



# Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel

Budget 2025 - 2028

**Witness: The Minister for Infrastructure**

Wednesday, 16th October 2024

**Panel:**

Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity (Chair)

Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South (Vice-Chair)

Deputy D.J. Warr of St. Helier South

Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement

Connétable D. Johnson of St. Mary

**Witnesses:**

Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John - The Minister for Infrastructure

Mr. T. Daniels - Director, Jersey Property Holdings

Ms. E. Littlechild - Group Director, Operations and Transport

Mr. A. Scate - Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment

[11:33]

**Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity (Chair):**

So, welcome to this public hearing of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel. Today is 16th October 2024 and this is our public hearing with the Minister for Infrastructure specifically focusing on the budget for 2025 to 2028. I would like to draw attention to the following. This hearing will be filmed and streamed live. The recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, please could be switched to silent. I would like to ask any members of the public who have joined us today

to not interfere in the proceedings and as soon as the hearing is closed to leave quietly. If we could begin with a round of introductions, my name is Deputy Hilary Jeune and I am the Chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel.

**Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South:**

Deputy Tom Coles, Vice-Chair.

**Deputy D.J. Warr of St. Helier South:**

Deputy David Warr, member.

**Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:**

Deputy Alex Curtis, member.

**Connétable D. Johnson of St. Mary:**

David Johnson, Constable of St. Mary and member of the panel.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Constable Andy Jehan, Minister for Infrastructure.

**Director, Jersey Property Holdings:**

Tim Daniels, Director of Property Holdings.

**Group Director, Operations and Transport:**

Ellen Littlechild, Group Director of Operations and Transport.

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

Andy Scate, the Chief Officer for Infrastructure and Environment.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Thank you, and thank you, Minister, for joining us today. Of course, we had a scrutiny hearing, our quarterly hearing, at the beginning of September and we did touch on some budget questions then, and so this is building on that. Of course, we have received from you recently a letter following that. So, Minister, what implications are there for the Island's infrastructure within a budget that has increased its health budget within an overall budget that is trying to limit growth?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Well, I think the challenge for all of us is about getting value for money and I think the team are working incredibly hard to achieve that. There is more that ... obviously, we would like to do more,

but we have had to, for example, reduce our capital programme for public realm. That does not mean to say that public realm is not important, but we have had to make some tough decisions around that, for example. Liquid waste is clearly key for us to deliver the affordable homes and we have to invest in that. I think the challenge for Infrastructure is, as you have become aware as a panel, often you do not see what we do but what we do keeps the Island running. There are some fantastic people right across the organisation that make that happen. Before this briefing, we were discussing the weather outside because we will have people on standby this evening, this afternoon and this evening, in case we do get heavy rain, just as we had a week ago when there was a terrific response, not just from Infrastructure but the Fire Service and volunteers, Honorary Police, et cetera. But Infrastructure are at the heart of it and we saw the impact on some roads, for example, but what the public do not see is the work that goes on behind the scenes to make sure the pumping stations are working and, if they are not working, they are responding to that very quickly. So, yes, there is lots for us to do.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Thank you, Minister. I think some of those things that you have mentioned we are going to specifically draw in on some of the questions. One of those is, of course, the liquid waste and waste infrastructure, which is, as you said, a big part of trying to deliver affordable homes. During our last quarterly hearing, you touched on the deferment of the introduction of waste charges. You said that the Government could not keep avoiding the challenge and that legislation should be brought forward as soon as possible. Can you confirm your commitment to bringing forward legislation for debate prior to the end of this term of office?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

It is certainly my ambition and aim to bring that forward. I think we have to address it and we have significant funds in place to, as I said, sort out the new houses that are coming on stream. We have done the work on the sewage treatment works, but the work does not stop. The work does not stop, and we have to continue to invest in existing infrastructure, improve infrastructure. There are still too many homes in Jersey that are not connected to the main network. I look to my left to the Constable of St. Mary. The northern parishes, they have some areas which you would fully expect to be on the main services, on main roads, which are not, and I include water in that as well.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Specifically on this waste charges legislation, has work progressed since our hearing in September?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

No, I do not believe we have made much, if any, progress since then. Our focus, you will appreciate, is on the Government Plan, and then I think once we are through that then we will get back on to it. We are keen to involve yourselves and other stakeholders in that process at an early stage.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

In the budget then specifically, is there funding put aside to develop this piece of work specifically?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I am going to have to look to my right. I believe there is.

**Group Director, Operations and Transport:**

I think money would have to be reprioritised in order to undertake that piece of work on charging.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

But we know we have to do it so ...

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

So then what would be not ... have you done that work on what would then be deprioritised, putting that charging ... that work around charging in legislation becomes a priority?

**Group Director, Operations and Transport:**

There is lots of ongoing work at the moment looking at how we deliver the savings and fund some of these key pieces of work that need to be done. So work is being taken place at the moment and that hopefully will be concluded by the end of the year to look at how then we go forward and fund these programmes moving forward.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

So at the moment we do not necessarily know ... we would not know what the ... we are deciding in the budget an overall amount but we do not actually know what that prioritises or deprioritises?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I cannot point you to a line in the budget that says X is going to be spent on liquid waste charging. We have to respond. When you have a budget this size, there is flexibility in a budget of this size. For example, at First Tower we have had to spend much more than we expected, but you cannot stop the work midway. You need the pipes to work and the pumping station to work, so you have to do that. Then you have to look at where do you get that money from and reprioritise. So you have to be nimble in what you are doing. You have your aspirations as to what you want to achieve in the 12 months, but you have to have some flexibility because there will be events, things that

happen, that you are not expecting. If you forecast a piece of kit is going to last you X, when it breaks down 3 years before X you cannot leave that for 3 years until you have the money. You have to respond to it.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Of course, we as a panel understand that. I think it is understanding the prioritisation of developing that waste charging legislation that will help the Infrastructure team to be able to have more funding to be able to then make those decisions on that specific ... on infrastructure. I think moving on with that, the panel raises questions about the ability of the Government to deliver those changes to the liquid waste network with the funding that is currently available in the budget, as you have just said. For example, First Tower needed more than what was originally put forward. The former Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel also raised concerns about security of funding in the liquid waste strategy. Please can you be clear on whether the current funding profile over the life of this budget is enough to fund key infrastructure projects scheduled for delivery in this period?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

What I can tell you is that the key programmes to bring on the affordable homes and for the foreseen major upgrades are in train. We have a challenge with the Maufant storage project but we believe we can find the solution to that. I think we are close to that solution. So yes, it can be dynamic, but we have to do Maufant to allow the St. Martin homes to come online. So it is about prioritisation and reprioritisation.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Specifically on that, what projects and part of the bridging liquid waste strategy will be delivered with the £21.3 million that is allocated in this budget?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Well, we have the St. Peter strategic storage facility, so we are just in the process of passing contract for the land to do that work. I do not know if you have seen the presentation that one of our head engineers, Tom Le Gallais, has done. He did it for the construction industry at I.C.E. (Island Construction and Engineering) and he recently gave it to the Council of Ministers, which really explains a bit more detail about how it works. It is something we would be happy to share with you. So we have the St. Peter work. We have the West Hill work. Maufant, St. Brelade, Le Dicq and St. Aubin's Road separation. So I think that is a key thing to mention is we have to continue to put a lot of energy into separating surface water from foul sewage, (a) because we need to make sure we have capacity for the foul sewage; and (b) there is no need for us to treat the surface water through the sewage treatment works. So we use up energy that we do not need to use. So there is a lot of work there.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

So the list you have just mentioned, that is within the £21.3 million?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Yes. Have I missed anything?

**Group Director, Operations and Transport:**

You mentioned the main projects. Otherwise it is the Bonne Nuit conversion of the S.T.W. (sewage treatment works) into a pumping station, but also allowing more properties to connect. Also you mentioned West Hill, I think.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Yes.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Within this, is there any projects that have had to be delayed? I know you mentioned Maufant, but is there any specific projects that you had identified in the liquid waste strategy and now you feel it has had to be delayed?

**Group Director, Operations and Transport:**

Some of the projects we would like ... within the liquid waste strategy we identified that we need to replace some rising mains, so some of those projects have been pushed back. Again, we will be keeping to monitor those rising mains and if we have to do repairs, like we have had to do with First Tower, then we will go through and reprioritise that capital programme. So yes, we are pretty confident with the projects that we have in for up to 2026 at this stage.

[11:45]

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

You used the word “confident” which is actually in my next question. How confident are you, Minister, that the investment your Government is making is sufficient to adequately maintain Jersey’s liquid waste network and is it fit for future purpose?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Well, I am confident that we can maintain the network as it is. Is it fit for future purpose? That depends how far you extend your view. We will have to continue investing long after this budget and this 4 years is over. It is a continuation because whatever we put in new today will need

upgrading, replacing, repairing in 5, 10, 15, 20 years' time. That is probably one of the only certainties that we will have to continue to do the work. You do not see it underground but it is a bit like roads. You have to keep maintaining.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Thank you. Just wrapping up these questions into ... obviously you have the bridging liquid waste strategy and there were some key requirements put down for 2026. Do you feel that these requirements will be met with this budget for 2026?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think we have confidence that we will be able to deliver that, yes. But as Ellen has already explained, if something happens then we have to reprioritise. So I cannot give you a cast iron guarantee but as we sit today we are confident.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

With that, has there been discussions with the Council of Ministers about this potentially ... as you said, that you are confident that there is this ...

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Absolutely.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

... project, but what happens if there is a reprioritisation?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I took the opportunity of getting the exciting subject of drainage on to the Council of Ministers' agenda only last week or the week before. The team came to present the work, not only the work that we have done, the work that we are doing and the need for the continuation into the future. I think it is very important that as many people see what we have to do because it often goes unseen. It is often seen as we can make savings here; well, you do that at your peril because without a robust liquid waste system you cannot have hospitals, you cannot have schools. So it is vital infrastructure. It was very well received and I am very happy to get that same presentation given to your panel.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Thank you. We would really appreciate that. Sitting that within the Bridging Island Plan, do you think that we will be able to deliver on those proposals that are set out in the Bridging Island Plan?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I do. I do because the work that we have done with the drainage team is to ensure that when properties are ready for connection that the drains are ready for them. That is why we have gone for the attenuation tank solution. So in short, we will store the product and release it when there is capacity in the network. So we have 2 main events a day and so we can release during the day and overnight and, therefore, we do not end up overflowing the sewage pipe. There is plans to upgrade sewage pipes as part of this investment, but the attenuation holds it and we release it when we can cope with it.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Thank you, Minister. One last question in this area, circling back, I suppose, a little bit around your priority you would like on the waste charging. It is that long-term financing strategy. Has that been developed for that delivery and maintenance for that long term that you were talking about? Very clearly, there is something for now but also that long term?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think there has been quite a lot of work done historically on that area and I think we keep refreshing that. But I think we have to look at it for the long term and we have to find a solution that we can bring to the Assembly where there is a new charging mechanism, whatever that looks like and we do not have a fixed idea on what that is. There are different models that work in different jurisdictions and we need to see what is best for the Island. But yes, I am hopeful that I will be bringing a proposal during this term, absolutely.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

If you have finished, Chair, going back to the liquid waste charges, it feels as if it might be premature to ask this question but the previous time this was floated - if I could use that word - it was made clear by the then Chief Minister that it would not apply to domestic households.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Yes.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

Has any decision or discussion taken place as to whether the intention will be to cover both commercial and domestic in any future plan?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I would not give that same commitment today as I sit there, and I was on the other side of the argument when it was looking to introduce commercial waste charges. We all use the sewerage



network. We need to find a fair and equitable way that we can continue to invest in this vital infrastructure.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

Thanks for that clarification.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

We will move on to estates with Deputy Warr.

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

Okay, on to estates. So please could you provide more information about the major refurbishments and upgrades contained in the estates table in the proposed budget? In particular, could you explain the drop in funds from £5.8 million in 2026 to £2.6 million in 2027 and then to £205,000 in 2028?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Yes. I think what we are looking to do is to review how we operate our estates and so our priority is the here and now. Your Government or the Government that we were in put in, for example, half a million pounds in this year, 2024, for Havre des Pas on page 68 of the Government Plan. That is the work that is carrying on, although some people think that we are reacting, doing a kneejerk reaction. That has been planned. That work is starting. In terms of the property maintenance, we are looking at what properties do we need. We are just about ... I am hoping the week after next we are going to be signing service level agreements with our tenants in education, for example. So we have been ... Property Holdings has been in existence for almost 20 years and we still do not have a service level agreement with some of our tenants. So who cleans the gutter, you or me? We need to rectify that and the team have been working hard for a long time, but certainly in the last 6 months they have been working hard to get that across the line so that we can identify who is doing what and, therefore, what the cost of that work is. Because other departments also get funding for maintenance of properties and it is important that that money goes on the maintenance of properties and not on other things that that department needs.

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

Can I just clarify one thing? You talked about that £500,000 or half a million pounds. You are talking about the whole of Havre des Pas, you are not talking particularly of one area? You are talking about the Havre des Pas area?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Havre des Pas, yes.

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

Yes. Okay. That is fine. Okay. So the next question is similarly can you detail what is covered by other I. and E. (Infrastructure and Environment) estate projects and the increase that budget sees in 2028 in comparison to the preceding years?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I am going to hand over to Tim for that question.

**Director, Jersey Property Holdings:**

The increase in funding is partly because we are looking at a review of our preventative maintenance packages, the P.P.M.s (planned preventative maintenance) We have had the same contract in place for, I do not know, maybe 10 years or so and we have just retendered and are going through the contracts for review of how we approach P.P.M.s. P.P.M.s cover the statutory and regulatory maintenance of our estate, so effectively keeping the buildings safe. Clearly, we are living in a finite world so what we are having to do is to put a little bit more money, we think, into the P.P.M.s in order to make sure that we prepare the buildings for the future. The expectation is that that will then reduce the reactive maintenance costs and that the buildings will be more regularly maintained, will be in an ongoing better condition, and that, as I say, hopefully that will reduce the reactive. But we have yet to see clearly if that is the case.

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

If I can, Deputy, are you asking the specific question on the line in the capital programme on other estate projects?

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

Yes.

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

Which totals 1.58. So that effectively includes the skate park investment as well as D.D.A. improvements to our estate, so just access improvements, those sort of things that we have to spend on the estate to keep them up to standard in terms of those other discrimination laws, safeguarding laws, those sort of things.

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

Sure. Okay. Thank you for clarifying that. The panel has noted that in a recent public hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning that relatively urgent structural repairs are required at Highlands College. Are you satisfied that the budget allocated to Jersey Property Holdings for

the purpose of Highlands repairs is sufficient to carry out the work which is needed to ensure safety and continuation of provision?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Well, I think that is the point, the same point, as the liquid waste. If there is an issue with safety, we have to find the money, and if that means that it delays us doing something else and we have to make a decision to do that, then we have to be dynamic and do those kind of things. So our first priority with any investment that we receive for our properties is to make sure that we meet the statutory safety requirements. That could be electrical testing. That could be water safety, fire safety. So those all become our priorities. So if we need to spend more than we have been allocated, then we have to find ways of finding that money, but our priority has to be for the safety of the people that use the building, the people that work in the building and the people that visit the building. So that is always our priority.

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

Thank you. Looking around the panel members, no further questions on that one? Okay. So the next question is: can you explain to the panel why the new school and educational development is listed under the estates programme rather than the capital programme?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Well, that will be an accounting thing which I have to look to my colleague ...

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

So the capital programme is broken down into various chunks. I think in general terms it is estates, which means property. We have infrastructure, which is generally our roads and in-ground infrastructure. We also have digital investments and things like that. So the investment, if I look at the capital programme here now, the estates section of the budget includes a lot of buildings, effectively. It includes buildings that cover some of our health estate, some of our school estate, some of our ... for instance, the crematorium is in there and things like that. So estates is used as a wider term just for the buildings expenditure.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

But it does not cover all of them?

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

No. So it covers the specific estates projects in this term of the budget. Obviously, there is a lot of other ongoing spend on buildings which occur generally in our property revenue budgets.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think it goes to the point I mentioned earlier about us looking at what we do and how we do things because we have ...

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

This is more about the split, that is all we are talking about here.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Yes, but it is about how we present things, though, going forward. For me, I will give you an example. Property Holdings is responsible for some grass verges. Infrastructure is responsible for some grass verges. Why on earth? In some cases, why on earth do we continue to own those grass verges? Why do we not offer those to the local community, i.e. the parish? So we are looking at how can we clean up what we do and how we present things to make it simple, but we are just a few months in, really. So it has not been able to do it for this budget but hopefully for the next budget it will be clearer to everybody, not just politicians but the public as well.

**Director, Jersey Property Holdings:**

If I may, just a couple of additions. At the moment the property team at Infrastructure and Environment look after the effectively non-technical, so bits of the hospital, the prison, specific areas of the police station. That has technical requirements that are effectively beyond our knowledge and capability, but there are also elsewhere in the estate bits and pieces of property or premises that are held by other departments but actually should come back to Property Holdings. We have recently taken over the running of the residential area by the prison and we have also been supporting Home Affairs in terms of the ambulance station and bits and pieces of that, which has been very effective in terms of giving us an overall view of the estate and allowing us a much more corporate picture of what we can do and where we can do it. So one of the challenges that we face in our review of how we deliver the service is do we continue to bring stuff back into Property Holdings where we can have that corporate view or is there another view of perhaps how the system can be operated, again that will deliver a safe and cost-effective estate.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Can I ask on this: does that mean why ... and it comes back, I guess, to the question Deputy Warr asked earlier about the drop-off of funds in 2028. There is no funding put for major refurbishments or fire safety in the C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills) estates. Is that then why there is nothing put in 2028 because of this review about which budget, where would that sit for those 2 specific things? I am just trying to work ...

[12:00]

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

We would like to think that the fire safety work will be completed, so that is the aim.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

The major refurbishment and upgrades ... because there is nothing put for 2028, so we are just wondering how that works.

**Director, Jersey Property Holdings:**

We are working with the Treasury team at the moment. The programme that you see in front of you is a snapshot, it is a 4-year view, which does not really aid management of an estate where buildings' lives are in maybe 40 or 50 years. So what we are trying to do with Treasury is to get a much longer view of where issues might lie. We have just had a condition survey completed, which will give us a sliding scale view of the priorities and challenges that we face. We will start to slot those premises and issues in in the years beyond the capital programme so that we have something more constructive when we come to discussions around the ... or when the Council of Ministers are discussing what the priorities should be we have more empirical evidence or more detailed evidence of, well, do we know that the roof here is out of date, the mechanical engineering dies here, and so from our view this is something that we should be bringing forward. So as I say, although you get a 4-year view here, that is not the way that we are thinking. We are trying desperately to push to give us a much longer horizon which will smooth the expenditure. Because at the moment everything gets frontloaded because people do not really understand that there is life after the existing Government Plan.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

So just to confirm and to understand what you are saying, in this budget it looks like it just drops off to nothing. Are you saying that in the budget 2026 you will then add back into that in this new framework that you are talking with the Treasury ...

**Director, Jersey Property Holdings:**

We may or we may not. As I say, there is no certainty at the moment, but what we are aware of is that we do not have a comprehensive view of those future years. So we are still being reactive when we are painfully aware that we actually need to be proactive.

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

As the Minister said, the published capital plan, the programme in the Government Plan, is as we know now. What we can absolutely guarantee is that things will change. So if we look 12, 24 months ahead, other things will occur that will need to be reflected in the capital programme at some point

and these numbers will undoubtedly change. Certainly, the further out we get, we have good certainty I think 2024, 2025, 2026, but as we get into 2027, 2028 we are looking further out. Undoubtedly, those numbers will change again and maybe new lines will be added depending on what issues have appeared.

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

Thank you. So the next question is: is there any concern about the impact of the service level agreements that you are developing with C.Y.P.E.S. for the school estate - you did mention this - on the level of funding allocated to Jersey Property Holdings? Presumably, you were talking about these ongoing discussions, so I do not know whether you want to develop on that or if you feel like you have already answered that to a degree.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I am happy to continue. I am frustrated we have not done it already. I want to get things done. We were hampered by the summer holidays and we are now fast approaching half-term, but I am assured that discussions are taking place during the half-term. What that delay has allowed us is to refine some of that work so I think we will end up with a better product by waiting. I have to hold my hand up to that to say we are better to have a bit of patience at times. But when we have those service level agreements we will then ensure that the funds are allocated appropriately. So if funds are currently allocated to a school to do - this is hypothetical - gutter cleaning and the S.L.A. (service level agreement) says that Property Holdings is going to look after all the gutter cleaning, then the money would need to follow.

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

Yes. That is fine. I think we have done enough on that one. My final question in this section: the panel understands it is still your intention to deliver a town skate park by the end of this term of office. However, the funding is not in the budget until 2028. Can you explain this?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Yes. So I have met with Deputy Stephenson who has shown a very keen interest. We are bringing through the presentation. We have identified a site and I am hoping that ... I think we are in preplanning at the moment?

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

We are, yes.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

We are assured that the monies are available to do it as soon as we get planning permission. We are working with the skate community on that as well.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Is this budget for 2024 for this or where does that sit within the budget?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I am assured by Treasury that the funding will be brought forward for the skate park.

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

I think that is another example of the capital programme movement that we are talking about depending on issues. We have an ongoing dialogue with Treasury around what the profile of the capital programme looks like depending on what issues we are seeing. The skate park is one of those conversations we want to see earlier in the programme. It will undoubtedly mean another couple of things may be slipping back. Some of that is reality because sometimes things just do not appear as they ... this is day one, we publish the capital plan, that is what we expected on that day, and then other things occur and we either get time delay or we get things that are pressured that come forward. However, the skate park certainly is something we want to get on with next year.

**Deputy A.F. Curtis:**

This message about reality and the capital programme being out of date the moment it is published, we hear it quite a lot. Is there merit or do you think that the budget goes far enough in explaining how movements for projects can occur? So it sounds like it is well aware that the skate park could be funded outside of 2028 but the narrative is not there to enable States Members or the public to understand the reality of capital programming.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I have met with Deputy Stephenson and written to her to give her that assurance because it is my intention to get it done. In a previous life I was dealing with similar budgets to the one that Infrastructure has, and in my experience if you are purchasing something, it may not be manufactured, you may have an opportunity earlier to buy something, and you just have to be a little bit dynamic. I think when you see the document the size that it is, the Government Plan, the budget, you could have something 5 times as large and it still would move. So I think you just have to make decisions based on the information you have on the day and then you have to respond to events, opportunities, risk, threats. So you have to, as in any other organisation, respond to those things.

**Deputy A.F. Curtis:**

Do you think there should be some at least even short narrative that clarifies that that is potentially a legitimate approach to take so that those who see these movements know it is planned and understood within how ... yes.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think that is probably a question for the Minister for Treasury and Resources rather than the Minister for Infrastructure because it would be the same for all of the departments. We are given an envelope. We work within that envelope. So I think that would be ... so you cannot spend money unless you have the business plan in place, so there are lots of checks and balances within the finance manual. So I do think it is a weighty document already so ...

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

I think it is a fair question because we do publish a moment in time here. That is our best assessment of what we think is going to be coming on when, and then obviously reality occurs and things have to be dynamic. We do have a regular dialogue with our Treasury colleagues, certainly around capital spend, and I think it is incumbent on us to explain if anything is moving here why it is moving and what is the implications of that move. For instance, we have spoken about some of the rising mains earlier. We have had to spend money on those. We have no option but to do that. As a result, we have had to make some other decisions to push funding in different directions. I think as long as we are open about what we are doing, it just shows the reality of life.

**Deputy T.A. Coles:**

Yes, that moves us on to the section of capital programme and obviously building on what we have just been saying. So what assessment is done around the long-term increase in costs that may come from delays or inaction?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think that is a really valid question. I think I told you in September that 58 per cent of our expenditure is on non-staff and we see as a department significant increases in costs, way above in some cases the increase in our budget. Again, we have to respond in that way. We have the I.C.E. programme, which is designed to maximise efficiencies to make sure that we have the money available, make sure the resource is available, so the human resource, to deliver things. The I.C.E. project I think as a programme is a really good step forward and I pay tribute to the officers who have put that together, as well as the A.L.O.s (arm's-length organisations) who have worked with us to get that there. I think it will help all of us, help the Island by having a longer plan in terms of what we are going to do to try and stop peaks and troughs that we are seeing in the construction industry at the moment. I was talking to a large contractor in the street yesterday morning. He was telling me that



things were not as buoyant as they were because of the interest rate predominantly. So if we are able to help in any way, then that is a good opportunity by looking at that I.C.E. programme, yes.

**Deputy T.A. Coles:**

Is there any sort of criteria that is used with delaying projects and continuation of others? What methodology do you use to weigh up the pros and ...?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I do not know the science, but there are a number of things that will come into the decision. So often it will be planning. If planning has not been granted in the time that we expect it to be granted, that is going to delay a programme. I think there has been some good progress made in the speed of planning decisions, so hopefully that will not be there. It could be availability of resource. It could be, as we have discussed, that we have had to divert financial resource to do something that is urgent. There is a whole range of things, but in terms of a science, I do not think we have a science.

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

No, I think it is a blend of all those. Sometimes it is just the risk base, things just have to be fixed and repaired or replaced. Some of it is that we know there is a community need for new facilities, so we will be looking at that. It is a complete balancing act, which I guess that typifies how the Government Plan is put together, really, is a balancing act of all those things.

**Deputy T.A. Coles:**

You said earlier that if you have a ... again, we will stick with the sewage treatment works, so the rising main at First Tower required extra funding. So that meant you would have to do a risk assessment of your other projects to consider which one you are able to delay. Are you able to share any of those risk assessments with us?

**Group Director, Operations and Transport:**

Yes. We certainly do asset management on all of our infrastructure assets, so we know what the condition is and we look at trying to plan out the replacement of those assets every 25 years. The drainage work we do lots of modelling. So we get cameras of all the network to assess the condition, then that condition is rated between 1 to 5 and then that is how we go through and look at our prioritisation programme. It is also things that happen during the course of the year. So if we know that we have certain areas where there is a lot of surface water flooding or areas like that, again we are monitoring that and looking at how we prioritise that programme during the year. Rising main replacement for First Tower was on that list. It had just been pushed out as we were focusing on other projects, so again we have to be dynamic. We have to carry on doing the condition surveys and be reactive. Sometimes we are able to patch work. In the case of First Tower, at the moment

we are doing relining. So we are not replacing all the pipes but we have a short-term measure for the next 10 years hopefully that will see us through in that space.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think another thing that is worth mentioning is once a month when we have a ministerial meeting we are brought up to date with each of the capital projects. We have a R.A.G. (red, amber, green) status so we know if something is behind, on schedule or if it is just about okay. That is part of that decision-making process because we do not want to get to November and find out that we do not have enough money to do everything we want to do or we are going to have money left. So that is something that is done with the ministerial team but the department, the officers, do that in more detail. The chap we have doing that is a very good officer.

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

Sorry, this is getting a little bit off-piste. I am trying to stay with the subject matter. I appreciate it is the budget. But this issue you talked about, bumping into somebody in the construction industry and saying things are tough, obviously we have recently seen another business fail. How much interaction is there between the Government and the private sector in terms of ... because obviously these prioritisations, if you know there is capacity in the private sector to do some of this stuff, how aware are they of that? Are you able to make them very aware of it?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think we presented the I.C.E. programme to the construction council and their members as a way of starting that dialogue. We want people to invest in training for young people, for example, and if they can see there is a future, then hopefully they will do that. It was just a chance meeting with someone I played football with so it is ...

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

No, obviously there has been a reality, though, of business failing and very recently high publicity, and we are thinking, well, if you have lots of projects that you need to get done, how come the ... I think one of the criticisms you made was around planning, I think was one of the reasons you felt there was delays.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

It was an observation rather than a criticism, and I think progress has been made and we should recognise that progress has been made.

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

Sure.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

You have to have the funds available, and so I think one thing that the Infrastructure team should take a lot of credit for is their ability to deliver projects on budget and on time. I think they have a very good track record when it comes to that. They cannot control things that are out of their control, clearly, but I do think in general they have a very good track record and one they should be proud of and we should be proud of.

[12:15]

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

Just in terms of liaison with the industry, the quick answer is yes, we do liaise with the industry, both from I guess an infrastructure perspective but also construction perspective. It is also fair to say we spend a lot of money already with the construction industry locally, both infrastructure spend and construction spend. So we have framework agreements with a lot of suppliers. A lot of day to day spend goes out through the construction industry. It is also not all constructors out there work for Government. So some recent examples, for instance, we had not got any work placed with that individual constructor. Some of those constructors focus more on the private residential market rather than Government and construction market. So it does vary, but we do have a dialogue. I have a meeting, for instance, this Friday with the construction council as just a regular meeting. We also are looking at developing a wider developer construction forum, industry forum, because the construction council does represent the industry but some people are not involved in that either. So we want to keep a dialogue going. As the Minister said, the 10-year outlook on the I.C.E. programme is good information that people can base their decisions on. However, there is a lot of private sector spend out there as well that hopefully people will see coming back online again with the interest rate regime changing.

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

Sure. Thanks.

**Deputy T.A. Coles:**

We asked in September about your decision not to include capital project funding for the market revitalisation project over the life of this budget. Can you share with the panel any feedback you have had from traders or stallholders in relation to this decision?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

We are spending a lot of money on the market, on the roof, et cetera, and we have a meeting with market traders shortly. I am going to look behind. Is it in the next 2 weeks?

**Female Speaker:**

Yes.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

The Constable of St. Helier leads on the markets, and he sends his apologies for today but he is just back from Germany, I think. So the dialogue happens there. We work closely with our colleagues in Economy and there is a meeting scheduled shortly with the market traders.

**Deputy T.A. Coles:**

Is that going to be discussing whether new leases are going to be intensively ...?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Absolutely, yes. It is our intention to ... we are due to write to the market traders I think ahead of that meeting and then have the meeting, yes. We hope to get it resolved in the coming weeks, yes.

**Deputy T.A. Coles:**

Excellent. That is good to hear. There is a specific capital programmes line in the budget for road safety with no funding allocated to it. Can you explain why that is and whether you believe that sufficient funding is allocated for road safety as part of the Infrastructure rolling vote?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Well, we have to be grateful to Constable Stone, who worked with my predecessor to get a percentage of the car park trading fund for road safety. I think there is some good progress being made in that area. Only last week or the week before we had people over from TyreSafe, which is a U.K. (United Kingdom) charity. They are going to come back again. They have trained up people locally to use a very clever system which can be rolled out. D.V.S. (Driver and Vehicle Standards) have it. I believe the Honorary Police could use the system to check not only the tread of a tyre but also the pressure on a tyre. I went down to see how that was working. We also had colleagues went to a conference recently in Sweden, and as a result of that conference we have an online presentation from one of the major speakers to talk to us about what Sweden has done around road safety. You will have seen on the front page of the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)* recently the camera that is due to arrive on Island in the coming weeks. I am not sure when. I think at our previous meeting ...

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

Next year I think it was.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think it will be, yes, probably around the Christmas, but I think at the previous meeting it was ordered that day because I remember an officer coming to whisper in my ear that it has been ordered. So there is significant work going on in road safety. Interestingly, talking to the chaps over from the charity, they had worked with our road safety officer for some 17 years in the U.K. and spoke very highly of the individual and I would echo those words.

**Deputy T.A. Coles:**

But there is still no funding against it in the line of the budget. That was the question.

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

Yes, the capital programme does not have anything new but we are looking at funding it via other routes.

**Deputy T.A. Coles:**

Okay.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

That will be revenue rather than capital, yes?

**Group Director, Operations and Transport:**

Some may be through planning obligations and other areas that we can be looking to try and resource some of the ...

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

So treatments, et cetera, yes.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

In that way, do you have a target that you want to get to? Because we do not see it in the budget, is there a target of the amount that you want to be collecting to help sustain road safety but also improve related to the strategy that I believe is agreed or ...?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think there are some ...

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Can you get that?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think there are some quick wins, and only in the last 3 weeks I have visited one parish's road committee with an officer to try and persuade them to work with us to encourage cycling on a specific route. We are meeting another parish at the start of November to do the same. If we can connect those 2 parishes, we plan to spend a little amount of money but to have a very effective corridor, basically, for cyclists, for example. So the work is ongoing and we are trying throughout the department to try and be a little bit smarter in what we do and how we do things. We have some creative people, so I am quite confident we are going to deliver some stuff, yes.

**Deputy T.A. Coles:**

I suppose there is also the other question of this speeding camera. I know there is an outlay of about £35,000 and I assume some of the money collected from fines will be going to cover that cost. But is there a chance to take some of the money that is received from fines to allocate towards better ...

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think the concept of the camera is around the unsocial driving that we see around the Island, predominantly at night or early morning. In the last week I have been woken up at 10 past 4 and 20 past 2 by speeding vehicles. I am not talking about somebody that is doing 24 miles an hour in a 20 miles an hour speed limit. I am talking about somebody that is driving at excessive speed. I think the idea of this camera is to try and target those people to try and stop or reduce serious accidents. This is not a revenue-generating system. I think if you put a camera like that on Victoria Avenue, then you would not keep up with it probably. So the idea of this camera is around trying to encourage people to drive sensibly and not drive erratically. We have just seen a very successful motor rally and that is the time for people to drive at speed on closed roads in a safe, organised manner, not as happens right around the Island. We get feedback from right across the Island. It is not just the north of the Island, it is everywhere.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

Thank you for that. We look forward to receiving you about a cycle pathway maybe in our parish. Thank you. A few questions if I may on the Infrastructure rolling vote and the public realm. We note that the Infrastructure rolling vote is £2.1 million less in 2025 and in the subsequent years to that which was approved in 2024 when it was £18.9 million. Given the stated importance of the rolling vote, are you satisfied that the funding is sufficient for the work that you are required to cover within this?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Well, it is back to choice and it is back to priorities. For example, we will be investing £6.5 million in roads resurfacing in 2025. If you gave me £8.5 million, I could invest that extra £2 million in road resurfacing. So it is about prioritising and we use ... much to some people's upset, where a road does not need to be dug up and resurfaced at full depth, we use a coating, which I can never remember the name of.

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

Micro asphalt.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Micro asphalt, and what that does is it protects the structure of the road for a longer period of time, which means that we can get our money to go further. So we have significant ... we spoke about the capital programme for liquid waste, but we do drainage surveys, water separation, and that is also in the rolling vote as well. We have work that we have to do as business as usual.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

I understand that, but the concern is that if the amount is reduced are you going to be able to continue with those services?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think I have mentioned a few times about efficiencies. We are certainly using far less external consultants within the department. I am expecting some of those savings to be reinvested in some of this work. It may take us slightly longer to do some things, which is frustrating, but I think we just have to cut our cloth accordingly and do our level best. That is what an operations team in whatever organisation would do.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

Are you aware of any projects which have been delayed or cancelled because of the reduction or, again, is it as you say, a question of deferring them until you have the funds or reprioritising?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Certainly, public realm is ... some of that work has to be deferred. I think we have said ... the Constable of St. Helier and I have both said before that our priority would not have been La Motte Street, although La Motte Street is a fantastic job. We think the timing of La Motte Street was totally wrong with our customer service office right there. The time to do that work, we felt, would have been after we had moved to our new offices. So we plan to do work in New Cut, so from the jewellers towards Library Place, as opposed to starting up near the department store and the church. So we think we can prioritise and work in that manner.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

That brings us neatly on to St. Helier itself. The Island indicator outcomes dashboard - that is a mouthful - suggests that satisfaction with St. Helier as an indicator is worsening. You have touched on it already, but can you expand on the specific improvements in the public realm in St. Helier which will be funded by this budget other than those you referred to?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

We are looking at a number of areas. There is work that goes unseen. So this week we will be publishing the consultation that we did with the Havre des Pas residents about the sea defences. That will be a great improvement for St. Helier. It is not a nice to have, it is a must have. It is how do we do that; that is what is open for discussion. We have the western bus gateway, which will be in St. Helier but will probably benefit Islanders who live in the west of the Island because it will enable buses to leave Liberation Station and access St. Aubin's Road quicker by going in front of Kingsgate House at the end of Gloucester Street, so very similar to what has happened with the east of the Island with the buses going in front of the Pomme d'Or. That has been a great benefit. So I have mentioned New Cut and King Street, and then we will be moving into Broad Street. That is where our focus will be. We have just opened the car park in Charles Street, which will benefit St. Helier businesses, St. Helier residents, but all Islanders in as much as anybody can use that facility, a long-awaited opening of that facility.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

To bring those points together and having regard to the satisfaction, will there be some programme available to the public to tell them what is happening in the future?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think what we have tried to do, and I will use the hopper bus as an example, we have seen ... I have not seen the latest statistics - I hope they are still going in the right direction - but we have seen a 79 per cent increase in the ridership on the hopper bus. We have lots of capacity to take a lot more people so we are working with the provider to promote that service. Again, you can use the hopper bus if you live in St. Helier, but if you live elsewhere you can get a through ticket and also use that service. But hopefully it will help other areas of St. Helier.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

My question really was you have these various targets and are the public aware of them? It might help their satisfaction level if they were.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**



It is a good question and something we can consider.

**Deputy T.A. Coles:**

A quick one: you mentioned the western bus gateway being on stream but not started yet from an implementation. To what extent within the schemes do you see provision of greater cycling in these schemes in the budget period? So does the western bus gateway provide for better access from those from the north side, obviously, through that crossing? Do you see that while these are individual projects there is integration within the wider network?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I have not seen the detailed drawings for the western bus gateway. I understand the concept. We recently walked around St. Helier and looked at identifying areas where we could increase the amount of blue badge parking. We have targeted areas that are most often used by people who do not hold a blue badge to identify them to try and reduce the misuse of those spaces. We believe that we have made progress. We also think we can increase that further still and I think I have a meeting on 6th November, I think it is, to discuss that.

[12:30]

We are looking at installing a lot more cycle parking. So, for example, at Snow Hill we intend to install some cycle racks which are double height with hydraulic lifts so you can put them up. Yesterday morning at 8.15 I was in Minden Street car park looking at the potential for cycle parking there, increasing the cycle parking, improving the motorcycle parking in that area as well. So there are a lot of things which I think your point is quite valid, David, can we join that up? I am really keen for us to promote cycling and we are working hard. We have a good team and earlier this year I got all of the officers involved in cycling projects together and we looked at what can we achieve in 3, 6 and 9 months. We will be sitting down again in November just reviewing what progress has been made; do we need to change the priorities. We have to work with Roads Committees as well, so it is not always our road that we impact upon.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

Just going back to St. Helier for the moment and without wishing to prompt any dispute between yourself and your Assistant Minister, how much does St. Helier contribute to matters which could be said to be within the public realm within their own district?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think Halkett Street is a good example where we have worked together. I think if you stand in Beresford Street and look up Halkett Street I think that is a fantastic example of what can be

achieved with us working together. So we want more people to live in town. We want more people to come here and make transactions, either retail, hospitality, both, so it has to be an attractive place for people to come to. Virtually all Islanders use St. Helier at some stage so we have to work closely with the parish and that is what we are trying to do.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

In terms of finance, does that ambition create any conflict or tension between yourself and the Constables?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

No, I do not think so. The parish invests significantly as well. The parish are going to be investing shortly in new play facilities in the Parade. We are investing in play facilities at our site at Springfield and at Millennium Park, and what we are trying to do is to co-ordinate things so that we do not end up with the same equipment in all of the areas but we end up with something that people can move around to. We are also looking at accessibility. Instead of each of those 4 playgrounds, 3 playgrounds, having one accessible facility, if we put all those things together, if you have a child that has access challenges they can go to one place and enjoy a playground just like any other child. So there has been ... we had a very positive conversation only in the last 10 days about how we can be more joined up and avoid duplication but work together.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

Moving on more generally ...

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Sorry, Connétable, Deputy Curtis first and then I will ...

**Deputy A.F. Curtis:**

On that shared responsibility, Minister, you published *Delivering Investment in the Public Realm*, which details a vision for Broad Street and details pedestrianisation there. But it suggests that road and public realm improvements will extend to around Library Place, which, of course, is a Parish of St. Helier road, as is Church Street. Do you foresee any surfacing changes or public realm improvements on Parish of St. Helier land being funded by the parish or do you foresee the public budget spent on parish land like that?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think that is the discussion that has to take place. I think there has been a bit of misinterpretation. Broad Street is where we are looking to pedestrianise and at Library Place the ambition is to have pedestrian priority. We are trying to get more blue badges in and around that area, but because of

the fact that it is a parish road we are not able to do that until we have spoken to the Roads Committee, so that is part of the delay. In terms of the funding of that, there has been no discussion to date, as far as I am aware, of funding for that element. By doing New Cut, if you put yourself coming down New Street and go through New Cut, the plan is to turn right on States land. But I think what that document does show is the potential to make it a really nice area where people want to go and visit. I think there are times when we have to show that kind of a vision and I pay tribute to the team who have done that work and I like the vision. I do not know if you have seen the image as you come up Conway Street. You can see it becoming a very smart area.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Thank you, Minister. Just on your point when you were talking about the different play areas that have been invested in, of course, just a wider question is the use of planning obligation agreements to fund these types of specific areas, I know that has been used in the past to fund. Are there some specific planning obligation agreements outstanding that would fund these particular one-off areas that help through the public realm?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I do not know about play areas specifically but I do know that the western bus gateway is due to receive some funding from planning obligation agreements. We are currently looking at how we can change the process so that money goes into Infrastructure for that purpose rather than going into the regulation side of our organisation before being released to do that. We are just trying to speed up that process, but I cannot answer around playgrounds.

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

Unless there is any specific development that highlighted a playground requirement, the way that P.O.A.s (planning obligation agreements) currently work is that it is directly related to the development and very often then it is quite specific as to what the P.O.A. is going to fund. A wider approach within St. Helier on a collection of P.O.A.s would be something that would be far more flexible. Going back to the point we are saying around a flexible and dynamic approach to meeting requirements and need, if we had more of a collective way of collecting P.O.A.s, a tariff or something like that, that would work in a more beneficial way for Infrastructure.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

Turning to a more specific item, if I may, can you explain the crossover, please, between the allocations within the rolling vote for sea defences and the funding that has been made available for development of the shoreline management plan?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think again that is a technical question, which I am going to look to my right for.

**Group Director, Operations and Transport:**

There is money that has been set aside for the bigger project, which is the Havre des Pas project that will be moving forward in 2028. For sea defence projects at the moment, that money is funded from the Infrastructure rolling vote, so there is a number of sea defence projects that are funded from that vote. I think the total is 1.3 for 2025 that is related to sea defences.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

I have 1.5 for the shoreline management plan, if that is what you are talking about.

**Group Director, Operations and Transport:**

I was just looking at the Government Plan. In the Government Plan it says for 2028 the shoreline management plan is 6.1 that has been set aside and then the other sea defences are in the Infrastructure rolling vote.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

That basically covers all the other sea defences around the Island that need to be repaired or to be improved?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

This will be repairs and slight improvements but if it is a major project, and the Havre des Pas is identified as the priority because of the circumstances and height and all of that kind of stuff ... there is work to be done in other areas along the south coast. There are 3 or 4 areas that need work.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

As a related question as to whether the rolling vote is intended to cover contingency for crisis or unforeseen funding, if there is further storm damage or flooding, is that within the rolling vote or is that ...

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

No, I think it depends on the event. If you take last week when we had flooding, then that would come out of our general expenditure. If you take Storm Ciarán, then that came out of central funds, I believe, mostly.

**Group Director, Operations and Transport:**

A little bit of both.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

A little bit of both. So we try to get help from ...

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

The rolling votes generally are business as usual, current programmes. If we have any exceptional items, they are not big enough to cover those and we have a conversation with Treasury as to what is available or not available or we have to deprioritise something else in order to fund it.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think the other thing that is worth noting about the rolling vote is the team publish 4 or 5 years in advance the road resurfacing and the microfibre works that are due to take place. I did not know that. Although I chaired the Roads Committee for over 2 years, I was not aware of that. There is a lot of information as to when the work is going to take place, where the work is, so they do plan quite a way in advance.

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

A general point, given the frequency of unforeseen circumstances, is there an argument for making the rolling vote ... upping it to cover it more?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

There is a combination of things, is there not? It may be that we could claim from insurance for some things. I think we have it about right at the moment. I think we could spend significantly more within Infrastructure if we had the money but we have to be sensible. We have to work with the other departments to deliver for the Island so I think it is ...

**The Connétable of St. Mary:**

That is my area completed.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Thank you, and over to Deputy Curtis.

**Deputy A.F. Curtis:**

I am just very briefly going to touch on the impact of recruitment on changes that we have heard. Our last hearing in September followed the recent announcement that there would be a recruitment freeze for civil service grades 11 and above and for the use of external consultants. You answered at the time that the focus was on how external consultants were used. Which specific areas of focus within the Infrastructure remit still require external expertise, consultants and contractors?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

There is a huge amount of expertise that we require because we are an Island and we have to have things like the abattoir. I do not know if you have visited the abattoir. I went there a few weeks ago on a Tuesday morning. That is a specialised area and we need to get assistance there from time to time. For some of our technology, whether that is to do with drains or the Energy from Waste plant, we will have to bring in expertise. We are also trying to develop ... and I do not know if you have walked through the offices at Bellozanne but I am encouraged by the ages of the people there. We have quite a lot of youngsters involved, engineers and the like. We have to encourage them to take up a career with us in the first place and then encourage them that we are the place they need to stay. I think the variety of work you get within Infrastructure is probably unparalleled on the Island from an engineering perspective. You could be working on the Energy from Waste plant, you could be working on the shoreline. There is a whole range of things you can do. I think we will always have a requirement. Road safety audits, for example. We have to bring people to the Island to do road safety audits because we do not do enough of them to keep our accreditation. I am due to visit Guernsey to talk to their infrastructure team and see if there is anything we can do together. I mentioned the abattoir and I do not know why we do not share staff for the abattoir because they will have similar volumes to us. Where can we work more closely together with organisations is something that I am quite keen to explore.

**Deputy A.F. Curtis:**

That is some things that have continued. Looking at where things might have stopped, in which areas have you now ceased the use of the external consultants and how have any skill gaps been filled?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Certainly, we are not using as many in the transport area. That has slowed down some of the work. For example, the introduction of green lanes in some parishes has been delayed by our decision not to use external consultants. If we can recruit, we would be delighted to recruit locally to some of these positions. We have around 535 employees, I think, at the moment within our part of the organisation, so it is a substantial workforce. As I mentioned earlier in the hearing, some of those people you never see. They are working at night, they are working at weekends, keeping the Island running I think is the hashtag we use. The front-line guys and girls supported by the team at head office do a terrific job, I think.

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

I just want to carry on about the idea of external consultants and training our own and making sure people are ... one of the issues I know - I was at a talk at Highlands the other day - is about getting

youngsters trained, put into programmes that are valid for Jersey. Is there a programme there with regard to Infrastructure and across the ...

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I was contacted a few months ago about a course that Highlands thought they may have to cancel and got in touch with the team and I think we found solutions for those people in terms of engineering.

[12:45]

**Deputy D.J. Warr:**

Is there a strategy out there to do this?

**Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment:**

I can answer that. We have had a very big focus on recruitment over the last 2 years, again refreshing our people. As you have rightly highlighted, we have a lot of pressures. We have an ageing workforce we need to refresh and we need to get people, especially younger people, encouraged and interested in our professions. Just some very quick highlights: we have got now 6 bursary students who we are funding through university places. That covers both engineering and some natural science work, so that is a first for government that we have commenced. We have a number of apprenticeships and traineeships in different areas. We also got, I guess for qualified staff, some career development programmes. Engineering is a good example where we try to grow engineers and take them through the journey. It can take 6, 7 years to get to chartered status and beyond. I think we have to look at all avenues. I think it would be good if we can give the panel a bit of an update on just our people and recruitment and our younger end careers, as we have called them. We also sponsor a design engineer construct programme. We are just going to switch that to Highlands College but again that supports a G.C.S.E. (General Certificate of Secondary Education) in design engineer construct. We are a supporter of that as a department through Property Holdings, as an example. We have a number of examples where we are trying to do that.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I asked this question only last week. We also see people move from our fleet department to D.V.S. It is quite good that people have got this opportunity and I think there is a lot of work in the Infrastructure team that gets done. I get a fairly regular update on where we are with our people, and I am encouraged. We have a lot of local talent. We will always have a need to bring people in but I think the focus is very much on developing our people.

**Deputy A.F. Curtis:**

I have 2 more questions before I hand back to the Chair. Touching on the information and the quantity you have, you have also mentioned about redeployment of staff in previous hearings and diverting them to do something else. Is this process happening? It sounds like it is. What information do you have so far on the grade level of those redeployments?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I have no idea about the grades. That is a personal thing between themselves and the organisation.

**Deputy A.F. Curtis:**

This is specifically more about the fact there was a grade 11 freeze. It is less about the opportunity. It is more with regard to that.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think if we have a requirement for a specialist then we will make the case that we need the specialist because we cannot switch off a function because we cannot recruit somebody. So there has to be exemptions, but I think we have a good track record in terms of refocusing people. We are doing some work on productivity. I think I have spoken about that in the past and I am really keen that we do that. The example I gave earlier of getting all the people involved around the table means they are not working in silos and they can see where we are headed to. It may be that we divert some resource from a project here to finish a project there to get it across the line. I am really keen for the team to adopt that kind of approach.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Just on the exemptions, we have heard from the other Ministers about exemptions. Has there been given a limit on how many exemptions a department gets? It feels that there is ...

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I am not aware that we have had any exemption to Infrastructure to date, but I would have no hesitation if the team told me that we need somebody to do a specific job because we were losing somebody. I would be very confident of going and making the case for that. There will be times because of the very nature of what we do that we may need to ask for an exemption. We have not had to do that to date and where we can move resource around we would do that in the first instance, but some of our things are so specialised there may be a case. That is the point I am trying to make; we are not going to switch off an area of our operation that is vital to keep the Island running.

**Deputy A.F. Curtis:**

Are you confident that the Chief Executive and Chief Minister hear that criticality and when you ask and you sincerely ask that will be met to keep the Island running?



**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Yes, I would be very confident. I would not be asking if I did not think it was vital. I am not suggesting for one minute that Infrastructure are going to be asking for exemptions left, right and centre. If I am going to ask for an exemption, there is a damn good reason for me asking for that and the team have convinced me that we need it, and I will take some convincing.

**Deputy A.F. Curtis:**

Thank you.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Thank you, Minister, and really closing up, when you were last here in September we discussed with you whether the proposed budget allowed you to fulfil the priorities that had been set out in the Government's Common Strategic Policy. Can you tell the panel how you would characterise this budget and what it will allow this Government to achieve?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think it does allow us to achieve that. We have spent a lot of time talking about the enabler for affordable homes and for other people to join the network. We spent some time talking about the public realm, which part of our aim is to help St. Helier. I think it is a sensible budget and a budget that we can deliver to. The team have put an awful lot of effort into getting us to this stage, working with colleagues from Treasury and other departments to get us to where we are today. I am very familiar with budgets of this size and delivering to them, so I have every confidence that we are going to do that.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Minister, there have been representations from people and also we have heard in the States Assembly that because of the timespan of the current Government to the next elections, this is a short-term budget because of delivery within the 2 years. There have been representations that this is a short-term approach. Do you think that it is appropriate for Infrastructure that there is this focus on 2 years' delivery?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think as far as Infrastructure is concerned, we always will have short, medium and long term. Budgeting for infrastructure goes way beyond 2028. It goes way beyond my lifetime. We have to continue to invest in our infrastructure but we have to work with the envelope we are given and that is why I am committed to coming to the Assembly with a proposal around a liquid waste charge, which would enable that area to be funded for the long term. It certainly will not be popular but I

think we are elected to make decisions based on the information we have. If we know that we need more funding for an area, we have to go away and identify that and try to find solutions for that.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Thank you, Minister. The final question is we have just had the C. & A.G. (Comptroller and Auditor General) publish a report and findings related to the long-term future proofing, the budget and looking at, for example, the Island outcome indicators and having that always in the back of our minds as State Members and the Council of Ministers specifically. How much analysis has been done with those Island outcome indicators that look to the future in preparing this budget? Do you feel that that is appropriate as you were saying about Infrastructure needing to have that long term? Do you feel that that was looked at?

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

I think we do take consideration. It is not the only measure we look at because there are other measures we need to consider, but I do think we need to be mindful of that as a measure. We have to make decisions on financial matters. We are responsible for the income and the expenditure and we have to make responsible decisions on those areas, not only in Infrastructure but for the Island. Some of the decisions we make are not popular but we have to make those decisions based on our responsibilities.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Thank you. I am looking at my panel members to see if there are any more questions to wrap up. I think we can wrap up 5 minutes early. Thank you very much, Minister, for that. I would like to thank the Minister and also officers for coming today and providing the information.

**The Minister for Infrastructure:**

Thank you, and we will get you the presentation on the attenuation, because I think you will find it very interesting.

**Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Thank you. We would like to do that, so thank you very much.

[12:54]