

2015.11.17

3.2 Deputy A.D. Lewis of St. Helier of the Minister for Transport and Technical Services regarding the total cost of the payment systems trial at Sand Street Car Park:

Will the Minister confirm the total cost of the new payment systems trial at Sand Street Car Park that began in November 2012, give the date on which the department concluded its evaluation of the trial, and advise when the results of that evaluation will be published?

Deputy E.J. Noel of St. Lawrence (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services): The capital cost of installing the N.P.R. (number plate recognition) system in 2012 was £185,000. An internal project appraisal report was completed in March 2014 reviewing the first year of service. No record of its circulation to the Public Accounts Committee can be found on file and, as such, I arranged for a full copy to be issued to the Public Accounts Committee yesterday. My predecessor also agreed to publish a summary report and again no record of this has been found on the file and, as such, I have asked for this to be forwarded to Members by the end of this week. I would like to thank Deputy Andrew Lewis for bringing this to my attention that perhaps the summary report may have not been already published.

3.2.1 Deputy A.D. Lewis:

Thank you for the Minister's candid response. However it has been some time and I would hope that in future the same situation would not occur. But also the Minister, while he is facing questions about these car parking situations, does the Minister think that the public has been well served by having 3 St. Helier car parks within 400 metres of each other that are all effectively publicly owned but which have at least 3 different separate payment systems? If he does not, what is he going to do about it?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

I thoroughly agree with Deputy Andrew Lewis, that the current situation regarding the confusion about off-street parking, and indeed on-street parking, is something that needs to be addressed. He should know that we are -- that T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) are already doing this. We are out to tender shortly for an app base solution whereby people with Smart phones can pay for their parking and update their parking, and this will be to run alongside the existing pay card systems for those that do not have access to a Smart phone. That is work ongoing. We hope to be bringing that in, in the second or third quarter of next year. That will allow for the first time a payment system that works both within the multi-storey car parks and on the street.

3.2.2 Deputy S.J. Wickenden of St. Helier:

When the car park operation is a material factor in the Sustainable Transport Policy and when the states adopted the Sustainable Transport Policy in December 2010 they requested the then Minister for Transport and Technical Services to monitor the impact and effectiveness of the policy against a series of goals and publish the results at least annually. The last update that we received was December 2013. Would the Minister agree to update the Sustainable Transport Policy for 2014 and 2015 before the M.T.F.P. (Medium Term Financial Plan) addition is lodged?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

Certainly, and I have one of the only drafts here with me of that update report. I have asked for some substantial work to be done on it in terms of identifying new targets. The original targets in the Sustainable Transport Plan were based in 2010 and based on measures that were deemed to be coming into place prior to the amendment. One of the amendments that this Assembly brought in effectively took one of the levers away from the department in terms of raising charges from the car parking side of the plan to supplement the policy itself in terms of additional bus provision and additional infrastructure to meet those targets. So, yes, the report is coming shortly. I hope to have it published in a format that takes into account some of 2015's figures obviously. I will not have all of 2015's figures by the end of the year but certainly all of 2014's figures and hope to bring to Members by the last sitting of this year.

3.2.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:

In his draft that he is studying at the moment is there any mention of the possibility of a Hoppa bus service in and around town or a substitute close to a Hoppa service which may be more affordable? Is there any mention of that, which has been a longstanding requirement from this House, that voted in favour of a Hoppa bus, 2, 3 years ago and still no sign of one? Is there any sign in his report?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

Certainly there is. Not in the traditional sense that maybe Deputy Southern is alluding to, but in a hybrid sense building on the availability of volunteer drivers and vehicles to provide a service for our urban community to link them up to our main bus routes. Yes, there is.

3.2.4 Deputy A.D. Lewis:

I thank the Minister for his candid response. However, he will also be aware that the Constable of St. Helier during the Sustainable Transport Policy debate some years ago requested an amendment to not just the size of emissions from cars but also the size of cars and "small cars" was then put into the amended version of the Sustainable Transport Policy. The Minister will be well aware that cars are getting bigger. Has he and his department made full allowance for the fact that cars are getting larger and is he redesigning car parks to accommodate that or is he going to be penalising people with large cars so that we can get a more Sustainable Transport Policy on the road?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

Again, as Deputy Andrew Lewis should know if he has visited Pier Road car park in the last 6 months or so, that we are taking the opportunity to increase some of the parking bays, and the rest of the multi-storey car park provision in the Island is also going through a refurbishment programme. The next car park, in the early part of 2016, is Sand Street and then we will be making additional provision for larger vehicles and also changing the provisions there to enhance the availability and the space for disabled vehicles as well, and for those people with young families.