

STATES OF JERSEY



CARBON NEUTRAL STRATEGY 2019 (P.127/2019): AMENDMENT

**Lodged au Greffe on 3rd February 2020
by Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence**

STATES GREFFE

CARBON NEUTRAL STRATEGY 2019 (P.127/2019): AMENDMENT

PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (a) –

At the end of paragraph (a), after the word “Report” insert the words “with the addition of a fifth defining principle, **“We will make sure that carbon neutrality policies do not increase financial inequality”**, in accordance with the more detailed explanation of the principle set out in the report accompanying this amendment”.

DEPUTY K.F. MOREL OF ST. LAWRENCE

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to receive the Carbon Neutral Strategy 2019 as set out in the Appendix to the Report and –

- (a) to adopt the defining principles for the Carbon Neutral Strategy, as set out in section 3 of the Appendix to the Report with the addition of a fifth defining principle, **“We will make sure that carbon neutrality policies do not increase financial inequality”**, in accordance with the more detailed explanation of the principle set out in the report accompanying this amendment;
- (b) to agree to the establishment of a citizens’ assembly as defined by the mandate for a carbon neutral citizens’ assembly, as set out in Appendix 3 to the Appendix to the Report; and
- (c) to request the Minister for the Environment to lodge by the end of 2020 a proposition containing a long-term climate action plan for debate by the States Assembly.

REPORT

“Navigating our path to carbon neutrality will not be easy. There are different routes that might be taken, over different time frames; different investments can be made and paid for in different ways. The impact of any programme of decarbonisation on other social, economic and environmental priorities will be significant and will vary in different communities and places, and over time.

“This strategy acknowledges the complexity inherent in trying to decarbonise our society and economy.” ([P.127/2019](#) page 8)”.

The draft Carbon Neutral Strategy is right to acknowledge the complexity and difficulty of transitioning to a carbon neutral society. Equally, it is good to see the draft strategy recognise that “the impact of any programme of decarbonisation... will vary in different communities and places, and over time.”

Unfortunately, the varied nature of the draft strategy’s impacts is not accounted for within the four defining principles that the Assembly is being asked to agree to. Principle Four does call for making sure “that everyone can play their part” but does not extend any protections to islanders who are already struggling to afford life in Jersey.

By adopting this amendment, the Assembly will be creating a new and vital fifth principle (which is appended to this report) to guide the implementation of the carbon neutral strategy, one designed to ensure that the island’s response to the climate emergency does not inadvertently make life even more difficult for those islanders who are already struggling financially.

Financial and manpower implications

There are no additional financial and manpower implications arising from this amendment.

APPENDIX TO REPORT

The Fifth Principle in detail:

We will make sure that carbon neutrality policies do not increase financial inequality

We recognise that achieving carbon neutrality will incur costs to islanders that may present themselves through higher prices for goods and services, through taxation and through other mechanisms.

Whilst costs will be unavoidable, it is important that those which are incurred in the pursuit of carbon neutrality, do not increase financial inequality in the island. As such, all carbon neutral policies will be subject to analysis to determine their effects on financial inequality. Any that are found to be likely to increase financial inequality (as measured using a recognised tool such as the Gini Coefficient), will not be adopted as part of the strategy.

Of course, the Government of Jersey would not intentionally make life harder for thousands of people but, as we have already seen with the extra 4 pence for the climate fund that was added to fuel duty in the Government Plan, well-meaning actions can hurt the least well off, the most. In this case, a regressive tax has been used to help fund the island's climate response.

By adopting this amendment, we, as an Assembly, will be ensuring that those responses to climate change which the Government adopts, do not unintentionally increase financial inequality in Jersey.

If this amendment is adopted, the Government will have to subject its draft carbon neutral policies to analysis, using a measure such as the Gini Coefficient, to ensure that they do not exacerbate inequality in Jersey. If the analysis shows that a policy is indeed likely to increase inequality, then it will have to be rejected or modified by the Government to ensure it does not further widen Jersey's financial divide.

This fifth principle will act as a safety net for struggling islanders, who cannot be required to pay relatively more than those financially better off. By using the effect on inequality as the measure of a policy's impact on islanders, we as an Assembly will be ensuring that everyone in our community can benefit fully from our approach to becoming carbon neutral.