

2018.11.20

21 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade of the Minister for the Environment General regarding desired changes to the bus service in Jersey: [OQ.202/2018]

Question:

From an environmental perspective, what changes if any, would the Minister like to see to the bus service in Jersey?

Answer:

The Minister for Infrastructure has responsibility for managing the bus service.

I must congratulate him, his officers, and CT Plus (bus operator) for delivering significant improvements to the bus service. This includes an increase in ridership of over 30% since 2013, when CT Plus started to operate the bus service. This equates to an anticipated 4.76 million bus journeys in 2018.

One of the largest contributors to the Island's Greenhouse Gas Emissions and to poor air quality is emissions from vehicles. As part of the planned States Sustainable Transport Policy review, I'd like to see further changes to the bus service that would benefit the environment. A growth in bus usage will result in an increase in more sustainable forms of transport and a decrease in our carbon emissions.

In the States approved Energy Plan for Jersey, Pathway 2050, we have committed to decreasing our carbon emissions by 80 per cent by 2050, from 1990 levels. In order to achieve this we will need to look at a range of policy tools that influence and modify environmental behaviour changes. This should include reviewing legislation, sanctions, regulations, taxes and charges, and subsidies, and the continued provision of public services and information.

Members will be aware that I have lodged an amendment to the Draft Budget Statement 2019, due for debate at the next sitting. This asks the Council of Ministers to review fair and proportionate taxes and charges to encourage public behaviour changes to help deliver the proposed Common Strategic Policy's (CSP) objectives for the environment.

I'd like a range of changes to the bus service to be considered and I would be happy to work with the Minister for Infrastructure to explore these.

Options include:

- dedicated bus lanes and priority to buses
- safer and improved access to bus stops
- more use of planning obligation agreements to improve the bus service and associated infrastructure
- exploring the feasibility of introducing electric buses to Jersey
- reviewing bus fares