

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE
BY DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 4th JUNE 2019**

Question

Given the Assembly has agreed that Jersey should aim to be carbon-neutral by 2030, has the Minister's department given any consideration to the separation of organic waste from refuse and to the use of modern technologies to change such waste into a workable soil improver; if not, will the Minister commit to undertaking such consideration; and if such consideration has been given but the idea was rejected, will the Minister detail the reasons for any such rejection?

Answer

Achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 will undoubtedly be a challenge for the Island and I will be working with the Council of Ministers to develop a way forward. This plan will encompass how carbon neutrality will be achieved and what steps the Island will need to take. In order to focus on this plan and achieve a holistic approach, I believe that it is inappropriate to comment on individual schemes at the moment.

With regard to organic waste, Growth, Housing and Environment (GHE) currently collects and treats, via pasteurisation and anaerobic digestion, the urban wastewater produced in Jersey, transforming it into an organic fertiliser/soil improver, with the resulting c. 6000 tonnes of stabilised and sanitised product recycled to agricultural land. Separately collected green waste is treated and stabilised into c. 12,000 tonnes of soil improver at La Collette green waste facility, with the resulting material recycled to agricultural land. Both soil improver products, produced by GHE, are used by growers for their soil improving qualities, and as part replacement for agricultural fertiliser requirements. However, the recycling of all organic products onto Jersey agricultural land must follow both Jersey Environmental legislation and strict agricultural production procedures laid down by retailers and the associated supply chain.

The Department has considered the separation, collection and treatment of organic waste (currently disposed of as part of black bag waste sent to the Energy Recovery Facility at La Collette) to transform it into a workable soil improver. The separation and collection of additional organic waste (*e.g.* food/catering waste) is theoretically possible, if the funding, logistics and appropriate treatment procedures were introduced. That is, the provision of separate food waste collection bins/caddies for every residential property in Jersey, provision of a dedicated food waste collection service and construction and operation of an organic waste treatment facility conforming to appropriate treatment standards. The highest level of quality control would also be required from all participants to ensure that contaminants such as plastic are not introduced to the land bank.

In addition to this when the Department has previously reviewed food waste composting it is apparent that food waste composting processes have significant odour issues which are difficult to mitigate in an Island.

Any action in redirecting food waste away from energy recovery into recycling to land as a soil improver ultimately requires an economic and environmentally sustainable outlet for the resulting product. Owing to the volumes concerned any soil improver produced by GHE involves securing and maintaining access to Jersey's agricultural land bank. Failure to secure an end-market would require either burning the resulting material for energy recovery or export of soil improver away from Jersey. GHE is not presently intending to put the existing bio solid to land routes at risk by adding food waste to its products. GHE is not actively bidding for the funding required to implement the required infrastructure and processing to divert food waste to land.

The existing waste strategy is under review and the options for food waste will be considered. However it is likely that the waste hierarchy will remain the key component in any future waste plans and due emphasis will be placed on reduction at source before recycling, recovery or disposal options.