# STATES OF JERSEY

# **Environment Scrutiny Panel**

# Jersey's Sustainable Transport Policy

# MONDAY, 18th OCTOBER 2010

#### Panel:

Deputy P.J. Rondel of St. John (Chairman) Deputy D.J.A. Wimberley of St. Mary Connétable J.M. Refault of St. Peter

# Witnesses:

Connétable M.K. Jackson of St. Brelade (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services)

Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour (Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services)

Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services

Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services

#### Also present:

**Scrutiny Officers** 

[14.04]

# The Deputy of St. John:

Minister, thank you for giving us your time this afternoon to attend this hearing, we have a number of points of interest from your report. Given that you only have a very small budget, £500,000 is small compared to what you really want to do, do you believe it is going to be achievable to carry out the many things on your list, I will not call it a wish list but on what you are hoping to do with the kind of budgets that you have here? Given that the £500,000 was set aside for the eastern cycle track and you are only talking about £500,000 - if I have read it correctly - for the entire S.T.P. (Sustainable Transport Policy).

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes, good afternoon, Chairman; good afternoon, panel. You are absolutely right, money is tight and money will continue to get tighter, I suspect. We have attempted to pitch our sustainable transport policy to that which is achievable, as well as to a degree of aspirational but predominantly to the achievable because unless it is then really there is no point in doing it. We well understand the need for cash and probably the need more for education of the public towards our goals and that is probably the way we are going to achieve what we have to achieve.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

If you pick on the issue of promoting cycling to schools, not just cycling but other environmental friendly modes, and also for travel plans for businesses and the States, what is the overall picture around that?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

In terms of the philosophy, if you like, the safer travel routes to schools, business plans, are the areas we will have explore to achieve that. Once again, I think the maximum spend needs to be on education and working not only with the schools in doing this ... and we have met with the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture up at Highlands to try and achieve, in some measure, an amelioration of the present system which, quite frankly, in St. Saviour - as the Assistant Minister, the Deputy of St. Saviour will be well aware - we have the concentration of schools up there which all of us know cause tremendous traffic jams in the morning and we have to think of ways of getting around that. It is only by participation, if you like, that we can

achieve that. T.T.S. cannot do it by ourselves, we have to have Education on board, we have to have parents on board and work on it jointly. In terms of business travel plans, that is an area we are focusing, and will be focusing, with business on and encouraging them to formulate their plans so that our aspirations are achieved.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

I think the document says that you want have every school in the Safer Routes to School programme by the end of the period 2015. I think that is in there, correct me if I am wrong. I just wonder whether you have taken evidence from elsewhere about how much it costs to have someone promoting that, for example, in the school sector to make sure you achieve that target and we do have a doubling of school children cycling - at least - and more children walking and these absurd gatherings of cars outside every school gate in the Island.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes, I take your point. I think it is unrealistic to say how much it is going to cost to achieve that. I think we have to direct some funding towards it. Now in educational terms can we share that with Education, can we share that with parents? It goes back to my previous point, I think this is something we need to do jointly but employing somebody full time is probably not within our remit to do and not within the envelope of the fund, we have to manage it. So my philosophy is once again towards joint working.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

At the expense of possibly missing the target, and with the consequent knock-on, on child health?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think we have to measure the targets, and I think probably in a way the school transport system is something one can measure. In terms of the school bus service, for one, that is an area which we can probably measure quite well and we can work on ... as you are aware, the new bus contract comes due in January 2013 and that will also involve the renegotiation of the school bus contract. Now, one would like that to be integrated with the present public services, if you like, to make better use of it and I expect that will enable us to measure the performance on the school gate to see who is coming by bus, by bicycle and walking and so on. But I see that as being measurable.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

I know others will want to pick up on the bus issue. But if I step back a bit, when we are talking about the cost of what this policy is, which you say is £500,000, can we have a look at the benefits side, and on page 8 you list the way that travel impacts on the Island and the benefits of having this policy. I just wonder if you would like to talk to those a little bit and say how you are going to make sure the public know about the progress that has been made in these areas.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

In practice the translation will be towards reduced congestion, reduced air and noise pollution and down the list from that point of view, of course, improving the environment, particularly if you go back to schools; improving the environment in the St. Saviour area. I think the public will be able to judge that fairly well by the performance of the actions that we take. It will be obvious. I think what we need to look at is also the hidden benefits which are not there in writing, if you like - as you have referred to in the past - the environmental benefits which are not always immediately apparent will become apparent in the fullness of time and, of course, that has to link in with the Medical Officer of Health's requirements in terms of health improvements in the children. She is quite targeted on linking with us on that and we sincerely hope that we can work together in achieving additional health benefits.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

I just wonder, given the need to, in a sense, sell this policy - by sell I mean you have to sell it to the States, which is going to be quite difficult maybe, and sell it to the public - whether there should not be more emphasis on ... you say the public will be able to judge this, I am not sure and it would be nice if you had measures, existing measures of air and noise pollution and you could show 2 years down the line, 4 years down the line, this is the progress we have made in Bath Street, this is the progress we have made on St. Saviours Road, this is the progress we have made in St. Mary's village. Would that not be a real motivator for the public and for your own department?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Indeed, but I think air pollution measurement does take place at the moment. I cannot remember the specific areas. The Manager, Transport Policy may know.

Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

Our department closely monitors traffic volumes and we talk with the Environment

Department about the impact that will have on emissions, so as part of this policy we

will be very closely monitoring traffic levels which can then be equated into carbon

emissions and monitoring will be getting carried out by the Environment Department

and the Health Department with the regard to the impact that has on air quality.

The Deputy of St. John:

How many monitoring units have you got?

Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

We do the traffic counting monitoring and we have a permanent installation on every

main road approaching St. Helier, so we have about 13 sites.

The Deputy of St. John:

That is for counting but what about air quality?

Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

We do not provide the air quality side.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

That will be under Environment.

The Deputy of St. John:

But you work together on this?

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes, I know we have got some around the town but in terms of measurement, I think Deputy Wimberley is absolutely right, we need to pick up what they are measuring now and compare that with the ... put a time period on it and put comparative figures out.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

Going through the list, the same with levels of physical activity, you could have measures of that. You could find out much people are cycling. Last week my wife took a lung test thingy, blew into a machine, you could measure that across the population. You can actually find out whether this is working in health terms. Like the number of people who get asthma.

[14:15]

#### Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

We have mentioned in here the various methods we have for measuring traffic levels and I mention those automatic counters and I hasten to add because those automatic counters are just motor vehicles, whereas we also do a manual count where we get somebody out with a clipboard on every single approach into St. Helier to measure the number of people in cars, the number of people cycling, motorbikes, walking so that all the different modes are monitored as well. So that has to be done manually and we do that annually.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

I am going to move on to a very high level question to start off with. What is the

lifespan of the S.T.P.?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Fifteen years. This one is 5. We have a 5 year plan but in practice there has to be a

certain amount of projection ahead. But we will need to measure targets in 5 years, I

think, to establish whether it is working or not.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Assuming you are still the Minister for T.T.S. in that time, Mike, how will you

measure your achievements? Or what would you consider to be achievements that

you would like to achieve within the 5 years of this plan?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

We are going for a 15 per cent reduction in traffic. We can do that through counters

... 15 per cent reduction at peak times, I have to say, and effectively we have referred

to the effect being the same as when the schools are on holiday, and that is pretty well

15 per cent.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

What is the difference in actual numbers of traffic then on a peak time? What is the

current count of vehicles coming into town at peak time? So what would 15 per cent

represent: 100, 200?

## The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

From the town entirely or from the west? The west is what?

# Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

The 15 per cent equates to getting 1,800 people to come in not by car, and that is about 1,300 vehicles. There is a car occupancy rate of just under 1.4 per vehicle.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

How many extra buses does that equate to?

# Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

You can get about 60 people on a bus. Our studies suggest that about half the shift would be on to bus, so of those 1,800 people we are looking to see about 900 extra people catching the main bus service.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Okay, so within the S.T.P., what do you see as the main influences to make those 1,800 people chose not to go in by car?

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

We have got to make it easy. I think humans by nature will choose the simplest route. We have to make it easier for them to catch the bus, easier for them to cycle and easier for them to walk. That means, in turn, having regular bus services, clock face timetable, cycle tracks in appropriate places, buses going to outlying areas of the

Island which are not presently served, and making it safe for not only adults but also children to walk to school.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

So if we come back to 5 years' time, assuming you are still in the chair, and you have not achieved 15 per cent, will you consider that to be a failure?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think I would, yes. I think I would. I know something like that can be taken as a challenge but if we are going to do something like this, let us get on and do it. That is why we are quite keen to forge ahead and move on with it. The direction in which we are going all leads to that achievement. As you are aware, we are looking at cycle tracks, we are looking at improving the bus contract with a view to an improved service, we are working on cycle tracks virtually as we speak in various areas, and also working on road sharing where possibly we can. Where the roads are too narrow to have proper cycle tracks and footpaths, have shared areas which can provide for everyone.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Just before we started the meeting we were talking here about the forthcoming meeting here today, one of the things we said, or certainly I said I certainly do notice that if it is raining I need to allow an extra 10 minutes to drive into town. Do you see that translating in actual numbers? I am looking at the Manager, Transport Policy now. You know, on a rainy day can you project the difference on a rainy day to a dry day in the amount of vehicles?

# Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

I think it is much smaller than people would expect. We do not see a massive change in traffic flows from rainy days to dry days.

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

What you sometimes find is that people go off bicycles and on to the bus. So it probably increases bus usage. But I have to say that the figures coming back from Connex have not been ideal in terms of accuracy. They are ballpark figures but future passenger measurement and passenger numbers on the buses will be calculated rather more accurately so that we can get better information, which is somewhat lacking at the moment.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

I hate to say this but many, many years ago I used to work as a bus driver and at the end of every journey I would fill out a waybill and on that was the number of passengers by a simple count of my ticket machine about how many tickets I had issued. You tell me they cannot do that today?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

In terms of numbers of tickets, they can but I think the important thing is the actual fare stops and where people get on and get off. Those are the areas where we are lacking accuracy. If we know the overalls that can tell us the number of people that was, say, going to the airport or such like but it is the in between bits that are more interesting because that could enable you to, especially going to the country routes,

decide on whether to go straight to St. John or via St. Mary and do a circuit route or

whatever. That is where we need the information to work out how we can get a better

routing.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Just staying on for the moment of how do you encourage people or make it easier for

people to go on buses, do you see any way of offering any inducements to help that

encouragement?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes, by ...

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Inducements or penalties, can I be that wide? There are 2 different sides.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

You can absolutely, yes. I think my answer to both would be by smart ticketing. This

is an area which I think certainly needs developing and I am aware that Connex are

working on in conjunction with us and by doing that we can establish ... we can get a

better pattern of who is using the bus service when and how and incentivise people to

use the bus service perhaps when buses are less full and disincentivise them when

they are full.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

The other part of the question is about penalties. Do you see another way of encouraging people to vote literally with their feet by putting penalties on them if they do not?

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Indeed, by a smart ticketing arrangement within the car parks. That could be a way of incentivising people to use alternative methods of transport.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Have you looked into that within the S.T.P.? Is there any sort of background work being done into that?

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

That is being undertaken at the moment. Perhaps the Acting Director of Transport could comment on that.

#### **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

We are looking at an opportunity to introduce an automatic number plate recognition system in one of our car parks next year as a pilot scheme, and what that will allow us to do is to have variable rates of charging. So, for instance, at a short stay car park to ensure a turnover of spaces but to allow people flexibility when they return to their vehicle, you might have a standard charge for the first 3 hours and that would then escalate as they stay longer and longer. So if they chose to stay in town to have a cup of coffee or to have lunch, to free up that space, the charge might double, triple as the time goes on. That will ensure turnover of spaces in the car park. But equally you

could use it to do many other things. If you had a smart ticketing system on the buses and in the car parks what you may do is, say if someone parks 3 or 4 days in the car park, you could credit them with an automatic bus credit to encourage them to try and take the bus or something like that. These are all, at the moment, blue sky thinking but we are looking at the opportunity of tying these together.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

They are blue sky thinking, you are right, but that sounds a very plausible type of scheme. How long do you see before that is likely to come to an active proposition? Is there any costings? What sort of money are we talking about?

#### **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

We have not gone out for prices yet on the car parks, we are only at the early stages of the investigation so hopefully later this month we are going to the U.K. (United Kingdom) to see one of these car parks and have a look at the problems and check it is suitable for the Island. We would envisage having a system in place in one of the car parks next year. With regards to how that may tie in to smart ticketing, that is going to take a little further work; I would not like to commit myself to anything at this stage.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

I can give you an idea of cost because it was looked at wearing a different hat on a different committee, it is about £250,000. That is the sort of indicative price we have been given on a car park.

# **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

Just on that, I understand just from the industry intelligence we have had that the price of these systems is dropping significantly as they become ... gain the economies of scale.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Okay, thank you for that.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

Going back to this issue of the budget, because I notice in your list, the £500,000 list, you have a number of items with brackets around saying: "Be nice to have." Some of them are quite important like indeed the car park we have just been talking about. I wonder in the light of where it says on the Sustrans letter in Appendix A, where it talks about a typical return on investment of 13 to 1 for walking and cycling schemes, and that presumably is the savings in car parking, environmental quality, obesity, health impacts, the lot. You know, 13 to 1 is a huge return. Assuming that you had a look at that methodology, I just wonder whether you are being less than ... not ambitious enough really, that you could have bigger benefits. When you talk about 1,300 vehicles less coming in at the end of the 5 year as do come in now, that is 1,300 spaces, that is 1,300 trees or 1,300 divided by a certain number of flats, houses. So you are looking at very, very big gains when you talk about 1,300 less vehicles coming into town every day. I wonder whether you have considered ways of funding above the £500,000 so that you get a bigger return, because the returns are so big.

# **Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:**

The £500,000 is the fixed element of this strategy. To be honest we would not set a strategy with a budget of £500,000 to develop the cultural change that we need within the Island. Beyond that we are ... you are quite right, the Sustrans model looks an excellent return but what we did not want to do, again, was a strategy which just meant desktop studies and converting people, you have got to do something as well. What we have tried to do within T.T.S. is to be more innovative with our capital programme and look at where we are doing road improvements and schemes. Commercial buildings are a good example for next year where we are trying to incorporate cycling improvements and improvements for the vulnerable road user at the same time as replacing the infrastructure. The recent Green Travel Day, that was sponsored by private companies and I think was a very successful stance which we have made to say: "We are changing, the Island has got to change" and it was a very positive day. So we have got to be innovative. The money is there. We are not going ... to deliver this strategy in a timely fashion would require a substantially bigger budget, we have not got that, we are in times of recession but we will endeavour to do everything we possibly can moving forward.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

Sorry, you are saying to deliver this strategy would require a bigger budget? So we are now hearing you are not going to deliver the strategy but you would if you had a bigger budget?

# **Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:**

No, what I am saying is we would be more innovative with our capital programme on other areas so that we are going to deliver some of the infrastructure. If we were 10 years ago, we would have asked for more money but the money is the fixed item. We have got to deliver the strategy, we have set ourselves a reasonable goal at 15 per cent and we are going to try and achieve that.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

Can I challenge that? Is there not a way of looking at the budget for this initiative, the sustainable transport policy ... given the benefits are so great, is there not an argument for treating it as invest to save or invest to have benefits and borrow from the future in order to return back? There are sources of income in there that you could use.

#### **Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:**

We will endeavour to use those sources of income, there is no question about that. The difficulty is we are going through a C.S.R. (Comprehensive Spending Review) process, there is a lot of challenge on any new policy and what we want is to deliver this policy and to make it sustainable. Currently the States does not have enough money to sustain what it does now. So any increase beyond what is in here would not, in my view, gain support. So we have to cut our cloth and be innovative, which I think is what the strategy is trying to achieve.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

Given the car parking is subsidised, according to your own presentation to the Council of Ministers 2 years ago, no private car parking operator could do it at that price ...

# **Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:**

No, it is not subsidised, that is not correct. There is no profit made out of car parking.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

No, in the sense that you could use that capital in another way. A private operator just would not run at that cost.

#### **Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:**

They would charge a lot more money, yes.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

They would charge a lot more money; that is the quick way. So is there not an argument, therefore, for using some of that hypothecated fund called the car park trading fund, which you do not need to expand your car parking, you are talking about reducing it by 1,300 by the end of the period of 5 years, 1,300 less car parking spaces needed. So if you were to maybe work out ways of accessing that fund in the same way as was done with the eastern cycle track.

#### **Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:**

It is possible. The difficulty we have got is the asset life on some of those car parks has been defined and there will need to be a replacement because although you can move away from the commuter car park, the shoppers car park and the vibrancy of the town is essentially for the likes of Minden Place or the Minden Place replacement if we replace it. That car park has got, I think, another 10 year life on it.

[14:30]

We may be able to extend that, change that, but the car park trading fund was set up

very wisely many years ago to sustain car parking within St. Helier. I think we have

got to be very careful to keep stealing from it – it may be too strong a term – but to do

with fancy things.

The Deputy of St. John:

At the end of the day, the committee of the day made the right choice. I was on that

committee. [Laughter]

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think it was a very prudent move and I, quite candidly at the debate on the eastern

cycle track in the States last year, voted against the fund being raided, if you like,

because that was quite wrong. Having said that, once it went through I supported it

going to the cycle track because I also support that. But the philosophy of raiding the

trading fund was really quite wrong.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Because you need the money to replace ...

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Indeed.

**Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:** 

If we have too many of those we are in big trouble.

## The Deputy of St. John:

But getting back to your buses, I see if you want to get an extra 1,800 people you are going to need something in the region of 15 or thereabouts additional buses, just for that peak hour per day.

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Absolutely right. We are conscious of the fact that when we launched the transport strategy virtually the next day we perceived there to be problems with the capacity on the buses. I am sure it has been building up. It clearly is an issue and you cannot have full buses sailing past people on a bus stop long before they change their minds completely. So we really cannot have that for long and we are focusing quite hard, with Connex, on fleet replacement where necessary, and you will be aware of the double-decker trial and a longer single deck trial and we will have results of that any day now to make a decision so we can move forward at the beginning of next year with the replacement vehicles. But the winter timetable - and the last summer timetable - has put express services on the western route, where we have the capacity issues I have to say, and certain areas of the eastern route going to down to Grève D'Azette where we have had problems and we are desperately trying to address those.

# The Deputy of St. John:

But there are problems right across the Island because after 6.30 p.m. people cannot get home.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

That is not capacity, that is a question of getting a bus on there in the first place.

Once we have got the bus on we would like to think that we will have capacity ...

The Deputy of St. John:

Hopefully if we are having an additional 15 buses they will be used continually across

the Island on other routes, but then, of course, you will have the manpower problems.

It is not just the outlay for the equipment, you have the outlay of staffing and where

are you going to get this additional funding? Please identify it.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

In practice it is a question with the new contract of better management. The bus

service and the main service are not integrated at the moment and we think there is a

lot to be gained by integrating those 2 services. The present school bus staff are very

often part-timers and the vehicles are used for that purpose only. That clearly is

unsatisfactory. We also have a need for smaller vehicles going to the country areas ...

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Minister, can I ask, how are you going to change that?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

In the contract for January 2013.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

So you are going to make that a requirement of Connex to address their staffing

levels?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

The manner in which they staff?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Excellent, thank you. Sorry about that.

**Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:** 

Just for clarification, in 2013 it will be a new bus contract so it may or may not be

Connex, it will be whoever wins the tender and it will be a requirement for them to

move towards what will be called the new model network, which is, we think, a more

efficient use of resources.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Okay, thank you.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

On the bus contract, do you accept that one way of reducing the cost of the contract to

the taxpayer is to make the bus companies more eager to take some of the risk by

having a policy environment that says: "You will have people on your buses because we are arranging other things in your favour" because if you have the environment that there is now it will cost you more for people to come and ...

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I quite agree and I think it is necessary for the new contractor to be properly incentivised, which they are not really at the moment. So we are concerned about that. There has to be a mechanism in place which makes it interesting for them to do what we want them to do.

# The Deputy of St. John:

Given that the rent has doubled on the transport centre, it is doubling this year from £50,000 to £100,000, and it is closed early, why is that transport centre not being fully utilised until late in the evenings by using it not only for your buses, et cetera, but as a transport centre for taxis and the like late at night, where they can have shared taxis and late night buses. Keeping the centre open so that, in fact, it would be far easier to police than the Weighbridge is at the moment because it would be within a specific area. I do not see any of that thinking in here.

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I do not disagree with you but I think the policy we have got here is a higher level than that and clearly there are issues which will link in with the new bus contractor taking over. One of the experiences we have had in research done so far is an integration with the taxi service and the bus service for the more outlying areas and

personally I think that is an area we could explore and that would, in fact, link in with what you are suggesting.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

Two questions. One going back to the question of the policy environment, you say that you want to incentivise the contractor to have more buses, that is fine, we all agree on that. But what I was trying to get at was that if you have an environment, for instance as we have had maybe 10 years ago of car accommodation, so there is no disincentive, people are encouraged to get in their cars, it would have been very difficult for a bus operator to have made money or to say: "Oh yes, I will increase your patronage for you and then the States will need to pay me less." Whereas if you have a policy environment which says: "Come on, folks, let us get on the bus" then the bus operator is going to charge less. If it comes to the States subsidising the bus company a bit, the policy environment really makes a bit difference as to how big that subsidy is and that is taxpayers' profit so I just wonder whether that has been taken on board in negotiations ... in the thinking going into the new contract. That if we have the policy environment right, it will cost us less because more people will be using the bus.

## The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I am just trying to think how to succinctly answer that. In practice, you can incentivise passengers which will in turn incentivise the bus service, because there will be a lot more people on the buses as you quite rightly suggested. It is not necessarily all about more buses; it is about getting more people on the right ones.

The individuals can be incentivised and the bus service can be incentivised to make a less expensive service for the States.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Just staying with buses, or vehicles anyway, one of the policy objectives is to improve the air quality in Jersey, clean air is obviously what we are talking about. I notice the S.T.P. indicates a hybrid diesel electric type that is used in London were too expensive for Jersey. Do you not think it is the role of the government to lead the way and encourage their principal contractors to show leadership in that way to encourage other people? After all we do have a fleet of taxis in Jersey now which are hybrid vehicles or electric vehicles. Why do you feel it is too expensive for them to operate in Jersey?

#### **Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:**

When we brought the double-decker bus over for a trial, we looked at the cost of the hybrid versus the conventional one and it was double the price. There is quite ...

# The Connétable of St. Peter:

Is that acquisition price or running costs?

#### **Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:**

That was acquisition price, not running cost. We did not look at whole life costs at that stage because we were just looking at ... the hybrid as a concept, I think, has some merit on commercial vehicles particularly. But when you look at the whole life costs and the actual carbon footprint of producing that vehicle, I think there is still a

question mark about whether you would pay double for it and what the environmental

benefits are. I think the longer term aspiration is for electric commercial vehicles and

perhaps we are just a generation off that. But it is something we can look at. The

strategy is to move to more efficient, more environmentally sustainable vehicles but I

think hybrids are questionable, certainly at present, in terms of long-term strategy.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Have you considered looking at that with regards to your own T.T.S. fleet?

**Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:** 

We have, yes. Certainly for electric commercial vehicles we would be ... there is a

couple of manufacturers now who are getting there but hybrids we have not. We have

looked at many other types of vehicle and fuel use but it is finding the right vehicles,

and I think we are just on that turning point for vehicles where in the next 3-5 years

we will see a substantial change.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

T.T.S. of course do run on partly bio-diesel.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Do you see it as a role of T.T.S., being the transport face of Jersey politics, if you like,

to show some leadership in this as well?

**Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:** 

Absolutely, but we have got to keep the cost ... where we procure the vehicles, the

vehicles are leased to other departments, we have to make sure that there is a ... we

cannot just buy the latest innovative technology, which generally speaking is

expensive.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

I am going to change tack a little bit now. We have spent a lot of time talking about

getting people out of cars and on to buses, what are you going to do about getting

people on bikes? How are you going to incentivise people to get on bikes? I can

remember a Deputy in the States complaining when he came to the States that his bike

was worth £1,200, he had nowhere to park it so he left it in the corridor instead.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

It was not mine. My bike is not worth £1,200.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

They are real issues because a bike is easily picked up and taken away. Any thoughts

about how can you incentivise cyclists to bring their bikes in, because where are they

going to put them if they work in Cyril Le Marquand House or Morier House even?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think there are various ways, and it is down to making it easier, as we were saying

earlier on. In practice there is as question of incentivising businesses to provide not

only accommodation for bicycles but also shower facilities for cyclists when they

come in so they can freshen up and get their suits on, if necessary. It is incumbent on

us to work with the Parish of St. Helier and other parishes where necessary to provide accommodation in the public areas for people to lock up their bicycles. It is probably incumbent on us to work with the police to make sure the vandalisation of bicycles is certainly deterred. It is also ... the area we are looking at, of course, is the communal bike set up that you see quite often. We have ...

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Not like the old green bike scheme that all went missing?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

The green bike scheme, it must have been 10 or 15 year ago that it came out, had a problem whereby there was no charge and when everything is free there was no incentive to look after the bicycle. But the systems we are looking at at the moment, and we are quite seriously looking at getting some sort of system in place here because we think Jersey lends itself well to this, would be a scheme which involved a deposit. So there would be a degree of responsibility on the user to look after the bicycle but we are investigating schemes at the moment.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

If I can come in there, while you are talking about this it is all well and good but I do not see anything here where you want to ... you talk about bicycles, you talk about buses but there is nothing here that puts the 2 together. For somebody who comes from the north of the Island where we have quite a few hills, there is nothing to get me back up that hill on these buses. Surely you should be working to make sure that

the bus can carry X number of cycles to the top of Queens Road and then get off and take your bike.

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I see that as too much detail for this policy, but in all practicality, Deputy, we did have as presentation only a week or so ago from the bus operator with regard to putting bicycle racks on the back of buses and the issue involved, the time delays that might be involved with people getting on and off, whether people could physically get them on and off themselves and I think it is something we do need to consider.

# Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

Could I just add, there is reference to it at page 39, where it is one of the issue that we would like to progress.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, from my point of view, I go abroad and I will hire a bike or take one with me and there are buses that take bikes, not on the back, it does not take any longer, it takes the same length of time as a mother with a pushchair. Everybody gets on in the middle where there is space for buggies and wheelchairs ... and wheelchairs as well, which is a question I wanted to ask you. In the context of buses, if you talk about access for everybody in this transport policy that is a really important issue, access to disabled people, access for old people, access for cyclists. I am not sure it is enough to say we are looking at it. I think there should be possibly a commitment to ...

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

No, we are more than looking at it, in fact, as indicated, the quality of the buses is a key factor in the public's assessment of the service. Replacement vehicles will be wheelchair friendly. They will be child buggy friendly and so on. We have a fleet which, for one reason or another, is not and you will be aware that the airport buses are being reconfigured to carry luggage, which I could not believe really was not the case before. But anyway we are moving on on that one. Those buses of course can carry wheelchairs as well, which is an attraction. No, we are moving in that direction and all new vehicles will be wheelchair friendly.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

Is there a benefit on having a bus at 5.30am or whatever the first bus is to the airport, given the very small number of people that use it and the cost involved? Because figures I was given last week by somebody who had done a headcount over a whole week, were apart from people that worked at the airport, there were only 10 people that used that bus during that week.

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Given that the service has only been running for 10 days I think it is probably early days to get a measurement. But in practice there was considerable public comment about the fact there was not the service to service not only the staff at the airport but the first flights out.

[14:45]

It just seemed logical to do that. Historically there have been overtime issues with the

drivers. We have overcome that. Clearly after a season's running we will have to

review the thing but I would like to think that as time goes on regular users will be

aware of its presence and will make use of it.

Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:

Can I just add something that? It also provides an early morning service into town

which did not exist before, for those people that might work on construction sites and

the like and need an earlier start on return journey.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It is an issue we have had in terms of early starting, people are starting earlier than

they used to and, as the Acting Director of Transport quite rightly says, there is a

return benefit. If it is getting there at 6.00 a.m. it is leaving probably about ... soon

after, I am not sure of the exact timing, so getting people back to town for a 7.00 a.m.

start, for those that need it.

The Deputy of St. John:

I am going in a different direction. I am going to Beaumont junction.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Still on the buses.

The Deputy of St. John:

Buses do come into it. I have got a concern ... I have heard over the last 20 years, 30 years, we have got to do something about the Beaumont junction, but we are where we are. Is a lot of time being spent reading papers, and all the rest of it, for the Beaumont junction? We heard about the road that was going to go through the Goose Green marsh and we have heard about a new road along the front over the last 30 years, none of that is going to happen unless we have global warming and we have to raise the Promenade and then do something about it. But really are you wasting a lot of time playing around with the Beaumont junction knowing that we have ... it will not happen.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I have to say, Deputy, when this came up, and as one who lives in the west and using the junction quite regularly, I am well aware of the situation there. My officers think, I think quite rightly, that we had to close this off. We had a small study done just to give us some documentary evidence as to where we are and what the situation is with Beaumont is. In an ideal situation, as you say, there would be an extra route. Not necessarily an extra car route but a preferential bus route would be really what we would like to achieve, but the geographical space just is not there. I am aware that landowners would be very unlikely to succumb to giving part of their land to a wider road, and I think quite rightly so today as well. We have to make the best use of it. I have to say, I think it is sometimes over-egged in that if we were to reduce the traffic, the situation at Beaumont does reduce dramatically and 15 per cent reduction would make an awful lot of difference there. What you find generally, the congestion areas between probably La Haule and Beaumont, after Beaumont it flows pretty well. It can be probably a 20 minute delay, after Beaumont flowing through to Bel Royal is

not really that bad. We have looked, and recently we are looking, at whether we can improve the area just after Beaumont possibly with the perquage car park by replacing the present lit pedestrian crossing with a refuged arrangement and that would possibly speed things up a little bit. But it is only by pinching little small areas that we can get an improvement on the present.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

I have a couple of areas I want to go to but I will just start with a quick one; still staying with clean air and air qualities. I know there has been some talk in the media recently about possibility introducing M.O.T.s (Ministry of Transport tests), certainly is there an opportunity there to reduce the amount of pollution from highly polluting vehicles which could be commercial but there is a lot more diesel cars around now and quite often I see them tearing away from the lights in front of me and I turn my air conditioning off to stop the fumes coming into my car. The black smoke. Is there more opportunity to deal with that, because that is quite a high pollutant?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think our first stance would be looking at the commercial area because it is not only a question of engine condition but also of vehicle condition and vehicle condition can have an impact on the road and the infrastructure. I do not know if the Assistant Minister would like to comment because he is responsible for D.V.S. (Driver and Vehicle Standards).

#### **Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:**

Yes, I think we will be starting with commercials in the future but there will be a time when ... I know we are in a recession at the moment but there will be a time when there will be a reasonable expectation of other countries, namely the U.K. and France, that there is some kind of certification of roadworthiness. All we would need is a major incident somewhere and I am sure they would insist on it. But it would take a few years, I think, for garages to gear up for it but that is something for the future. D.V.S., although short on manpower, is still doing all the parish road checks with the Honorary Police and that is an ongoing thing. But it is something we are monitoring.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Can I just return to something earlier on, still staying with clean air, and that was really the question about alternative fuels. The one alternative fuel we have not spoken about was L.P.G. (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) and there is a lot of opportunities out there. Why do you think that L.P.G. has not really taken off in Jersey and do you think this is something we should be looking towards?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Certainly I know there are few vehicles, it is probably lack of outlets in practice and I suspect it is something we would have to link in with the gas company tying up with the present petrol stations to provide the convenient outlet for the public.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

In the light of the answer of the Chief Officer previously about keeping up with hybrid vehicles, are you going to keep abreast of gas technology in terms of vehicles; biogas, L.P.G. and so on so that as soon as it becomes viable ... or even thinking

ahead because you are looking at ahead of Bellozanne replacing the old digesters, have you thought of tying that up with your own vehicle fleet or indeed the buses? Jersey comes to cow power.

# **Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:**

It would be a very nice closed loop to run our vehicles on sewage but I think the chances of that are quite slim. The problem we have in Jersey is having the sulphide contamination within the gas which means that we can use the biogas for the digester plant, for specialist engines, but it will rip a normal engine apart really quickly or require a lot of cost and chemicals to strip out the H2S. So in the middle of England or France where we do not get the saline intrusion that we have in the sewage network here, it is possible that ... I would suspect it would be a bit too ... probably not at the right cost point for us.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

So it is specific to Jersey but it does not work?

#### **Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:**

It is specifically to coastal areas that have saline intrusion and the type of sewage network we have. Also scalability-wise, we use the biogas within the Island very efficiently so there is not really the added value of doing something else. Hydrogen is one which I think is probably one of the more exciting next generation technologies in fuel cells but within the 5 year window of this strategy ... we have got to keep abreast of them, I think that is the key thing.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Slight bit of levity, but I was looking forward to T.T.S. having a sign on the back saying: "Powered by effluent." [Laughter]

# The Deputy of St. John:

Moving on, can I look at taxis, please, and what are you doing about ... well, private hire, taxis, et cetera, currently we are seeing taxis going around at a cheaper rate, with their mobiles and they are doing a door to door service whereas they are supposed to be working off a rank; we are seeing private hire picking up on the streets of town after midnight when they are supposed to be working at the depot and they are charging considerably more for their service. When are you going to regulate the taxis, when are you going to see them - not uniformed because that may not be the word but the attire that some of the chauffeurs ... they turn up in their flip-flops and a pair ... a shirt, or not even a shirt just a t-shirt. When are you going to regulate them and how are you going to regulate them?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Deputy, I am aware of your concerns and I have to say it is one of the challenges I am keen to deal with during my term of office. We have a regulated rank taxi service at present and an unregulated private hire service or mostly unregulated. Now, these 2 services really have evolved historically for one reason or another but I do not think in this day and age they are providing the best service to the public. As you say, since the numbers of mobile phones have increased over the last 5, 10 years, it really has made a tremendous difference and I think the service that the providers give to the public of the Island needs to be improved. We are working on numerous factors

which all apply to the service, bearing in mind that we are dealing with people's livings and we are conscious of that. I am also looking at ... shall we say there are a variety of areas we are looking at, the uniformity of vehicles, apart from the uniformity of the chauffeurs as you suggest, we are looking towards providing a more comprehensive service at the airport which makes use of the returning private hire vehicles. Very often you will find a public rank vehicle will take a fare up or perhaps will not take a fare up, they will be more likely taking a fare back but the private hire will be taking one there and so on and so forth. There are issues with the Weighbridge at night. There are issues over the different sorts of plates: we have white plates for private hire; yellow plates for public rank and red plates for company owned vehicles. We have issues over 24 hour provision which we are keen to have in place. We have concerns over people out in the country getting vehicles late at night. The department is working quite seriously on trying to address it. We have interviewed, I have to say, probably most stakeholders involved with the business to try and ascertain what the feeling is. I have to say there are probably about 250 conflicting views on how it should be dealt with but I am quite determined to move it ahead, as I say, during my term of office.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

Would you deregulate if need be? Would that be on the radar?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

We have looked at that aspect, I have to say, because that has been done in certain other jurisdictions and certain other towns in the U.K., not always successfully, I have to say, and I am slightly apprehensive of going down that route. I do not think it is

the answer. Very often you will find deregulation occurs but you still have hackney cabs, which are basically private hire, running parallel. Now, in Jersey we have a slightly different state, almost because we are too close, we have this close proximity between private hire and rank taxi, and this is the area, I think, we need to make better use of. There is a requirement for both. Perhaps the requirement for rank taxi has reduced from what it was. We still have an ability for the public to hail on the street, which is not common practice in Jersey but you can hail either a rank taxi or a private hire vehicle at will, and provided their light is on there is no reason why they should not stop and pick you up. It is curious that this arrangement is not often used, as it is very often in London, of course.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

With a new bus contract coming up, is there is not any merit in working with the bus company and the taxi association, because they have to be either regulated before that goes down the road but surely you should be working very closely with both groups so that they can be integrated into any bus contract, especially for the out of town areas where you have got small populations?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I mentioned earlier that we were shown an area, in fact it was in Vannes in France, where there is as interlink between the bus service and a cab company. I think it would probably work better with a cab company than with a rank arrangement because principally there would be contractually issues and I see that as a way forward.

### **Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:**

Can I just add a point on the t-shirt and flip-flops? There is a condition of their licence, I believe, that they are properly dressed and if anyone is caught by an officer they will be warned, and should they do it again they will be called in.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

Just moving on slightly, but still on taxis, you have got some areas, which could be revenue returning to your department, which could be privatised, whether it be the airport taxi rank, which is owned on private property, which is States property, and the like. Have you given thought to privatising, shall we say, that particular depot where a particular company could pay you rental for it and you would receive the income, or the Island would indirectly receive income from that. Instead of them all working out of various depots all paying their £120, £150 a week rent to some other operator, you could benefit or the airport could benefit.

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It would be the airport that would be benefit. I have to say the situation is at the moment, of course, the airport is serviced by ranked taxi, working off the rank there, who do not pay depot rental. The only difficulty with that, and we have had approaches with regard to that, is that the rank systems relies quite largely on the airport service for their daytime work. I think it would probably end up as being detrimental to the rank service throughout the Island because it needs to be integrated and having one company up there, I suspect, might knock the rank system for 6.

[15:00]

## The Deputy of St. John:

Given that you would be looking at a whole new system, I was hoping ... I am concerned with the answer you just gave me now, daytime. The problems we have are in evenings up to the last flight. Because frequently the phone calls I get is because there might be a football match on or whatever they have to call in private hire because the taxi drivers are watching their football match. If that was out in the private domain then that can be controlled by the employer, i.e. the department concerned, whether it is the airport, whoever.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

My preferred route at the airport, which I think would in the long run be more satisfactory, would be to have a permanent dispatch service, probably employed by the airport. It may be that taxis/cabs would have to fund that from their charges. In effect it is always difficult if you have 3 aircraft perhaps dropping down at the same time to have the number of vehicles there to cope. The evidence we have when there are no taxis there tend to be always anecdotal. Evidence that we receive by number counts, which are fairly spasmodic I have to say but they are fairly regular, tend to indicate usually there is a service there. There is a dispatch service at the moment, although only for a short time in the evenings, and that is run by the Rank Association themselves. So they have the ability to call up extra vehicles if needed but certainly at present the arrangement whereby hired vehicles are taking a fare up there and then returning back empty is far from satisfactory.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Can I just come back to the airport? You made a comment there, Minister, that if the airport was to be given over to, say, a private hire company to run out of the airport that it would be detrimental to the rank taxi service. I can understand to a point because we know that at the airport there is a captive audience who the majority do not have an alternative so they are going to be using a taxi. Have you done any work on that or is just really the evidence has been given by the rank taxi drivers themselves?

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

We have consulted with all stakeholders, we have had presentations, we have had discussions with the airport. We feel we have got a good feel of what goes on at the airport but we have to look, from our point of view, at the provision of a 24/7 taxi service, taxi/cab service if you like, for the whole Island and I think the airport is integral with that and needs to be part of it. So I think separating it out, as I suggested earlier on, would be detrimental to the whole effect on the Island.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

But have you done any actual exploratory work to see what the impact would be, or was it really a supposition based on empirical evidence rather than actual?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes, we discussed it with not only the cab but also the taxi people and I do not think there is any question about it. The general feeling is that the service of the rest of the Island would be hard hit.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

There are a lot of people who believe that the cost of taxis in Jersey is far too high.

Do you think that is prejudicial against people using them? If, for example, one

looks just across the square at Broad Street rank (which was Broad Street, now

Library Place) we will see some taxis sat there for many hours before they go out,

which probably means they need to charge a higher fare because they are not getting

so many turns. If they were charging a lower fare would that make them far more

usable to the general customer?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think I must first correct you as regards fare levels. I mean Jersey, in terms of rank

taxi rates, is about middle in U.K.'s charging levels.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

But we have cheaper fuels. We have no road tax. So if you take that into account as

well in ...

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Vehicle costs are probably ...

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Are less.

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

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Well, not always. Possibly a little bit more in terms of costs. What I would like to just correct is the common public perception, which I have to say (due to confusion, which is perfectly acceptable) is the difference between a rank fare and a private hire fare, which is sometimes 25 per cent and more higher. My department controls the rank fares but the private hire fares are not controlled and those are the ones, I have to say, about which complaints are often received. I am not aware of many complaints about rank fares, I have to say. The Acting Director of Transport might correct me but we do not really get many complaints. I do not think you will find many vehicles waiting at Library Place for hours on end. There is a pretty thorough turnover. If they are waiting ...

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Depends if it is raining or not.

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

If a vehicle is waiting there for a long time he will not be making much money and I think you will find he will move on to other things.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

How are you going to get cabs, taxis and the like to pick up in the country? That is a big bug-bear for many people in outlying areas. Historically we had a number of small operators who would be living in the areas concerned. They get swallowed up by one or 2 of the major operators. Their plates become part of that major operator's outfit and they become private plates for the operator. When will you stop that and allocate plates for outlying areas of the Island where people live and that is their main

area of operating; plus they can operate obviously, if they are at the airport dropping someone off, to pick somebody up. But have you given any thought so that we get a proper taxi service in the outlying areas because, as I say ... and this is purely St. Brelade, south of the Island we do not have a problem but anywhere else over a certain area it is difficult.

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

While it is difficult, I think, in all practicality, to confine any operator working in a particular area of the Island ... I think I would prefer to see several small companies operating, probably more than at present. The situation we have now is that there is a mandatory requirement for a private hire driver to have a linkage with a company. We have got very few companies. We have probably got 5/6 companies at present. There is also this company plate issue, which I have to say I am not terribly content with and we are looking into the machinations of those, if you like. I question the continued need to link white plates with a company. The original philosophy was to ensure that companies did provide 24-hour cover which, as you quite rightly say, is something that is put to question these days.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

Currently, whatever colours you have (whether white, yellow, red, whatever other colours you have), are they all out or have you got a number still to be re-issued?

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

We can issue as many as we like but in practical terms the numbers fluctuate a little bit. The crucial thing as far as we are concerned is the mileage that a driver accomplishes and in order to retain their plates they have to achieve a minimum mileage which is between 15 and 20,000 miles a year. So we can establish, in terms of figures and measurement, the actual taxi coverage over the Island during a period, if you like. There are some drivers over 70 who are not achieving that sort of mileage and in this case we will issue another plate to a driver if mileage falls off. There is not an age restriction on taxi drivers at the moment. I think it is an area we need to look at, in all practicality, to stimulate new drivers coming in because very often, quite obviously, older drivers do not really wish to service the night industry, which is not always very pleasant; whereas younger drivers might be more enthusiastic.

# The Deputy of St. John:

What about plates that get handed in; how long is it before they are redistributed?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I am not aware of there being any delay on redistribution whatsoever.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

Some months ago I was given to understand by yourself or the Assistant Minister, I believe, that there were a number of plates that had been handed in over a period of time that had still not been handed out or redistributed.

# **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

We will just look into that a bit further but the number of plates that are out there, as the Minister said, is not necessarily a fixed beast. We can increase or decrease the number of plates out there. So the plates that were handed in would not necessarily

be re-issued. I mean I am not sure of the specifics of this, if it is happening.

The Deputy of St. John:

So why would you decrease the number of plates? I do not know what the actual

figure is. You might give us a figure. If you have got 250 (and that was agreed some

years ago, when I had something to do with it being on the Public Service Committee)

why would you want to hold any in by decreasing the number of plates? Can you

answer that, please?

Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:

We do not have a policy to decrease the number of plates as far as I am aware. So I

am afraid I cannot answer that.

**Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:** 

I think the Acting Director of Transport was just saying it can be increased or

decreased. There was no fixed amount. I do not think we are suggesting it would be

decreased.

Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

The number is about 346.

The Deputy of St. John:

Sorry?

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### Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

We have got 340 issued at the moment. There are 6 about to go out shortly. So 346 is the answer to how many.

# The Deputy of St. John:

So there are still 6 kicking around the place?

# Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

The 6 are about to be issued, yes.

# The Deputy of St. John:

How long have they been back within the department?

#### Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

I could not give you an answer to that.

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

There is no reason for not issuing them. I mean effectively it depends on the individuals next in line and they have to obviously submit the appropriate vehicle for testing. That could be an issue for delay but I cannot see any other reason for delay.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

There are several questions, just going back over the patch a bit more. The S.T.P. has changed its rationale behind the targets from an earlier draft of the policy compared to this latest version. I am rather interested in the rationale behind that. For example

bus change has now gone up from 50 per cent to 100 per cent, cyclists have gone up from 50 per cent to 100 per cent, walking has gone down from 50 per cent to 20 per cent and road injuries are down from 20 per cent reduction to re-establishing a reducing trend. Could you just give us some background to that, please?

# Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

The revised figures have come from the fact that we have done some more research. The original I.T.T.P. (Integrated Travel and Transport Plan) had very little research put to it. It was sort of an approximation and the 15 per cent target figures stayed the same. But last year we conducted a number of interviews at car parks of what people would be likely to do given a range of interventions and so we have revised the subtarget figures which will add up to that 15 per cent to reflect what we think is more realistic from our research.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Thank you. Just moving on to another little item now; in the past when there have been increases in car-parking charges there has been a recordable difference in the downturn of car parks. What was the impact of the last car-parking charge increase and was that sustainable?

#### Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

We have sold as many scratch cards as we did previously but the assessments that I have made of the number of cars parked in our car parks would suggest ... I mean they do fluctuate quite a lot but it would seem that we have got about 200 or so cars typically parked in the car parks recently than we had in the same period last year.

**Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:** 

Fewer?

Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes. Did I say more?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

It was just 200. You did not say fewer or more. [Laughter]

Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

It would appear that there has been some reduction.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Therefore, one could suggest that the price of car parking is price sensitive and could

encourage a change of habit?

Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes. There is reference to that in the Sustainable Transport Policy, that the cost of

parking needs to go up and that we would want to see how the other measures are

working before we decided by how much. But it is relatively inexpensive and the cost

needs to increase.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

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Can I go into the area of what if? What if we put the parking charges up on public car

parks? Do you see that as being prejudicial against the public car-parking parker

compared to somebody that has got private parking at a business address and have

you thought of any ways of balancing that up?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

We are conscious in St. Helier of the number of private car-parking spaces. If, I

suppose, one puts up car-parking prices (I am just picking up on your line of thinking)

you will push the price of those private spaces up as well. Now, that in turn will bring

them more into being of interest for development purposes. There must be a break

point at some stage at which it would properly tip over the balance. Going back to the

point about charging for car parks, I was made aware that when the charging

arrangements for the Waterfront car park, which we do not administer, were taken to

accommodate credit cards the parking numbers went up because it was easy. So it

goes back to the incentivisation, ticketing arrangement, which I think probably would

have a marked effect on car park usage.

The Deputy of St. John:

Increased?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I suspect it might.

The Deputy of St. John:

That is the last thing you want though, is it not? You want to decrease it.

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#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

What we want is probably decreased parking but increased money. So that is a bit of a challenge.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

Do we have any more on parking?

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

There was another one in my head but I have just lost it. I will come back to it. Sorry, Daniel, you carry on for the moment.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

Moving on to road safety then; you say on page 67, quite rightly, that we have 400-odd injuries on our roads each year and you put the cost of that, in financial terms, at £18 million, give or take. Of course, there is the personal cost as well. Then we find that the target has moved from a 20 per cent reduction, I think over the 5-year period (I think that is right), to a decrease and I just wonder why you have gone from 20 per cent to no target?

[15:15]

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Our aspiration target, of course, is zero and I think it has to be. It is quite interesting, in discussion with the Minister for Home Affairs, he questioned that because he said:

"How can it possibly be zero because I cannot afford to do it," and so on and so forth.

But I think, from our point of view and from a general road administration point of view, our target has got to be zero and I question how it can be anything else. David might comment on this one. I know you have discussed it with the police.

#### Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

Yes. I mean the 20 per cent dropped out of it in that we took a view on what was happening in the U.K. and in the early version of the I.T.P. it was suggested that we took a leaf from the U.K. and put in 20 per cent. But in discussions with the police we felt that there had not been enough research done on why accidents happen in Jersey and what our rate is comparatively. You can do a comparison with overall U.K. figures but you have got to look at what you are comparing with. You will get much higher sort of pedestrian accidents in the U.K. in the deprived areas, for example. You need to be careful how you are comparing. So we really concluded that it was wrong to pluck a figure out of the air that had not been properly researched and what we needed to say in here was that there is much more work to be done to research it properly but what we must do is establish a declining trend in accident rates. As the Minister said, the aspiration is that we have a long-term target of no fatal or serious accidents; in other words, we do not accept that a given accident rate is an acceptable rate.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

But do you not agree that if you have a target of zero with no date on it at all as an aspirational target and you abandon your target, even over a 5-year time scale, what you are saying is you do not have a target at all? In terms of focusing people's minds

and saying: "We are going to get a reduction over the next 5 years. Okay, there might be a blip but over the next 5 years we are going to drive the accidents down. We are going to do it. Somehow we are going to do it." To do that obviously you have to find out why the accidents are happening. So it works backwards and it forces you to do certain things and I am just concerned that by abandoning even the 20 per cent you are abandoning the real probability of progress.

### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think the vision zero is today; it is tomorrow; it is now. One of the issues here in Jersey, and I think the Deputy has brought it up in the States before, is the lack of interlinking information in full, I think, between the police and ourselves. There is obviously a certain amount but I think there is an inexorable link, shall we say, between the licensing arrangements and accident rates. We have not probably got information which tells us how many accidents are attributable to drinking issues<sup>1</sup>. Now, if it were to be found out through figures that were to be the case we would need to be, through our Home Affairs Department, focusing stronger on the Licensing Board to try and reduce it from that angle. But in terms of our area of responsibility (in terms of the roads, footpaths, cycle paths and such like) we can work with what we have got but we do need assistance from outside agencies as well.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, I accept that it is inter-departmental issue, obviously. But when you say that there is a lack of information about the causes of accidents, which you do say in the document and that you are going to address that, it just seems to me again that if you

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Subsequent to the hearing the department confirmed that it does receive information collated by the States Police on contributory causes to road accidents (including drink and drugs)

do not have a real something that you are aiming for in the medium term, not zero one day but in the medium-term, then we are not going to see progress. This year has been appalling. It has been completely unacceptable and there must be causes for that, whether it is rain hitting roads that have got mud on them and all the rest of it; but then maybe you have better means of warning people. But there has to be a proactive stance on this and not: "Well, we will wait for the departments and ..." You know, I can hear what you are saying and I can see that it is inter-departmental but I am just wondering about the urgency and whether it would not be better to put a target back on to force the focus.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Although in practice the difficulty is with a lot of accidents they are unpredictable and circumstances do vary. I am just thinking of probably the last 2, if not 3, fatal ones. The circumstances, I think, would have been difficult for anyone to avoid from the detail I know if them. We look at all these instances and think: "Well, what could we have done to avoid that accident?" It is quite difficult to know what you would have done differently to avoid that accident. I am not sure what the answer is.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

Can I come in here? Given that you have got responsibility for pedestrians and moving people around, how close are you working with, say, Planning, Agriculture and Fisheries and the like; given that it is only joined-up thinking that things are going to happen? We pay area grants to the agricultural industry of £37 per vergee per annum. Do you talk to Agriculture and say: "Right, you have got a main road running from St. John's Church to Carrefour Selous of which 80 per cent of it has arable land

along it. For your £37 per vergee we want a footpath," just as you have on the Five Mile Road or St. Peter's Valley and the like, "from A to B," which is going to cost very little to put in place. We are getting something for our £37 per vergee that we are annually giving these farmers across the Island and we can all benefit. Do you have joined-up thinking between yourselves and Planning/Agriculture?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I am keen to work with all departments, I have to say, firstly. In terms of working with Agriculture, my department are about to, under the chairmanship of my assistant, get involved in a review on tractors which are clearly agricultural. We are working with Planning, of course, with regards to the Island Plan. There needs to be a lot of integration there. I think your suggestion is quite admirable but in some places it will work, in some places it will not.

# The Deputy of St. John:

Absolutely, but you could probably put in, quite easily, around the Island, at very little cost, something in the region of 10 miles of footpath. Therefore, you would be eliminating accidents. I can think of one road that I know of (4 serious accidents, broken limbs) where people have been knocked down along that road over the years which have cost to the Island because of the social security and off ill and everything that goes with it, long-term injuries and the like. Therefore, we could all be winners.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Indeed.

### The Deputy of St. John:

This is where I would expect out-of-the-box thinking to be coming from and honestly I would have thought that I would have seen something in there.

### Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

Could I just add that there is reference in there to wanting to get off-road footpaths put in where we can do so but, in our experience, it has always been difficult to get access to private land. But I take your point that ...

#### The Deputy of St. John:

You can put the arm up somebody's back. They want funding from us as taxpayers. In return they should be told: "We will cut out your payments if you ..." You know, it works both ways. That is what I would expect to see.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Just on the theme of accidents, Minister; you and I had a different conversation on a similar subject earlier this morning and it is really the concerns about the manner in which the traffic conducts itself. But let us go back a bit further than that and I am going to ask the Assistant Minister about D.V.S. How much do you think weight can be put on the driving standards and the driving tests and are they in any way implicated in not being strong enough to deal with what we have seen this year; quite a significant number of wet-road accidents, which has seemed to be quite high particularly in St. Peter, my parish, on Beaumont Hill. Is that related perhaps to not enough driving awareness being put in at the early stages through the D.V.S. testing mechanism?

### **Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:**

Yes, I take your point but most of the complaints I get from people regarding that are the licensing procedures are too stringent. Are you suggesting some kind of skid-pan or ...

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

No, I am just wondering. Cars have got better braking systems now and better tyres and yet see seem to be getting even more wet-road accidents than one would have had in recent years. It seems to be more prevalent lately. We have to apply 2 police cars in St. Peter now to regularly close Beaumont Hill, which we were not doing a couple of years ago. So there certainly is a step up in the number of Beaumont Hill-related accidents. It may just be wet roads but certainly my perception is that traffic speeds have increased, certainly in this year. Is that part of it as well?

#### **Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:**

I am not sure if it is more speed or whether it is more automatic vehicles around but when somebody takes their test, that is a certificate of their competence on that particular day. If they go on to develop bad habits obviously that is a policing matter.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

Could it be then that it is the quality of the surface of our roads that creates a problem more so than the actual driver, given that our roads are in a very poor state? Would you or would you not agree that considerably more surface work is required, given

that if a road becomes shiny it is far more difficult to drive on than one that has got a reasonably fresh surface?

#### **Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:**

The gangs are out on a regular basis putting in the anti-skid surfaces.

#### **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

The high performance surfacing goes down in identified accident black spots but it is expensive and it does not last long. It only lasts 5 years because of the nature of the material.

# Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

Can I just draw your attention to what the S.T.P. says about this issue because we provide road surfacing; so we would be the people to talk to about things like that. Obviously police are involved in enforcing and D.V.S. have a role to play in what they notice about defective vehicles. What we are saying here is that there has not been a properly co-ordinated approach to these things in the past and what we want to do is set up a group that will do that co-ordination. In answer to the Deputy of St. Mary's concern, that group would also look at what might be realistic actual targets and bring numbers back to targets. But the most important point is that the co-ordination really has been a bit lacking and we have been doing some areas of issues on road safety. The police have as well. But the police, D.V.S., the road safety officer, health department, the honorary police, all these people need to be getting together regularly looking at why accidents are happening in Jersey and where is the

best areas to invest in that may start reducing. So there is a lot of work that is going to fall out of this but that is the basic proposal.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think you would be aware that we had a sub-group conducting a speed review as a result of a proposal from the Deputy of St. Clement. That has been concluded and will be lodged ...

#### **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

We hope to have an M.D. (ministerial decision) for you to sign at the end of this week; so we should be able to lodge within the next couple of weeks.

### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

So that obviously is directed towards reducing speeds in built-up areas which we hope to roll out shortly towards road safety in the Island.

#### **Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:**

Just also on page 80, there is the roadworthiness and emissions testing spot there.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Can I just come back to a comment that the Acting Director of Transport made a moment ago about his services and his concerns? Yes, I have noticed in the last few weeks there has certainly seems to have been a step-up of enthusiasm on the new friction surfaces and I do not know what they cost. Let us say for one small piece of road, what, £5,000?

### **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

I would not like to give you a figure because I do not have one to hand but it is significantly more expensive than regular surfacing. It is made of a much softer material and how the surface works is it basically abrades as the cars travel over it. So it is always presenting a new face to the tyre so it always remains sharp, which is the reason why it only lasts 5 years. So once you put a site down, there is an ongoing maintenance commitment to that site that you will be returning every 5 years. But with asphalt it might be up to every 20 years or something like that before you have to replace it.

#### The Connétable of St. Peter:

The actual figures do not really matter. Is there a cost benefit there in that one piece of black spot being covered with that might save how many broken legs at £5,000 a time?

#### **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

You get a huge rate of return in terms of injury reduction rates. If you take the community costs into account then it pays for itself very quickly.

### The Connétable of St. Peter:

Fine. That is the point I was trying to get to. So there is a cost benefit to do that?

# **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

It is cost effective, yes, definitely. So that is why we try and target as many sites as we can. We believe that we have got most of our high-priority sites addressed. But, of course, as network use and developments are carried out around the Island, it is a moving target in effect.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

Going back to the co-ordinated group, will the work of that group be based on, in the very first instance, proper analysis of causes of accidents?

### Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

Absolutely, yes.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

Because that determines where you go with your road surfacing but, of course, there are many, many other factors as well.

#### **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

The other issue it is not just the surfaces; there is also the geometry of the roads and that type of thing that needs to be looked at. It cannot be looked at in isolation, just materials or one ... there is not one solution is what I wanted to say.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

There is quite a balance to be struck because what you will find is we might come up with a solution in a country area, put proposals forward for various road safety measures and then get considerable objections from those who do not wish to see

over-urbanisation of a particular corner. So, once again, we have to try and strike a

balance and achieve road safety perhaps with a variety of different methods.

[15:30]

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Can I ask, on the analysis (I want to really push you on this), who will it be done by

and would it be done by a certain person? I think it is in here that it is going to be

done by the group. Analysis cannot be done by the group. So who is going to do it

and will the results be published so that they are open to review by whoever would

like to look at them?

Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

T.T.S. is going to chair the group. So we are going to take responsibility for seeing

that it happens. The police have a statistics unit. There is resource there and there is

resource at T.T.S. So, between those departments, those are the officers that are

going to be able to incorporate it into their day-to-day jobs basically. So we are not

looking for an additional resource.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

All right. Will the results be published of the accident analysis as it rolls forward?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It will have to be.

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#### Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

It is certainly not going to be kept secret.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

Can we move on then? Hopper bus service; is it going to be free, where will it go and how many buses will there be?

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

As part of the new contract we are keen to incorporate a hopper bus service in this. It is fairly early days at this point. The Connétable of St. Helier was quite keen to develop one of his own. We were rather keener that a hopper service is integrated with the overall service because it has got to be more cost-beneficial and would link in with the outlying areas. In terms of free, probably in order for it to work best, as a proper on and off hopper service, it would have to be because one of the delays in getting people on and off is paying. But that is something we need to cost through and take a view on and analyse because once you make something free it increases the cost of doing it. So it is something we will have to look into but I suspect we may end up going that direction.

#### **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

Can I just add in this, we have got a draft new model network which has got some proposals for the hopper service in it but because it is still in its development and validation the Minister has not been shown it yet; but the Minister will have that very shortly. Smart Cards could offer a quick way of payment if you wanted to have a payment mechanism on it.

# The Deputy of St. John:

Is it likely to be part of the main bus contract or a separate operation? What is your thinking on that?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Our thinking at the moment is to have it integrated with the whole bus contract. I think it would be sensible to have common ... well, they are probably different vehicles but there needs to be some inter-relation between the outlying areas and particularly the schools at St. Saviour, Highlands and so on, with the rest of the service.

# The Deputy of St. John:

Have you got any idea of how many numbers of vehicles you are likely to want on this? Any work been done?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I don't know if the Acting Director of Transport ...

# **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

I am not an expert so I would hesitate to put a number forward, I am afraid, at this stage but we have got draft proposals which are being pulled together at the moment.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Remember historically it was tried and it did not work? So we need to be quite careful and plan it thoroughly.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

But I take it that the evaluation would include the value to the main line bus service not going round the loop, the Broad Street loop? That must be costing you a lot of money at the moment.

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Well, in effect, the Broad Street loop is quite contentious. We have altered it in this winter timetable in that the evening buses do not go round there. Morning ones still do because they are depositing people into town. In the evening they tend to be returning. But it would be an opportunity to reduce that. The Broad Street loop adds quite a lot to the time of the bus turnaround, which affects the whole timetable. The operator is not keen on it but it is extremely popular.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

It is extremely popular but it could be integrated into the hopper system?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Yes, it could be. It is very convenient, if you come from the west and you want to go to Broad Street, to jump off at Broad Street rather than to get on another bus. It is something we have to evaluate yet.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

The Connétable of St. Peter is just about to retire from the meeting. He has another meeting to go to but we will continue for a few moments ourselves. What about hubs? Has any thought been given to hubs in real terms? I am thinking, a simple one I can think of, if you had a hub, shall we say, at La Fontaine car park in St. John. For instance, vehicles coming from the west could park in that car park there. You would have a pick-up point from there to bring them straight down to town. Has any thought been given to hubs within the centre?

### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

You are talking about a park and ride system?

# The Deputy of St. John:

I suppose, yes.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Depending on the areas available it could work but, once again, it has to be convenient and effectively it is down to perhaps the parishes providing car parking to accommodate that.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

I mentioned that one because it is one of your car parks. So, therefore, it could be done on a trial period and see if it works because that is a car park essentially, apart from weekends, on weekdays, for 90 per cent of the time, it is totally empty and then you might only get a dozen vehicles there in an evening because of the use of the restaurant nearby. I just wondered ...

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It is an area we are keen to look at. If we can get more people on the buses we will try any way of doing it.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

Bus priority; now, priority lanes for buses and the like, surely this is going to be a non-starter or ...

### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

In effect, nice idea aspirationally. But, once again, with our narrow roads and lack of additional space for lanes, it is probably not achievable. We have certainly seen areas where it can work and traffic lights can be triggered but you do need a separate bus lane. I do not know if the Acting Director of Transport could comment any more on that?

#### **Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:**

The Manager, Transport Policy is probably the person. There is one area where we think we can get in some dedicated bus space, which is on the approach to West Park, down the Inner Road, and the road is wide enough there already to be able to address that using some paint markings.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

Have you considered Victoria Avenue, 3 lanes versus one?

### Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

No, we have not done research on that. There is a report that shows how that could potentially work but it would be quite radical basically and it is not a proposal as things stand because the remaining road capacity for cars would be well short of the number of people, even without modal shift, that would be able to cope with. Basically you would have a lane coming into West Park for buses and only one lane for cars.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

No, I was thinking of keeping the 2; so you do not delay the drivers going in but you could take one lane from the other side. Have you done any study on that?

### Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

No, we have not. I mean the thing with the ...

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

Just to give the bus the advantage.

#### Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

I mean most of our roads are very tidal. So you get a high movement into town in the morning and a high movement out of town in the afternoon. So you need that lane capacity coming into town in the morning and you need it on the other side of the road going out of town in the evening. So it would be quite hard to shift one over.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

On a temporary basis, yes. That is the issue, the daily ... it has to be swapped.

### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I do not think there is enough slack. I think there is too much west-going traffic to achieve what you are suggesting.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

The short answer is it has not been studied.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

It has not been studied but we are quite happy to study it.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

You have spent quite a lot of time and energy looking at likely transport systems and concluding that they are not really viable; whereas this is simply a reallocation of road space. So I wondered whether some work had been done on it.

# Manager, Transport Policy, Transport and Technical Services:

Well, some work was done. It was based on the logic of providing a bus lane to get into town and that would then be aimed at getting modal shift so you would get an improvement at all times. So the fact that you did not have a bus lane coming out of town would not potentially matter because you would get the modal transfer. But the conclusion was it would be too radical a scheme to introduce and that is why we feel that there is scope to get to modal shift without having to do anything of that nature.

#### **Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:**

I mean we are not talking about Greenfield sites and the traffic engineers retrofitting everything.

# **Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:**

It requires a different mind-set as well. There are priority lanes like that in Birmingham but people have to get used to them and, for just one small section of road, it is quite a hard thing to change. We also noticed when we did the Victoria Avenue resurfacing this year that we had a lot of congestion going west when we were down to one lane. So we have some problems with one lane in either direction because, although it is tidal, you still get a lot of traffic. So you have just to be very careful what you try and achieve.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

Pedestrian zones and cycling priority and shared zones; the policy talks about it but why does the policy not do more to restrict vehicle movements through St. Helier during the daytime?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

There is, once again, a balance to be struck in St. Helier. There are the needs of the residents and the needs of commerce and they are not always compatible, it has to be said. I think it is important that if the vibrancy of St. Helier is to remain, people have to be allowed to get in. Now, how do they do that? There are suggestions and we are obviously aware of the EDAW Report with regards St. Helier and the present philosophy of the Connétable. There are aspirations to close Halkett Place to through

traffic. Those are objected to by a lot of the traders. So I think there is a fairly delicate balance to be struck. We also have the issue of the move towards the Waterfront and the old abattoir site and what effect will that have on town centre trading. So I think there is probably more work to be done. That is my feeling so far and I know the Chamber of Commerce is in considerable opposition to certainly closing off Halkett Place, which is a big issue.

### The Deputy of St. John:

There is a lot of air pollution in those areas on very warm days and I can recall in the 1960s and the early 1970s when we were putting the precinct in town, et cetera, being a Centenier at that time, and the traders and the like and Chamber of Commerce used to complain about taking away the business from the town. In fact it was the best thing that happened in St. Helier because we now have a vibrant King Street, Queen Street and other areas. Surely, because of people who live and work in that area, we should be looking seriously at increasing that and yet we do not seem to want to take that on board.

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think the drive for that has to come from the parish and it is my philosophy throughout the Island that the Connétables need to be in concert with our policy and we need to be in concert with theirs. If there is not the enthusiasm, there is little point in us fighting the battle. But with regard to David Place, shall we say, in the whole of the North Town Master Plan, clearly there are issues there which we have discussed at length. But, once again, there is considerable comment from town trade, not only the

market users but also the hoteliers in the area, who have considerable concerns about the sustainability of their businesses.

#### **Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:**

The demographics have changed as well with the loss of the Talman site and Gas Place and we are starting on the town park in the not too distant future.

### The Deputy of St. Mary:

It was interesting what the Chairman said about the traders complaining about closing King Street and Queen Street as well but that was introduced as a trial scheme (well, that is how I remember it) and after 6 months nobody would go back and we certainly would not go back now. So are you saying, in principle, yes to trial scheme of, for instance, closing a few more roads around the market on a temporary basis to see whether the traders are right or whether they are wrong; because a better environment produces more foot fall and research has shown that

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think you are right and I think a trial is the only way into these changes. I think, although this is probably for further discussion, the actual usage of the markets needs review and perhaps the market operation needs modernising. On Property Holdings, the States spends considerable amounts of money maintaining the covered market which is an absolute delight to Jersey and St. Helier but one perhaps might question is it producing the return in this day and age that it might. Maybe the pattern of usage needs to be looked at.

The Deputy of St. John:

Sometimes you have to subsidise things if you want them. As we are subsidising a

bus service by £4-odd million, we have to subsidise something we want to hold and

cherish. That would be a decision of the States of the day to make the decision if we

want to keep our market, unlike Guernsey who got rid of theirs and they regret it. So

it is a political decision but, that said, it should not prevent you from moving forward;

put that in a box by itself and you deal with that at the same time.

[15:45]

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think the North Town Master Plan would close off, in effect, Bath Street and David

Place.

**Acting Director of Transport, Transport and Technical Services:** 

David Place and Bath Street would be one way on the North Town Master Plan,

whereas the pedestrianisation of Halkett Place is in our plan. The North Town Master

Plan works north of that area and is silent on that particular issue.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

The effect is to stop through traffic. That is the purpose of it, is it not?

**Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:** 

Halkett Place?

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# The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes. Pedestrianising Halkett Place is to stop the 25 per cent of cars who simply do not need to be there at all and then somehow to reduce the numbers of the others.

### **Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:**

Yes.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

One could limit it to delivery vehicles and perhaps taxis. So that could be a way forward which I think we need to look at.

# The Deputy of St. Mary:

Choice of buses: you mentioned that the order is early next year of the new rolling stock. Can you give us an assurance that they will be friendly to disabled and the elderly and cyclists?

#### The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

Certainly disabled and elderly. In terms of cyclists, I think we need to select our routes on those. We have only just looked at the rack arrangement and we need to be assured that it will work on the vehicles that are being provided. I am enthusiastic that takes place because, the Deputy's point earlier on, there are hills involved and it will encourage people to get on them; so well and good.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

I think you are on to a winner, I really do. You cannot lose. The question is whether

you can have a bus that is designed in such a way that all 3 are accessible and

welcome; and shoppers as well.

**Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:** 

Can I point out that every member of the T.T.S. team here are very keen cyclists?

The Deputy of St. Mary:

You may be so fit, you lot, that you do not need to go on a bus but certainly I think it

will be a big plus for the Island if you could achieve that.

The Deputy of St. John:

Anything else? While we are looking at that, will we get double-deckers on any of

our routes?

The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

The Chief Officer and I are very enthusiastic, it has to be said, and it has even got to

the stage where the Chief Officer was looking up Routemasters on eBay at one point.

The Deputy of St. John:

So is that a yes?

**Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services:** 

Yes. I am very keen.

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### The Deputy of St. John:

Thank you, you did say yes.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

I think, to be fair, the report has come up with a few issues and quite clearly they are over the wider buses that we are offered now having an effect on roads, being larger than road width. The double-decker really would only work on the number 15 route. There are one or 2 road issues which we have to look at: a few issues at the airport; there is a garage issue in terms of the servicing and the bus station, of course, where they cannot go inside. So these are all things which, in my view, are obstacles which can be overcome. The public are very enthusiastic. There is obviously benefit by carrying more passengers with one driver and the suggestion was put that we might try them initially on a lease basis. There is a little bit of discussion to be had but I would like to suggest that we will be seeing double-decker buses in the Island.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

That is very positive. I am very pleased to hear that. That was an area that at our very first meeting with Connex 18 months ago, Assistant Minister, when it was a total nono. I am pleased that hopefully, by this time next year, we will see them rolled out on our roads, some of our roads.

#### The Deputy of St. Mary:

I have always felt that transport is an area where we can save money for the Island in a big way and your document does point out the connections between transport policy and health, urban environment (it does not go quite as far as saying that children will have a better life because of a better transport policy but it should) and so on. So there are lots of benefits going across different departments and lots of savings. I would put it to you that the policy costs too much not to do it because of the savings you have foregone if you do not do it; yet we are sticking to this sort of very limited envelope of £500,000 and I just wonder whether you cannot find a way of turning some of those benefits into more funding streams to do ... I mean, as the Chairman said, we already subsidise the bus service to the tune of £4 million because we know it is the right thing to do. We know that that generates savings but we cannot put a finger on it, a little flag that says we have just saved more than that. Can we not do that so that we can get these benefits?

# **Chief Officer, Transport and Technical Services:**

The big savings, long-term, are with health (obesity, accidents, prevention) and the difficulty is you will realise those savings in 20, 30, 40 years' time. So they are not bankable now and that is the real issue. When the political cycle is of 3 years, to get a commitment to spend something that in 20 years' time is going to give you a return is very difficult.

#### The Deputy of St. John:

But surely it is only a matter for the Minister and the Assistant Minister to sell it in the right way to Members who all have got children or grandchildren and we want their health to be improved over the next 20 years, not go the other way. It is a salesman's job and, given you spend a lot of time behind a counter, you should be able to sell it to your counterparts around the Ministers' table.

# The Minister for Transport and Technical Services:

The debate, no doubt, will tell, Deputy.

# The Deputy of St. John:

Anyway, I will declare the meeting closed and thank you all, the Minister in particular and all your officers and your colleague, the Assistant Minister, for the time that you have given this afternoon and I am sure it has all been worthwhile. Thank you.

[15:51]