



Deputy Steve Luce
Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel
By email via n.hall3@gov.je

Dear Deputy Luce

Bridging Liquid Waste Strategy 2023-26 Review

Thank you for your letter dated 11 May 2023 regarding the review by the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel of the Bridging Liquid Waste Strategy 2023-2026.

Please find overleaf the responses to the questions you have asked that be considered in respect of the strategy.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any follow-up questions or require further information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Helier Smith', is positioned below the text 'Yours sincerely'.

Helier Smith
Chief Executive Officer

1) What engagement and consultation has there been, if any, from the Government of Jersey with your organisation in preparing the Bridging Liquid Waste Strategy (LWS)?

Whilst the LWS refers to the aspiration for a combined holistic approach which takes account of the whole water cycle, Jersey Water was not involved in the preparation of the LWS. To the best of my knowledge there has been no specific engagement or consultation with Jersey Water during the preparation of the LWS.

2) In your view, to what extent do you think the proposed Bridging Liquid Waste Strategy is sufficient in meeting the needs of the Island in terms of liquid waste management?

- **Flood Water Resilience** - In January 2023, the island suffered a period of very heavy rainfall that culminated in flood events on 17th January resulting in the evacuation of residents in Grands Vaux and flooding of their properties (some of which remain out of use). The cause of the flooding is directly attributable to the inadequacy of the drainage infrastructure in the area to cope with heavy rainfall events. The constraints of the drainage network in the Grands Vaux valley and consequent risks to flooding have been well understood for decades and yet they remain unaddressed. There is no mention of Grands Vaux within the LWS which is perhaps surprising given the events of 17th January. Section 7 of the LWS does acknowledge the increased risk of flooding due to climate change and highlights the need to mitigate increased flood risk, indicating that this will be delivered through the planned “Catchment Flood Management Plan”. The timing of and source of funding for flood mitigation projects arising from the proposed flood plan is not clear.
- **Pumping Stations** – A critical drinking water quality risk arises during periods of heavy rainfall. Sewage pumping stations are at risk of being overwhelmed by surface water which can result in untreated sewage being discharged into watercourses. In certain catchments, the pollution risk to drinking water reservoirs is significant either due to the number of pumping stations within the catchment (e.g., in Grands Vaux catchment there are several pumping stations) or the proximity of specific pumping stations to reservoirs (e.g., Handois reservoir has a sewage pumping station within a few metres of the inlet stream). The LWS refers to the need for surface water separation to minimise the impact on wastewater infrastructure and the upgrade / refurbishment of pumping stations including increased storm water pumping capacity. Aside from the obvious need for investment to maintain pumping stations in good working order, the added benefit of reduced pollution risk to water courses and reservoirs should not be overlooked.
- **Foul Sewer Extensions** – Section 11.2.5 identifies the spend of £1,000,000 on the extension of the foul sewer network. Whilst the specific locations of the spend for years 2 to 5 are uncertain, there remains the opportunity for working together on schemes that extend both the drinking water network and the sewage network. A joined-up approach to the extension of respective networks would facilitate the opportunity to save costs (enabling more to be done) and meet customer demand to a greater extent than independently.
- **Water re-use** – Section 5.4.1 refers to the growing trend worldwide of recycling wastewater by treating it to a high standard and reusing it as a source for treated potable water. Water re-use was considered in Jersey Water’s 2021 Water Resources and Drought Management Plan (WRDMP) and remains an attractive option to help address future water resource deficits and enhance Jersey’s water supply resilience. The next iteration of the WRDMP is currently underway and expected to be published in 2025. The intention is that this project will consider the suitability of water re-use in Jersey in much greater detail.

- **Water efficiency** – There is direct linkage between water consumption and the amount of wastewater generated within homes and, to a lesser extent, businesses. Given that the wastewater network is operating at or close to capacity, there is clearly an opportunity to seek to reduce the volume of wastewater generated by reducing the volume of water consumed within homes and businesses. Currently the per capita consumption of water in Jersey is approximately 114 litres per person per day (l/p/d), lower than the average for England and Wales (145) and Germany (126). Reducing (over time) the demand for water to, say, 100 l/p/d (a long-term target set by several water companies in the UK) would see a decrease of up to 12% in the volume of wastewater entering the sewage network from households¹, bringing all the associated benefits of reduced pumping, transmission, treatment and discharge. There is an opportunity for Jersey Water and I&E to work more closely together on water efficiency related investment and initiatives given that the outcomes benefit both the supply and waste elements of the drinking water cycle. At present the LWS defers efforts in this area to post 2025 when earlier engagement could be beneficial.

3) To what extent do you think the timeline is sufficient in meeting the needs of the Island and to not delay necessary future developments on the Island?

- The LWS is clear that new developments in the island will present a challenge from a liquid waste perspective and that the lack of clarity around timing and specific locations makes planning for them challenging. There is a dependency on the need for time to upgrade the network to meet the demand before allowing the demand to be created. As such the timeline would appear to work only to the extent that the LWS can be delivered in advance of the developments being built.

4) To what extent do you think the budget is sufficient in meeting the needs of the Island and to not delay necessary future developments on the Island?

- Difficult to comment on meaningfully. Have assumed that the budget is satisfactory to deliver the promised outputs.

5) To what extent do you consider that Jersey Water will be adversely or positively impacted by any aspects of the Bridging Liquid Waste Strategy?

- Generally positively in respect of sewage pumping stations refurbishments depending on the extent to which the investment reduces the risk of pollution.

6) In your view, are there any further considerations/solutions that should be included in the Bridging Liquid Waste Strategy? If so, could you provide further detail?

- Given the urgency of resolving the long running flood risk issue at Grands Vaux, there would be merit in including specific funding for the upgrade of the capacity of the drainage systems in the valley to reduce specific pinch points that exacerbate flood risk in the area.

7) To what extent do you think the Bridging Liquid Waste Strategy will be successful in addressing current sewerage capacity issues?

- Difficult to comment on meaningfully. The LWS acknowledges the significant uncertainty and assumptions upon which the strategy is based (especially around capacity increases to meet housing needs).

¹ Ignoring the effects of surface water drainage. The correlation of water consumed to waste water generated is not 1 for 1. The figure is indicative.