

#### **4. Questions to Ministers Without Notice - The Minister for Transport and Technical Services**

##### **4.1 Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:**

Would the Minister advise Members whether he is awaiting the completion of a report from within his department in which consideration is being given to the current seatbelt legislation, and if so, will he undertake to make the final report available to States Members?

##### **Deputy G.W.J. de Faye (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services):**

Under the Transport and Technical Services business plan, I commissioned a report into seatbelts several months ago. Perhaps coincidentally, it is the case that that report is now virtually at completion, and I am expecting to read a draft of it this week. In the light of Deputy Le Claire's proposition, I can certainly give an undertaking to the House that I will be bringing that report forward as a first priority, and I think it is entirely appropriate that Members have the widest possible information to hand when we come to the debate. So, I expect to publish that report shortly.

##### **4.2 Deputy A.E. Pryke of Trinity:**

Paper recycling schemes have been working well, with the bins emptied 3 times a week. Would the Minister inform the House if it is proposed to change these existing bins to newer bins, and if so, will there be a need for new trucks equipped with lifting facilities as these containers are going to be much heavier and larger?

##### **Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:**

The department keeps the issue of technology associated with recycling constantly under review, and I would hope that where we can improve on matters, things will be improved upon. I have no information I can give directly to the Deputy on the specific questions she is asking, but I can say that regrettably we have, at this point, spent the entire recycling budget that is available for the department, so I am not in a position to push things any further. However, that is all a matter under review, and I am pleased to say that I am getting co-operation from the Comité de Connétables and indeed only yesterday enthusiastic help from the Environment Scrutiny Panel. So, we do intend to progress these issues. Regrettably, it always boils down to a matter of cash.

##### **4.3 The Deputy of Grouville:**

My question is quite simple, given the questions that the Minister fended off in the last few weeks. When exactly are the lifts in Minden Place car park going to be open after 10.00 p.m.?

##### **Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:**

I regret to say I seem to have found out the Deputy has not read her emails this morning, because if she had she would have noticed that I emailed the States Members last night to inform them that, as of only a matter of days ago, the lift at the Minden Place multi-storey car park now stays open until 11.00 p.m. This is on a trial basis, and I regret I do not recall the name of the Member who raised this matter, but due to an accident in not adjusting the timers, we did run Minden Place multi-story car park until 11.00 p.m. for a while last year - a matter of days - and in that light as nothing untoward took place, it seems to me entirely reasonable that we should test the waters and see whether we can keep the lift open until 11.00 p.m. So, that is the current position.

##### **Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:**

May I thank the Minister for that answer, and doing something about it? I am sure the public will be delighted to hear that.

##### **4.3.1 The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Could I just ask a supplementary on that line, and ask if, indeed, the Minister has informed the States' Police and the Honorary Police of St. Helier, so maybe they can keep an eye open?

**Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:**

Well, I have to admit I have not informed either of those worthy bodies about the change in the lift time, and I am not sure how often they use it, but I can advise the Deputy there is a very clear notice inside the lift and, should any of those worthy gentlemen and ladies be going past, they will soon find out that it is open an hour later.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

I do not think I need the flippant answer. I think the query is whether the police are informed to know so that they can police the area, not use the lift.

**Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:**

Do the Ministers not know?

**Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:**

Well, Sir, I will take steps to inform the States' Police and the Honorary Police so that we can have their additional assistance.

**4.4 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Will the Minister inform Members whether he intends to consult with local residents over the decision to create a 1,000 space car park on the Ann Court site?

**Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:**

That is something that I am prepared to consider, but I should point out to the Deputy that that type of consultation will be carried out as part of a normal planning application process, and I do not see why things are likely to change.

**4.5 Deputy J.A. Hilton:**

The Minister touched briefly on the question I was going to ask. I attended a very helpful meeting that was called by the Environment Scrutiny Panel yesterday, alongside with my colleagues from No. 3/4 District, and really, we talked about additional sites for green waste collection and generally recycling rates. I would just like the Minister to confirm, as a result of that meeting yesterday, his intention to consult widely with the Constables in an attempt to possibly introduce kerbside collection of recyclables in the parish. Thank you.

**Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:**

The Transport and Technical Services Department has regular meetings with the Comité des Connétables. This is a subject that often comes up. Kerbside collections are, of course, essentially a matter for the parishes themselves, and we respect the parishes and their various different systems of dealing with the matter. The department will try and facilitate wherever we can, and this is an ongoing process, and I can assure the deputy that we will continue these consultations.

**4.6 The Deputy of St. John:**

Deputy Hilton has asked the question really that I was going to ask, and I thank the Minister for his reply on that. But if I could just add a little more: I mean, does he have any plans at the moment to assist the parishes in introducing kerbside collection schemes similar to that currently in St. Johns, and in virtually every western country in Europe? There is lots of talk about it, but I do not see a huge amount of action from the parishes or from the Minister. Does he have a precise plan to introduce this, and would he ever consider making the parishes adhere to a mandatory obligation to introduce such recycling?

**Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:**

It is always a pleasure to hear from the Deputy of St. John as his parish is doing so particularly well in this area. There are a number of plans and a number of ideas, and I apologise, I am sure Members tire of hearing this: everything is constrained by the amount of monies available. I think it really is rather early to suggest we may be looking at mandatory moves to inflict upon the parishes. This is really an issue of how both parties can co-operate with each other, and of course, it does raise the issue of how payments for things like waste disposal are dealt with. Parish kerbside collections, as I understand it, will be paid for by the rates system, and that is something that really is a matter for the individual parishes and parish ratepayers, and something that they will thrash out at parish meetings. The involvement of the States is a slightly different issue. To date, while we encourage the parishes with their kerbside collections and wish to assist, the department has largely been restricted to only being able to introduce green bank operations, though I have to say, there is clearly some level of progress on looking at the idea of extending the numbers of recycling reception centres around the Island, which I think would be of great benefit to all our Islanders.

#### **4.6.1 The Deputy of St. John:**

Does the Minister not agree, though, that it should be one of his remits and, indeed, a policy decision on the part of his department to introduce such legislation, possibly, to encourage the parishes to move forward with this; and, as an aside, if I could just say that the cost of doing such a thing in St. Johns, every household is collected for less than £6 per household per year. I would suggest that other parishes could follow suit, but perhaps they need a bit more of a nudge from the Minister to do so.

#### **Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:**

Well, Sir, I thank and congratulate the Deputy for his enthusiasm on this subject, though I have to say that I think that the role of the department is largely policy formation. I think it really is a matter for the States Assembly once we start to move into any suggestion of somehow adjusting the relationship between a States' department and the parishes. That is something that bears an awful degree, I think, of prior consultation, and certainly would not be a matter I would wish to take an executive decision on as a Minister. I think that would have to be a matter to be dealt with by the States Assembly as a whole.

#### **4.7 Deputy S. Pitman:**

As one of the Ministers responsible for road safety, does the Minister not agree that his libertarian argument does not stand and is irresponsible regarding the rear seatbelt issue when considering that a significant of front seat passengers have been killed by back seat passengers not wearing seatbelts? Also, and in the last 6 years in Jersey, 3 head injuries and 3 deaths have been caused by passengers not wearing rear seatbelts, Sir. Also, the costs of people suffering head injuries due to not wearing rear seatbelts to Health and Social Services and the Social Security Department.

#### **Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:**

I do not think it is appropriate in question time to go into response to the details of the various incidents that the Deputy has raised. I would rather say that I do not think it is in any way responsible to raise allied issues in respect of what is being described as a libertarian approach. I have made it quite clear in the media, and I would hope that Members understand my position: I am entirely in favour of the use of rear seatbelts, and I have encouraged anyone who has the slightest concerns for their safety while travelling in a motorised vehicle to ensure that they are properly belted in, either in the front seat or in the back seat. But it is a factor that if we approach a change of law in this area, it is yet another extension into people's personal freedoms, and I happen to know on the body of an enormous amount of correspondence that I have had from members of the public, that people do feel very strongly about this issue out there, and it simply is not a question of wishing to bow down to the latest dictates of Health and Safety.

**4.7.1 Deputy S. Pitman:**

Is the Minister aware of the cost to the Health and Social Services and Social Security Department?

**Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:**

I do not believe that there are any reliable statistics to be had on the Island on this particular subject, and most of the statistics available come from the United Kingdom, which realistically speaking, is a rather substantially different experience to the experience of driving in Jersey where a taxi driver informed me only this morning, that around town he drives on average at 18 mile an hour, and around the rest of the Island he drives on average at 28 mile an hour. That is rather different to living in a place with motorways. I do think that there is a strong argument for having a Jersey approach to this particular issue. Now, that is ultimately a matter of conscience for all the States Members for them to decide, and I ...

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

The question was about costs and I think you have answered.

**Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:**

As I said, Sir, there are no straightforward Jersey statistics to indicate precisely what the costs are.

**4.8 Connétable P.F.M. Hanning of St. Saviour:**

Given that we are being encouraged to use low energy light bulbs, which I believe contain albeit a small quantity of mercury, could the Minister say if any provision is being made for the special collection of these bulbs, or should we continue to keep putting them into the household rubbish as we have to at the moment?

**Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:**

I am very grateful to the Connétable for that question, Sir, because I have just started using low energy light bulbs myself, and I find it rather interesting walking around in what appears to be more of a candle-lit environment, rather than the bright flat I was used to residing in. But I have to inform the Connétable that this is a relatively new development in terms of bulk purchases of all Islanders of this type of bulb, and I am not aware the department has, at this point, any specific mechanism to deal with it. However, I will certainly put that to our recycling officer and see, and I will respond to the Connétable so that he can dispose of his light bulbs when they do finally give out, in a sensible and safe way.

**The Connétable of St. Saviour:**

I believe that they are going to increase in use, albeit probably somewhat less effectively than candles.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Very well. The time for questions without notice to the Minister has expired.