

6. Questions to Ministers Without Notice - The Minister for Transport and Technical Services

6.1 Connétable G.W. Fisher of St. Lawrence:

There is a large sign erected by Dandara giving notice of delays on La Route de la Haule shortly to enable works in respect of their Goose Green Development. Last year the Minister indicated it would be 3 years before the digging up of resurfaced roads would be allowed and he specifically stated that the Goose Green works would not interfere with the newly completed resurfacing of La Route de la Haule. Given that assurance in respect of the newly completed works on that stretch of road could the Minister clarify why permission appears now to be given to dig up this road so soon and what level of compensation is being required from the developer to make good the work once it is complete. Thank you.

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

There have been a number of various developments that have taken place around that particular construction site and regrettably my understanding is that this is works that need to be put in place by one of our utility companies and, in effect, there was no practical alternative to take. I am not in a position to comment on what compensations may be made because I simply do not know the answer to that.

6.2 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:

It is about a year ago since Clos de Corvets, otherwise known as the Jambart site, was completed. I believe the developer paid Transport and Technical Services for the construction of a bus shelter at that time yet it has not been provided. Could the Minister explain why it has not been provided and when it will be?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

I am afraid this is news to me, I am not able to offer any explanation as to whether monies have been received by the department for a bus shelter and when a bus shelter is going to be erected. What I am aware of is that there were significant problems relating to the drainage aspects, I think, relating to that site, which are being resolved and I imagine that the bus shelter, as an item, will come before me in due course.

6.2.1 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:

Will the Minister ensure that due course is sooner rather than later than?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

As I am sure the Deputy knows, I am a huge fan of bus shelters, they enhance the comfort of the travelling public and as probably the Island's major exponent and promoter of our public bus services I think they are a very useful addition.

6.3 The Deputy of St. Martin:

Under item B today of the States Order Paper under R&O 123 this order increases the fee for the compulsory basic training for motorcycles from £85 to £102, the last increase was in April last year. Can the Minister inform Members why there is such an increase for this basic cycle course?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

This activity is undertaken mainly at weekends and a submission was made to the department outlining that there was a difficulty in encouraging people to take part as instructors because of the level of remuneration. An amount of remuneration was put forward by the group that runs this particular set of tests and I found the amount being requested was entirely reasonable for people who are working over the weekend.

6.4 Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I was very pleased to be advised recently by the Minister that the speed limit outside St. Lawrence School was to be reduced on a part time basis to cover the times of opening and closing of the school. Will the Minister advise when that will be coming into effect and also how the public will be advised? Will there be notices put up within the area to warn motorists of the change in speed limit? Thank you.

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

It is always a matter of great pleasure to me to please Deputy Mezbourian as she sits immediately alongside me and when she is unhappy it can be a distressing experience. **[Laughter]** I can advise both the Deputy and the House that in effect these measures are already in place because I have agreed to an order which will extend the 30 mile an hour limit that currently prevails around St. Lawrence Parish Hall and School so that a new part time 20 mile an hour limit can be put in relating directly to the school that will come within an extended 30 mile zone. I am quite sure the appropriate notices will be put in place but I regret that because clearly this is currently a matter of technicality we have not got to the practical detail of knowing precisely when the relevant signage will be installed. But I will be happy to inform the Deputy as soon as I know those details.

6.5 Deputy K.C. Lewis:

I refer to the illuminated speed indicators that inform drivers of their speed, plus or minus 30 miles an hour. I congratulate Transport and Technical Services, I believe this is an excellent initiative. Does the Minister have plans to roll out this programme further around the Island?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

Yes, I do.

6.6 Connétable T.J. du Feu of St. Peter:

With regard to the question that the Connétable of St. Lawrence raised, I may be able to assist the Minister because yesterday in a meeting with the officer responsible for drainage of the Island I asked precisely that same question, unaware at the time that the Connétable was going to ask his this morning. I was assured that a ducting system had been placed under the road in question prior to the resurfacing job and that there was no need or reason for the road to be dug up. So perhaps the Minister may look into this particular issue and clarify the situation.

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

I am very grateful to the Connétable of St. Peter for his intervention and comments although I rather think we may be talking about different stretches of roadway. However, I thank him for what he said and I will certainly be looking into it.

6.7 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:

The updated figures provided this morning by the Minister for Transport and Technical Services in relation to the compost operations have thrown more light upon the operational costs of this facility. In the recent sitting the Minister acknowledged that this was not the best location and that his department would once again be looking into alternative locations. Has he any progress to report to the House on that issue? Also, if I could ask, I supplied some information to the Deputy in relation to smell amelioration, I wondered if the department had looked into that issue and whether they had trialled the material I had forwarded to him and his department?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

Yes, we have made some progress on looking at alternative sites but not sufficient progress where I think it would be valuable for me to make any statements to the House at this stage. I am grateful for the technical advice that Deputy Le Claire brought to my attention. I can advise

him that having pursued that particular matter the department has trialled a number of liquids that can be poured over or applied to, spray, et cetera, to the open windrow compost rose and my officers assure me that they are happy to try out the particular substance that he put forward. Our general experience though is that these types of industrial applications have a level of success but that needs to be balanced against their costs. They are quite expensive to apply. But my understanding is that the officers in the department were quite enthused and will be pursuing application of that particular liquid.

6.8 The Deputy of Grouville:

I have got 2 questions rolled into one here in case I am not asked again. Could the Minister confirm if sewage was injected into land up until 2005 and what his department is doing to investigate and try and trace the source of the e-coli outbreak in the Royal Bay of Grouville this summer?

The Deputy Bailiff:

I think those are 2 separate questions, Deputy, and the rules say you should ask one. So you asked the first one.

The Deputy of Grouville:

I shall ask the first one.

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

I am happy to pursue both those questions because my understanding is the outbreak of e-coli in Grouville Bay was very heavily investigated by the relevant protection agency and it was shown that it did not appear to bear any relation to sewage sludge being disposed of on the land surface in the area. Certainly there has been a period when it was normal practice for sewage sludge to be injected into agricultural fields, normally at the request of the field owner, and conducted normally on a payment, I think, where the dispersal was paid at rate of £10 per vergée to the proprietor of the property. It is important to say, though, that the sewage sludge was pre-treated before being injected on to the land, therefore there was no danger of any pathogens being dispersed by that particular process. To the best of my belief the Transport and Technical Services Department is not linked in any way whatsoever with the outbreak that the Deputy is referring to.

6.9 Deputy R.C. Duhamel of St. Saviour:

I notice over the last 6 months or so that very large advertising hoardings have been erected or placed on a number of public buildings under the administration of Transport and Technical Services, notably the car parks. Has planning permission been applied for? How much revenue is being generated? What are the monies being spent on? Will this new policy be applied to the funding of bus shelters?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

I can give the Deputy and the House an assurance that all the proper processes have been followed. Every single one of those commercial hoardings has secured appropriate planning approval after detailed discussion with the Planning Department. I regret I cannot give the Deputy a precise figure on how much money has been accrued from those particular sources which primarily are multi storey car parks but I can give the House an assurance that those sorts of monies are the sort of monies that I plough back into public services on various levels, for example the sort of money we are deriving currently from a new approach to advertising on car parks, on buses and, most lately, on taxis will achieve results such as the issue of free bus timetables as opposed to the former charge of 50 pence and a continuation of the much applauded taxi marshal scheme that is utilised on Friday and Saturday evenings at the

Weighbridge when previously things could get a bit out of hand down there. I can assure Members that all the monies are being well spent.

6.10 Deputy C.J. Scott Warren:

Does the Minister agree that it is essential that there is an early debate by the new States Assembly on the long awaited Integrated Travel and Transport Plan and that it is imperative that this is considered to go alongside and be integral to the urban regeneration of St. Helier?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

As I am sure Members will know, I sincerely wish we had had this debate some time ago. But a number of elements have interceded, not least of which are the proposals to construct a tunnel under the Esplanade Quarter. I took a strategic decision to put the Integrated Travel and Transport Policy on hold because, broadly speaking, the expert members of the department in that particular field were having to plan a traffic management system of the size of a small village. Not to say even perhaps a large village. That took an enormous amount of work. Nevertheless there are spin offs from that and it is important that we take on board the experience that we have gained from that and apply it to the Integrated Travel and Transport Policy. Yes, the sooner we debate this the better because it will relate to congestion around the Island and I can assure Members it will not be an easy debate because Members may be faced with having to consider some relatively draconian moves in order to sort out the traffic situation. The whole thing is an extremely complicated issue and there are no easy solutions. But as I have indicated earlier, at this stage in proceedings I think it is a matter that should become before a new Assembly and should be handled by a new Minister who may not see things the same way as myself, and I think that is the appropriate way forward as I have said. At the same time I am considering whether to release the current I.T.T.P. (Integrated Travel and Transport Policy) as a report so that all Members, extant and to join the Assembly, can have the fullest information at their disposal.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Very well, that means that the time has expired in relation to the questions to the Minister.