions was stopped a number of years ago. It is time that real effort is made by all concerned to address this matter with the view to finding an acceptable and sustainable way forward. To do nothing is unacceptable.

Amendment (2) – Transport and Technical Services

It is disappointing that the Liquid Waste strategy is still to be considered by the States, as I and many others had thought that, following last year’s Business Plan debate, the strategy was nearing completion and would be considered this year.

As a result of the delay, the issue of mains drains extensions is still to be resolved. Indeed in this year’s Business Plan under Objective 2, the success criterion relevant to this issue reads– *Approval of the Liquid Waste strategy approved and implementation plan prepared.*

This statement seems to indicate that for many, the provision of mains drains extensions to their particular area is still a long way off. There is however, a sign of hope, when one reads the second success criterion where the aim is to identify a long-term sustainable funding route for liquid waste to ensure proper support for the provision of the service. My concern is that in practice, one could interpret this statement in a number of different ways as it is a very general in nature.

This amendment is designed to support the department in their efforts to address the issue but also encourage the Transport and Technical Services and Planning and Environment Departments to work together to find an appropriate and acceptable solution.

Presently all available public funds are being used to improve and maintain the existing sewage system, in built-up areas where mains drains are already available. For those without access to the sewage network this in itself could be viewed as inequitable.

I appreciate budgets at present do not seem to allow for extensions to the sewage system, however this surely is not an insurmountable problem. Efforts must be made to address this issue and dialogue needs to take place with all interested parties, including developers and those households where the lack of mains drains is a problem.

If the Assembly approves this amendment it is my sincere hope that every effort will be made to address this issue and find a solution which enables the mains drains extension programme to be restarted.

Financial and manpower implications

There are no direct financial or manpower implications arising from this proposition.