

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER  
BY DEPUTY G.C.L. BAUDAINS OF ST. CLEMENT  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 15th MAY 2012**

**Question**

Given the commitment within the Council of Ministers' Strategic Plan to position Jersey as a low carbon jurisdiction that uses resources efficiently and wisely, can the Chief Minister assure members that, with regard to energy requirements, support will not be given by the Council of Ministers to controversial schemes such as wind-farms and instead all relevant Ministers will be encouraged to give assistance where possible to schemes that harness tidal power?

**Answer**

The Minister for Planning and Environment holds the lead responsibility for Energy Policy and will shortly be bringing forward for consultation a Draft Energy White Paper which will cover the question of renewable energy in the context of an energy policy. In addition since 2008, a parallel work stream has been underway and led by the Renewable Energy Commission who have been providing advice to the Minister.

The Renewable Energy Commission is chaired by Constable Murphy and was mandated under MD-PE-2011-0043<sup>1</sup>. They recognise that the deployment of renewable energy can bring many benefits to Jersey in the long term including a sustainable source of low-carbon energy, opportunities for economic diversification and an increase in security of supply.

However, the challenge in currently deploying all forms of offshore renewables is that the power they generate will be significantly more expensive than traditional electricity or hydrocarbon fuels. This would be particularly true of tidal power since this is a technology at its very earliest stages of development and commercial arrays are still at least a decade away. But, over time the cost of renewable energy generation is likely to drop and as well, it is expected that hydrocarbon energy prices will rise significantly. Thus the feasibility of a future project of whatever renewable technology (e.g. wind, tidal stream, wave energy) can be assessed at the point at which a project is more economically feasible.

The Commission have recommended to the Minister for Planning and Environment that currently all work about renewable energy concentrates on the 'technology blind' steps. These include the following areas of work:

- Drafting of renewable energy legislation to ensure any future project takes full account of the environmental, health and safety and navigational risks of an installation;
- Working with the UK and EU to assess Jersey's eligibility to subsidies to generate renewable energy;

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- Working with other Channel Islands to promote joint working wherever possible and to present 'one voice' in external negotiations (for example our work within two British Irish Council workstreams that cover renewable energy);
- Resolving issues regarding the ownership of the seabed which currently lies with the Crown in the Right of the Duchy of Normandy;
- The development of a Marine Spatial Plan to categorise the surrounding waters into areas that may or may not be suitable for renewable energy installations because of their environmental, economic and navigational sensitivity.
- Consideration of the funding models and commercial arrangements that would need to underpin any future project.

Thus I would like to reassure the Deputy that all our current work on renewable energy does not favour any one technology over another, the Renewable Energy Commission and the Minister for Planning and Environment advise that it is not yet time for us to 'pick winners'. In the longer term the economic feasibility of a particular project will be considered in the context of the economic, environmental and social consequences. This future point will be the time for the Island to decide the most suitable type of installation for Jersey in the context of environmental, health and safety and navigation constraints. In the meantime, work concentrates on the enabling steps for deploying renewable energy when the conditions are right for Jersey.