

2024.03.19.

## **5.9 Deputy H.L. Jeune of the Minister for the Environment regarding the development of an Energy Strategy (OQ.51/2024)**

Will the Minister state whether he is intending to develop an Energy Strategy and, if so, will he provide an outline of his plans and timeline and further advise which, if any, other Ministers will be included in its development?

### **Deputy S.G. Luce (The Minister for the Environment):**

The Assembly's forthcoming decision on the principle of an offshore wind farm, as well as further ongoing analysis of the whole energy market, will allow me to work towards developing an energy strategy.

[10:30]

I am cautious about committing to specific timelines for the Deputy, as there is currently significant uncertainty, meaning it will take longer to prepare. I fully recognise that this, while I might be the lead Minister in energy matters, there is a significant overlap with other key Ministerial portfolios. These include the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development, Ministers for Infrastructure, External Relations and Treasury and Resources. I absolutely favour collaborative working and I commit to working with all these Ministers, Scrutiny, energy suppliers, external stakeholders, including Guernsey, the United Kingdom and France in this important matter.

### **5.9.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Will the Minister outline what steps you will take to ensure solar is a specific part in the energy strategy and to explain what his preferred option would be: whether to focus on developing rooftop installations or field-based developments and, if not, why?

### **Deputy S.G. Luce:**

Solar has a part to play in the future energy requirements of the Island. Electricity will clearly be the main source of energy into the future and how we create that energy will be important. I was Minister some time ago and introduced a 90 per cent permitted development solar on roofs, and I think obviously we can only extend that to 100 per cent, which I think has been done subsequently. I have also served on the Planning Committee deciding in favour of the first large commercial solar array in St. Clement. I was also on the committee that initially showed some scepticism about the second proposal at Soul Point but it is clear that solar has a part to play. While Jersey is a very small Island, we do need to be careful about how much solar we put in the environment and in the countryside but I certainly would encourage anybody who has the ability to put solar on their roofs to do that.

### **5.9.2 Deputy J. Renouf:**

Does the Minister accept that one of the advantages of rooftop solar is that it encourages members of the public to decarbonise further by being able, through example, to run electric cars off their solar panels, reducing the cost of that element of decarbonisation?

### **Deputy S.G. Luce:**

Absolutely. The 2 main areas of focus which we have to make in the coming years is on transport and on heating homes, especially historic homes, and those are the 2 places where we need to substitute fossil fuels for electricity. Solar on roofs allows for small batteries to be installed to charge electric

vehicles and it also allows for energy to be put into homes, some of which could well be used for heating and rely less on carbon fuels.

**5.9.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune:**

Will the Minister advise if he has confidence in the local energy companies to deliver safe, cost-effective, decarbonised, resilient and secure services for the Jersey citizens?

**Deputy S.G. Luce:**

Absolutely. I think it is clear that Jersey Electricity have for some time now been delivering electricity to the Island, which is very low in carbon, good security, good sustainability and at a price which we have all been very happy to pay. I have to say to Members that the low prices we have enjoyed for electricity for many, many years now may be coming to an end as general energy prices across Europe push ahead. But it is my view that we have been served well in the past, and I commit to continue to working with the electricity company to make best use of that in the future.