

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE  
BY DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 24th SEPTEMBER 2019**

**Question**

Will the Minister advise –

- (a) what the annual financial return from the Liberty Bus contract was in 2018; what specific projects this money has been spent on; and what the projected return is for 2019;
- (b) how much subsidy Liberty Bus received, or is estimated to receive, from the Government of Jersey during 2018 and 2019;
- (c) what percentage and amount of Liberty Bus ‘profits’ from the Jersey bus service were returned to Jersey bus operations; and
- (d) what proportion and amount of any such ‘profits’ from the Jersey bus service were used in other, off-Island bus providers within the HCT group?

**Answer**

- (a) As an update to the provisional figure of £289,000 given in my answer to Written Question 290, the financial return from the Liberty Bus contract in 2018, in terms of the States’ portion of the surplus over and above the contractually-agreed declared margin, remains subject to final audit but is currently expected to be in the region of £257,000.

As also stated in my answer to Written Question 290, this income will be paid into the revenue budget of the Transport Planning section, and partially allocated to covering a shortfall in the funding of concessionary travel reimbursement due to higher than forecast demand from holders of senior citizen passes, with the remainder contributing towards sustainable transport infrastructure. Current projects which this money is helping to pay for includes:-

- New pedestrian crossing facilities aiding access to and from bus stops, such as the recent schemes on Longueville Road and at Beach Road in Gorey;
- Pavement enhancements on Rouge Bouillon, and new pedestrian refuge islands on Route du Fort and at Gorey Common;
- Design and procurement of further waiting shelter installations at bus stops;
- Kerb realignment of the kerbs at Liberation Station to improve the pedestrian environment and the operational efficiency of bus services using the external stands.

At this stage it is too early to predict with any certainty what the figure for 2019 will be, but early indications suggest that it will be of a similar quantum to 2018.

- (b) I must stress that the contract payments from the Government of Jersey to Liberty Bus represent a subsidy to the travelling public, rather than to the company. The total value of payments for operation of both the main public bus network and the school bus network in 2018 was £3.421m with payments totalling a further £0.875m in respect of reimbursement for journeys made by holders of free concessionary travel passes. The projected expenditure in these areas for 2019 is £3.554m and £0.952m respectively.

- (c) At the heart of the bus operating contract is a profit share arrangement whereby any surplus over a base level of 3% is shared equally with the Government, to reinvest in infrastructure. The majority of LibertyBus' profit is retained in Jersey to reinvest and their aim is to allocate a minimum of 30% of its profits towards vehicles, service enhancements, community transport and social impact projects, as well as exploring new ideas such as electric buses, and new routes. A small amount of profit leaves the island to contribute towards the parent company's group costs, which generates benefits for LibertyBus through reduced shared service costs, purchasing scale, access to innovation, and further investment and expertise.
- (d) LibertyBus' profits do not subsidise any other bus operation elsewhere.