

STATES OF JERSEY



GOVERNMENT PLAN 2021-2024 (P.130/2020): TWENTY-FIRST AMENDMENT (P.130/2020 AMD.(21)) - COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 11th December 2020
by the Council of Ministers**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The Council of Ministers agrees with this proposal and urges States Members to accept the amendment.

Conclusions

- This amendment raises an important area of work and the Minister for the Environment welcomes it and thanks the Connétable for bringing it forward.
- The Carbon Neutral Strategy is clear that biodiversity initiatives are important and legitimate responses to the climate emergency and ‘tree preservation initiatives’ fulfil this brief in many ways. As is rightly recognised in the amendment, trees form an important part of the island’s landscape and townscape character, are significant contributors to biodiversity, sequester carbon, provide shade and urban cooling and promote mental health and well-being for islanders.

Background

- The proposal to develop an ‘Island Tree Strategy’ is welcome. We agree that it is important to develop a comprehensive framework for the protection and management of all Jersey’s trees and woodland to ensure that they are adequately protected and cared for; and that the island’s green infrastructure can be maintained and enhanced in the future to help mitigate and adapt to climate change. This should include a review of the efficiency and effectiveness of the use of existing regulatory provisions, and the potential for their enhancement; the development of policy for the management and enhancement of the island’s tree stock on public and private land; and a clear and prioritised plan and programme for action and implementation.
- Some work is already underway in Infrastructure, Housing and Environment in this area, supported by funding agreed in the 2020 Government Plan from the Climate Emergency Fund. Whilst COVID has delayed 2020 progress, the Minister for Environment, in evidence to the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel, reiterated that this workstream is a priority.
- The effect of this amendment, with the provision of this more substantial resource, will springboard this important work in 2021 and give it longevity: the successful management of a tree population is, by its very nature, a long-term process and there is considered to be a need to ensure significant investment to ensure that this work is well-founded and sustainable into the future.
- Continued funding over three years will enable the appointment of a dedicated resource to enable the establishment of a robust basis to undertake this important work. There is great value in funding this work from the Climate Emergency Fund because if the full resources are not expended in 2021 they can roll forward into subsequent years to match with an agreed phased work plan.

Financial and Manpower Implications

- The financial implications of this amendment would be that the available balance on the Climate Emergency Fund, at the end of 2021, would likely reduce by £300,000, with a reduction of £75,000 in each of the following years in the plan.

Statement under Standing Order 37A [Presentation of comment relating to a proposition]

These comments were submitted to the States Greffe after the noon deadline as set out in Standing Order 37A due to final due diligence and checking taking place.