

STATES OF JERSEY



SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT POLICY (P.128/2019): SECOND AMENDMENT (P.128/2019 Amd.(2)) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 6th March 2020
by the Minister for Infrastructure**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Background

Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier lodged an amendment on 27th February 2020 ([P.128/2019 Amd.\(2\)](#)):

“At the end insert the following words “, with the addition of approval of a bus pass scheme for all people eligible to pay fares aged under 21, for which a charge of £20 per annum should be levied, to commence from 1st April 2020 and to be reviewed by the Minister for Infrastructure with a view to assessing overall cost, take-up and customer satisfaction, the outcome of the review to be published by the end of the third quarter of 2021”.”.

Detail

The Minister for Infrastructure **opposes** this amendment.

I recognise and share Deputy Ward’s wish to improve accessibility of bus services and that is why I propose in the Sustainable Transport Policy ([P.128/2019](#)), a Bus Service Development Plan.

There is a detailed explanation of the objectives of this important piece of work on page 42 of the Framework for a Sustainable Transport System 2020-2030 as follows –

“The Bus Service Development Plan will undertake – for the first time in Jersey – a systematic and whole-system analysis of the options, opportunities and challenges associated with making changes to:

- *the optimum distribution, design and frequency of routes, including existing routes;*
- *infrastructure, including where improvements could make it quicker and more convenient to get the bus;*
- *the size and types of vehicle used eg smaller buses, wheeled trams etc;*
- *allocation of space, including for priority bus lanes, junctions and bus stops;*
- *the ticketing and fare structure, concessions and the government subsidy;*
- *the school bus network and service; and*
- *the long-term investment plan for the bus fleet, acknowledging the move to ultra-low emissions technologies.*

The Plan will be based on detailed quantitative modelling, and qualitative analysis, of where, when and why people do (and don't) want to travel.”

It is clear that the Bus Service Development Plan will bring forward the evidence and analysis to make quantified and costed policy interventions that this Assembly will debate in due course.

However, Deputy Ward is asking this Assembly to reach a specific conclusion in advance of the findings and recommendations of the Bus Service Development Plan.

He asks this Assembly to make the leap that the best use of unquantified amounts of 2020 funding is to run a year-long pilot scheme that allows all under 21-year olds free bus travel.

To reach that conclusion I would need evidence to confirm that this policy intervention would achieve our policy objective of increased bus use AND, is the best use of funding, in comparison to other policy interventions.

In the absence of the rapid policy analysis that will be carried out in the Bus Service Development Plan there is no such appraisal or costing. Therefore, it is impossible to conclude this is the most effective way to spend unquantified amounts for the Climate Emergency Fund, even as a pilot scheme, and I cannot support Deputy Ward's assertion.

I would like to take the opportunity to reassure the Deputy of St. Helier that my ambitions for a future bus service are high. I would like to remind the Assembly that I have extensive experience and a history of delivering better bus services with our contracted suppliers as many will remember I was the Minister when the last contract was renegotiated. I did not shy away from taking difficult decisions that ultimately have led to the increase quality of our bus services and attracted significantly increased bus ridership.

The next iteration of our bus service will be underpinned by the evidence from the Development Plan and will have the foundation of increased investment opportunities from the Climate Emergency Fund. A better bus service is a priority for me, but I need to bring forward to this Assembly, evidenced and funded policy interventions that I will develop collaboratively this year.

In summary, I conclude that whilst free bus travel *may* be a conclusion reached by the Bus Service Development Plan, this Assembly does not yet have that evidence and therefore I believe should not support this uncostered Proposal.

Statement under Standing Order 37A [Presentation of comment relating to a proposition]

These comments were submitted to the States Greffe after the noon deadline as set out in Standing Order 37A because the amendment was lodged late and as the Assembly sitting was brought forward to Monday 9th March 2020, the deadline for papers was brought forward by a day. The comments would have met the original deadline.