

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
BY DEPUTY S. PITMAN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 28th APRIL 2009**

Question

Given the attendance of the Minister at the recent British-Irish Council, would he inform Members what the States of Jersey is doing right and wrong in terms of global warming issues? Would he outline what we should be doing better and advise what action, if any, he plans to take to ensure this happens?

Answer**1. Background**

I thank the Deputy for the timely nature of this question given that the theme of the British Irish Council, Environment (BIC(E)) summit, held on the 17th April, was climate change. The opportunity to work with the other British Irish jurisdictions on this matter was an invaluable chance to exchange experiences and knowledge and in particular receive an update from Professor Mitchell of the UK Met Office, Hadley Centre on the latest climate change scenarios. Attending Ministers were as detailed in the notes at the end of this answer.

2. Awareness of Climate Change**2.1 The production of 'Turning Point' – the ECO-ACTIVE guide to the Science and Impacts of Climate Change**

A critical area identified by the BIC(E) forum was that of awareness of the issue of Climate Change and I feel we are making good progress here in Jersey on that issue. I refer to the recent production of 'Turning Point - the ECO-ACTIVE guide to Climate Change' that all Members will have received their copy of. I hope that you will agree with me that it is a highly accessible summary of the science behind climate change and the effect of greenhouse gas emissions arising from human activity on our global climate.

In addition, 'Turning Point' outlines the impacts of climate change on Jersey and highlights the challenges ahead as a result of the predicted climatic shifts for example longer hotter summers and warmer wetter winters. Attendees of the BIC(E) commented that 'Turning Point' provided a very comprehensive summary of the subject that will raise awareness and understanding of the issue preparing the way for challenging proposals for mitigation and adaptation^[i].

Copies of 'Turning Point' have been issued to a number of stakeholders and are available from the Planning and Environment Department in hard copy as well as being posted on www.ECO-ACTIVE.je for downloading. In addition we will be distributing copies to all the schools accompanied with a resource pack that highlights how climate change and associated issues can be integrated into the curriculum.

2. Mitigating Climate Change - An Energy Policy for Jersey

Awareness and understanding is the first step in addressing the challenges of climate change. Mitigation, however is encompassed by an Energy Policy and an extensive Green Paper – ‘Fuel for Thought?’ was consulted upon in 2007/2008. The Green Paper and the feedback from the consultation process has been developed into a draft White Paper and the principles of this were endorsed by the Council of Ministers in autumn 2008.

The proposed goal of Jersey's energy policy is to achieve ‘**Secure, Affordable, Sustainable Energy**’. This recognised that energy is essential to our quality of life, our economy and social equity. The Green Paper put forward a number of options that described the fiscal, legislative and policy measures to achieve this goal. The measures proposed fall into the following categories:

- Doing more with less – reducing energy use;
- Adopting sustainable energy solutions;
- Ensuring a secure and resilient energy supply;
- Preparing for the future.

To help make sense of the priority for action, an Energy Hierarchy for Jersey was established. In this hierarchy the first step is to reduce energy demand followed step two which is to use low-carbon fuels. Step three is to use less imported energy and then the hierarchy proposes that the other impacts of energy use are reduced. The lowest action priority in the hierarchy is to negate unavoidable carbon emissions.

The Energy White Paper will be brought forward to the States later this year and will encompass the principles of the green paper and propose a suite of policy options to mitigate Jersey’s contribution to global emissions and achieve ‘secure, affordable and sustainable’ energy for the Island into the long term. The White Paper is a cross-departmental piece of work led by the Energy policy Steering group comprising myself, the Minister for Treasury and Resources and the Minister for Economic Development. It will propose challenging carbon-reduction targets in line with European best practice such as a reduction in Jersey’s carbon emissions of at least 80% by 2050 (on a 1990 baseline). The Energy White Paper will also identify the need to bring forward a strategy to measure and cope with the effects of climate change.

3. Progress ahead of the publication of an Energy Policy

Considerable progress has been made on three critical workstreams ahead of the publication of the Energy White Paper: delivering an Energy Efficiency Service; progressing investigations into large-scale renewable energy for Jersey and improving the minimum statutory thermal performance of new buildings.

3.1 An Energy Efficiency Service

Funding for the first phase of an energy efficiency programme in 2009 was agreed by the States in September 2008 (£1M); this has been supported by a voluntary contribution of £500,000 from the Jersey Electricity Company. The programme is aimed at helping low-income and vulnerable households^[ii] reduce their energy bills and improve the energy efficiency of their homes by providing up to 100% grants for a range of measures including loft and cavity wall insulation.

A full service will be offered incorporating, inspection, supply and fitting through approved contractors. We aim to treat approximately 800 homes over the next 12 months and the benefits are three-fold :

- Low-income groups will benefit from a reduction in energy use and thus lower energy bills;
- There are environmental benefits since overall energy use (and thus carbon emissions) will be reduced;
- There is a stimulus to the local economy by the injection of considerable sums into the building sector e.g. cavity wall and loft installers.

The intention is that the first phase of this initiative will act as a stimulus for recurring funding and more substantial States funded programmes to encourage people to use energy sustainably and to act on climate change.

The Service will be advised by the 'Jersey Energy Trust' an independent unpaid body which is being constituted with a remit to monitor the progress of the scheme and provide advice for the development of the project now and in subsequent phases. An external advisor from the UK's Energy Savings Trust sits on the Jersey Energy Trust and has been able to provide invaluable assistance in the development of the scheme as have the Advisory Group on Environmental Sustainability (AGES)^[iii].

2. Renewable Energy for Jersey

The potential for the exploitation of renewable energy, at a large enough scale to displace fossil fuel imports in the long-term was identified in the Energy Policy Green Paper. In the summer of 2008, I appointed a Tidal Power Steering Group (TPSG), chaired by the Constable of Grouville, to advise how the Island might best exploit tidal stream technology in its territorial waters.

The TPSG kindly reported back in December 2008 with the unanimous conclusion that tidal power could, in the medium term, make a significant and increasing contribution to the energy requirements and security of the Island for the rest of this century. Furthermore, the possibility should be actively pursued by an appropriately qualified and mandated group. The TPSG have recently recommended to me the format of the mandated group with a remit to:

- Investigate funding options around the environmental and technical investigations;
- Investigate the legislative and commercial framework necessary to attract resource developers;
- Liaise with our neighbouring jurisdictions to explore potential collaborations both in harnessing the resource and selling to potential markets.

I am convinced that this is a vast long-term opportunity for Jersey and shall be shortly be convening the first phase of this group. I had the opportunity during the BIC(E) summit to hold extremely productive discussions with Lord Hunt of Kings Heath^[iv] whose portfolio includes tidal power.

I consider opening discussion with the UK and our neighbouring Channel Islands critical to achieving the most advantageous progress. Should the Island develop large scale renewable energy generating capacity, it is likely to wish to export the majority into a larger grid system for two reasons : i) to ensure a smoothed supply (renewable generation is intermittent) and ii) to take advantage of higher tariffs from European jurisdictions which have legal and financial incentives to purchase renewably generated electricity. Any such approach will require careful consideration of the benefits to Islanders but early discussions are essential and the BIC(E) presented a welcome opportunity to begin this process.

3. More challenging building bye-laws

Over 30% of our carbon emissions arise from the built environment locally so the thermal performance of this sector is very important in ensuring minimal energy use and emissions as well as an improved living environment for the eventual occupier. I have been working to bring forward more challenging updated building bye-laws to ensure that new developments perform to the highest standards and I expect these to be completed and in force by the autumn.

The Deputy also asks if I would outline what we should be doing better and advise what action, if any, he plans to take to ensure this happens. My answer to this is that I would have liked to have seen the Energy Policy White Paper brought to the States earlier. However, over the last year there has been considerable movement in the global market place in respect of energy prices as well as in the global economy as a whole. We have taken the view that we must account for this rapidly changing scene in the White Paper and so further work has been carried out to ensure it is robust but unfortunately this has caused a delay. Nevertheless, I believe my commitment to progress the three significant workstreams outlined above has meant that we are still making considerable meaningful progress whilst ensuring that we will be bringing forward a challenging policy for debate by the States

that proves Jersey takes its global environmental responsibilities seriously.

NOTES

Ministers Attending the BIC(E) event

- Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, Minister for Sustainable Development and Energy Innovation and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords, UK
- Mr Michéal Kitt TD, Minister of State, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Ireland
- Stewart Stevenson MSP, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change, Scotland
- Jane Davidson AM, Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, Wales
- Hon John Shimmin, MHK Minister for the Department of Local Government and the Environment, Isle of Man
- Deputy Peter Sirett, Minister, Environment Department, Guernsey
- Minister Sammy Wilson, MP, MLA Minister of the Environment for Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland
- Minister Conor Murphy MP, MLA, Minister for Regional Development, Northern Ireland
- Senator Freddie Cohen, Minister for Planning and Environment, States of Jersey

^[i] *Mitigation* involves taking actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to enhance carbon sinks aimed at reducing the extent of climate change. *Adaptation* involves taking action to plan for and minimise the impacts of climate change.

^[ii] The Phase 1 target group for this initiative are those home-owners in receipt of either the Cold Weather Payment or that are on the 65+ Health Scheme. Further phases of the scheme are expected will to extend this group. Those in States housing are not included in the scheme since there is a parallel scheme running within the States to upgrade these properties. Ways in which to extend the scheme to tenants living in accommodation owned by private landlords are being explored.

^[iii] AGES is Co-Chaired by Dr Lee Durrell and Sir Nigel Broomfield

^[iv] Minister for Sustainable Development and Energy Innovation and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords