

# STATES OF JERSEY

## Environment Scrutiny Panel Meeting with Transport and Technical Services

**TUESDAY, 7th JULY 2009**

**Panel:**

Deputy P.J. Rondel of St. John (Chairman)  
Deputy D.J.A. Wimberley of St. Mary  
Connétable J.M. Refault of St. Peter

**Witnesses:**

Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour (Assistant Minister for Transport and Technical Services)  
Mr. J. Rogers (Acting Chief Executive)  
Ms. E. Littlechild (Acting Director of Waste)  
Ms. C. Walwyn (Acting Finance Director)  
Mr. W. Gardiner (Director of Waste Strategy)\  
Ms. C. Anderson (Director of Transport)

**Present:**

Mr. M. Orbell (Scrutiny Officer)  
Mr. M. Haden (Scrutiny Officer)

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Will you give us an update please of your plans for the next 3 months, thank you.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We are going to start on liquid waste strategy and Ellen Littlechild is going to be presenting the progress to date.

**Ms. E. Littlechild:**

The liquid waste strategy is obviously in draft format and is something that we have presented to the Scrutiny Committee previous to the States. In the interim period at the moment we are looking at the improvements to hand for the regulator in order that we can meet with the Regulator Standard and, at the moment, we are carrying out the hydraulics design upgrade, the R.A.S. (return activated sludge) pump standby, review of various options on the sewage treatment works tanks and various modifications. The liquid waste strategy we are hoping to take to the States probably in the middle of next year and we are looking at the different options at the moment to decide on how we take that forward.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Questions, officers?

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

There was, going back again in the sort of mists of time, there was some idea about renewing the whole of the sewage treatment works, was there not, down at Bellozanne, but I believe they are possibly relocating down to the reclamation at La Collette. I think that has now changed slightly, has it?

**Ms. E. Littlechild:**

I think the first part of the draft of the grey strategy we looked at the 2 options, one of looking at La Collette and the second main option was looking at Bellozanne with a long sea outflow. I think our preferred option at the moment, and it is only a draft option, is looking at basing the sewage treatment work and doing the upgrades at the Bellozanne Valley, but that is still something we have got to pursue further and take on board, and update the strategy with that preferred solution.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

What is the interim response to Chris Newton's problem several weeks ago now when he was highlighting the amount of E. coli discharge into St. Aubin's Bay?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We have done a lot of tests and a lot of challenges on the problems that the sewage works has had. None of those has resorted, as far as we are aware, of any increased levels of E. coli coming out of the sewage treatment works. The issues with oysters were predominantly about testing arrangements and what the oyster testing showed was E. coli but it shows dead E. coli as well as live ones in the D.N.A. testing and the fingerprint(?) that happen there. He did have some correlation between discharges from the sewage network on the high flows and increased levels of E. coli in oysters, but that is a function of the sewage system and it was not due to any failure of the system.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

That was the southeast, John, was it?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Yes.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

But certainly Chris identified in St. Aubin's Bay that there was certainly on high flow incidents with the sort of flash rainfall incidents we are having does increase the amount of E. coli in St. Aubin's Bay as well.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

What happens is under storm conditions the storm weir operates and all the storm flows go through the U.V. (ultra violet) plant to take the E. coli down but it is at higher levels slightly than the normal going through the full process.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Again, coming back to the original question. What is the interim measure between now and when you finally get the long sea outfall?

**Ms. E. Littlechild:**

What we have been able to do is agree the interim plan with the regulators until we can resolve the overall problems that we are having with the old asset base at Bellozanne. There is a number of things that we are doing within in the interim. One is doing the eutrophic study of the Bay, which we are hoping to complete by the end of this year. We are doing design upgrades on the sewage treatment works.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Sorry, the eutrophic study? Sorry, my ignorance.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

It is the nutrient level within the Bay because it is in closed waters, and one of the issues and the main reason the sewage works has had a problem has been the denitrification elements, and these are the nitrates which are causing the potential issues with sea lettuce, and we are probably going into it and carry on with a nice summer, potentially a summer of those issues, so we have commissioned another study of the Bay in the eutrophic state at St. Aubin's Bay to ascertain whether a long sea outfall would solve those problems.

**Ms. E. Littlechild:**

As well as looking at the options that we can look at in the short terms whether we need to ... what kind of pellets we might need at the plant in order to help reduce those nitrate problems until ... if we decide to go with the option of the long sea outfall.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Is there any intention on behalf of the department to look at the long sea outfall as an early introduction before the refurbishment of Bellozanne, or Bellozanne 2 I think it is called, is it not?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We have capital monies of £14 million in 2014, I think, or 2012. I cannot ...

**Ms. E. Littlechild:**

We have £7.5 million in 2013 and 2014.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Thank you. What we may finish off doing, depending on the liquid waste strategy and funding options from there, is utilise that money to put the long sea outfall straightaway which would enable us to buy some time to refurbish or put in a new process.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Thank you very much.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Can I come back on to my agenda? Can I have an update please on the programme for your peer review, a real update, and have there been any major changes as a result of this review?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Since we met last the key work we have been doing is validating the strategy to date, and we have been focusing what is the optimum solution to get more detail on there. In terms of the peer review, what we would like to do is to work with yourselves on the peer review and perhaps Scrutiny commission the peer review instead of us commissioning our own peer review then you commission another one, which I think we did on solid waste. But that peer review needs to be done in parallel at some point. The actual review within States departments has been ongoing and we have been through another round of review within Environmental Health and the Environmental Department.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Any results from that review?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

The main output appears to be ... the preferred solution appears to be long sea outfall and rebuilding Bellozanne in some form. That seems to have got quite a lot of benefit in terms of being what the Environment Department see as the benefit for the Island and also from the ...

**The Deputy of St. John:**

And the public consultation within that.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Public consultation we have not started as yet. The liquid waste strategy has not become a public document as yet and we are hoping to do that programme in the autumn.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

A brief question first. You mentioned options, when you say “options” what kind of options? Presumably not just technical ones.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

In terms of solutions, i.e. where the treatment process is, I think we have reviewed 8 options. In terms of the options of how you deal with urban waste water, we basically looked at all the best technologies available, so it is about service wants separation, grey water recycling, which is what we have tied into the Island Plan as a principle, and minimising the amount of waste. What you cannot minimise is the amount of waste that we will produce, so there is still a sewage treatment option. I think we have reviewed 8 options or a combination of options, which is different sites and combinations of those.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Does the total volume have a big impact on what you need to design?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Total volume has an effect on the transport mechanism, the size of the pipes. It does not have that much effect on the scale of the sewage treatment works. It has some effect but not a great deal. The sewage works is about treating the waste products and the service water elements makes everything bigger and makes it more inefficient in terms of you are pumping water which you do not need to do and you are starting off with lots of dirty water instead of less dirty water. So there is a long term benefit in separating it out. But the sewage water does not change tangibly in terms of the secondary process and the actual meat of the sewage works.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

It surprises me as a lay person that if you have, say, half the volume but it is twice as concentrated, that that does not ... that you are saying that would not have an effect at that point. It has an effect in terms of the infrastructure elsewhere, the pumping and the ...

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

The only difference if you have the volume, the only difference you would have is you would have effectively a primary settlement so that you might not need as many primary tanks, which is where you get the main separation, but the rest of the process will stay the same scale.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Just coming back to where I was before really. What are the consequences of underfunding for the maintenance of the sewage treatment works?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

I think we are there already, is the honest answer. I think we run a very high risk of failures.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

What would be the outflow from the failures?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We would be prosecuted. There would be a breach of the Environment ...

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

What will be the impact to the general public? Would they recognise the failures?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

It depends on how catastrophic it is. But in the scenarios that we can potentially see we can have a catastrophic failure of the sewage treatment infrastructure. Power failure of the secondary treatment and failure of that will lead to raw sewage going out into the sea. So if it happened, because we have got telemetry and we monitor it and we have got a very good maintenance team looking at that all the time and we are building as much resilience as we possibly can, but the risk of that is getting higher and higher.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

If you had to sort of prioritise, where is the highest risk of failure?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

It is probably secondary treatment because it is not operating as we showed on the site visit. It is not operating satisfactorily now so we are very much on the limit now, so it is very easy for that to then go beyond the limit.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Just for the sake of the record, could you just ... secondary treatment?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Sorry, secondary treatment is where the biological process is cleaned up. The primary treatment is where you get the separation between solids and liquids. Secondary treatment is the biological aspect of the works.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

So the net result of a failure there would be an actual outflow of raw sewage into the Bay?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Yes.

**Ms. E. Littlechild:**

Something the liquid waste strategy identifies is that 42 per cent of the assets in the sewage treatment works are in poor condition and need to be replaced, which is a significant proportion, and for us to be in that position.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

You have already told us it is going to cost around about £14 million for the long sea outfall, what is the extra cost for looking after the treatment works itself?

**Ms. E. Littlechild:**

I am not sure it is going to cost £14 million to fund the long sea outfall. That is costings that we have got to look at. What the liquid waste strategy identifies is that we need £200 million over a 20 year period in order to replace the existing assets, be it part of the sewage treatment works or replacing different parts of the drainage network.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

So you are looking at the whole Island picture within that figure?

**Ms. E. Littlechild:**

Yes.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

But just to upgrade Bellozanne 2, what sort of numbers are we looking at there?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Between 50 and 60.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Do you have a timescale?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We would start tomorrow if we had the funding.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

How much more will it cost if you wait? I mean will it cost more if you wait or if you do it now?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Perhaps that is a question on the E.f.W. (Energy from Waste), it is ... as time goes on things cost more money. The plan we would like to roll out involves a big investment, but in realistic terms it would be 4 years if we started today before we had a plant which we would be commissioning.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

To do with the health then, the longer it is left the bigger the health risk?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Yes.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Can I just ask a supplementary on that point about health risk? You mentioned interim plans with the regulator. What exactly are the "interim plans with the regulator"?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

What we have done is because of the plant problems with denitrification, we sat down with the regulator and agreed an action plan which involves a stage of approximately 7 different items, which need to be rectified and undertaken. The key one is improving the biological treatment now. To do that we have got to improve the selector zone, basically we have got to improve the way the sewage treatment works deal with the biological issues and we have agreed those actions with the regulator.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

I have to raise an issue, I think you mentioned early on in your evidence that you were hoping that your peer review would ... our panel would be part and parcel. In fact, I wrote to the Minister on 27th March stating that we would stand aside from being part and parcel of the review because we have to take a view on the overall picture once you have formulated your particular programme. So you have to put your actions together and then we will review those when the time comes, about 3 months on that your department have been aware.

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

I have actually looked into that from a request from Mr. Richardson and there are a couple of contacts that I have followed up for us as possibilities to do a peer review, which I have not told you about, John. I just realised I had not.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Thank you.

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

So there are a couple of opportunities of peer review we have investigated.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Are there any other questions on this? Then we move on to the next item. That will be the report on the current status of your taxi cab industry please.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

Within the department we have had a brainstorm, a discussion with both the Minister, the Assistant Minister, Alan Muir, head of D.V.S. (Driver and Vehicle Standards), John and myself, so that the Minister and Assistant Minister are completely up to speed with how the taxi industry runs, which I have to say is quite confusing. I think the Assistant Minister will agree.

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

Absolutely.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

On top of that, we have also had meetings with the rank taxis to consider their request for a fare increase, which the Minister turned down, and also a meeting with the airport, Deputy Paul Routier and Julian Green to discuss taxi provision specifically at the airport. All of that really is feeding into thoughts that certainly I know my Minister has concerning where he might wish to see or proposals he may wish to put regarding the taxi industry that, at the moment, are not public but we would wish to put in a new S.T.P. (Sustainable Transport Plan), which I know is the next one on the agenda, which we can update you on. I am just wary in open session mentioning the sort of things that he was talking about because those have not been discussed with the taxi industry. But there are certainly - whether the word is "concerns" - but there is confusion certainly by the travelling public and the Minister was the one that said: "Well, I did not understand how it worked" which leads to the fact that if you catch a rank taxi the fare is going to be lower, it is a regulated fare. If you catch a private hire it is increased. The rank taxis' claim is about a third more than rank taxi fare. I know the Minister is concerned that that is not general knowledge. People regularly anecdotally say: "Well, hang on a moment, it only cost me a tenner to go from the airport to town whereas when I catch one back again when the hotel gets it for me it might be £12, £13." It is confusing. The service given I think is disparate. I think we have some excellent service. We also have some that possibly are not quite so excellent, and I know the Minister is very keen to improve that standard generally, raise the standard of customer care by our taxi industry.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Given that as far back as 1995 the Public Service Committee of the day did have a committee working alongside or with the Taxi Drivers Association and the private hire, and G.P.S. (Global Positioning System) systems were being looked at then by public services, so therefore you would have no dead mileage. Has that ever been progressed? It does not appear to within the public sector, maybe in the private hire it has been progressed, but in the public sector it appears it has not.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

No, it has not. I know there have been quite a few attempts to modernise the industry, change it in some way beginning of 2000/2001 with the then President of Public Services, Deputy Hacquoil, came very close to getting some sort of synergy between those 2 different, private hire and rank. But I was not there at the time but certainly it never came to fruition. It is difficult and maybe, at that time, either politically or publicly too difficult. But we are certainly wanting to see some ... the key thing is the service to the public. It is not just change for change sake. It is making sure that the service to the public is enhanced.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Therefore, would it not be time just to withdraw all license plates and reissue them with new guidelines, which would put in place an actual service to the community and a fixed mileage charge across the board and start afresh with a clean sheet of paper because for too long now, for at least 20 years that I am aware of, and much longer, taxis and cabs have been a real problem on this Island and records will show some taxi drivers were only doing 1,800 miles a year historically and they put in place a minimum mileage for all drivers. So is it not time that the whole picture was looked at again by giving a date, whether it is 2 or 3 years down the road, where all licenses have to be reapplied for under a totally new criteria and if people are hungry enough then they will actually ... in other words if we start thinking outside the box to resolve this one.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

Chairman, you may be right but I do think you have to remember that you are dealing with individual taxi firms for private hire. You are dealing with 150 self-employed rank taxi drivers. That is not easy. They are all individual people, as we know from Broad Street, they are also unionised. Nothing good, nothing bad. I simply say it as a comment. I do not know whether that will solve the problem. But I do know that this Minister wants to look at it, and we will look at it again.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Why I say that, in other industries, whether it be the finance industry or accountants and/or insurance companies, you have to have X number pairs of eyes where historically if you ran a business as an accountant you were allowed to operate singularly, nowadays you have to have, I think it is, 4 sets of eyes looking at the document. So there is absolutely no reason, if we can make changes in that area, we cannot make significant changes in other areas and we have got to think outside the box.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Another thing, Caroline, just to pick up from what the Chairman has been going on, on the same sort of tack unfortunately, would you consider the taxi service in Jersey is fit for purpose?

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

I think it comes in for some unfair criticism. I suppose you might say I would say that. I do think since T.T.S. has taken it back over from Home Affairs with D.V.S. we have made significant improvement and certainly the number of complaints we get now is way, way down. We have withdrawn licenses from people that have not been operating correctly and, in fact, letters have only just recently gone out on the mileage

being done by taxi drivers. So I do think there is a far better relationship. As I say before, I think our key point is service to the public, and I do know there are issues. I am not blind to that. I also know it is a very difficult area.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

I think, if I may come back, if one were to go out into the Royal Square now and ask the general public their view of the taxi service you will get one-liners like: “Too expensive”, “Unhelpful.” I have seen taxi drivers flick the lever while sitting in the driver’s seat so somebody can load their own bags into the boot of their cars. You see that quite often on the ranks and I am afraid I do not call that service. I think the general presentation of the drivers does leave a lot to be desired. I think the fact that very often one cannot see taxis on the ranks at prime times is another problem the public also see, and the fact that we do not have a black cab type system in Jersey where you can just hail them. A cab parked on a taxi rank or in a depot is not servicing the customer, and while I fully accept what you are saying, that we must look after the people providing the taxi service, they are here for one reason and one reason only, and that is the customer. The customers I think are voting on their feet and if we look at that within an S.T.P. is that servicing the sustainable transport policy? My feeling is it does not at the moment. I know John Rogers and I have spoken, and I do favour a more radical approach and I hope you will be looking at that. So it is not a question of sustainable transport ...

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Minister, could I have your views please on taxis?

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

As Caroline has pointed out, it is providing an excellent service. There is always room for improvement and letters have gone out recently regarding mileage and dress codes, et cetera and standard of behaviour. The whole thing needs looking at. There is a general confusion, as has been pointed out, between taxis and cabs where you may pick up a taxi or cab and hailing thereof, but this is something the Minister is looking at and it might be something quite radical, but we have got a few meetings to come up, but a radical approach might be on the cards.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We are not discounting any options at the moment.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Delighted to hear it.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Because of the nature of this panel, indeed the recording, we do not think it is fair for us to discuss those issues beyond.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

I just wondered if you would like to comment, because I have just jotted down 3 criteria, whether they can be squared or whether one is more important than the other. What does the public want? Consistent fares. Also companies like I used to run need consistent fares. I could not even quote because I did not know how much it cost to get from the airport to Rozel, I just did not know. Low fares and competition. I am

not sure ... anyway you comment on how those 3 things can dovetail and when the chips are down which ones are the most important because they may not fit together.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

The question is to who please, Deputy.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

The question is to the Minister, I should think.

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

Consistent fares, yes that would be very handy. I mean obviously somebody arriving at the airport: "How much would it cost me to get to town?"

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

The answer is: "I do not know."

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

But we do have quite a few occasions where obviously you have taxis turning up there and that is a standard fare, but you get cabs also booked if it is a company, for instance, which as Caroline pointed out is about 30 per cent higher for a private cab as opposed to a taxi, which as has been pointed out people are not necessarily aware of. There is also the private limousines which are sometimes booked by companies. So, I think the whole thing needs to be reviewed and the Minister is very keen that this should be sorted out.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

Can I just come back on one thing, because the views of the public are really quite interesting because we put it in the J.A.S.S. (Jersey Annual Social Survey) survey a few years ago and there was something about fares. There is no doubt about it. To be honest, if you ask generally about it I think most people would say: "Well, they are too high" but in general most of the other service was acknowledged and appreciated as reasonable. In general people did get a taxi. I know the scheme down at the Weighbridge now is really well liked. It certainly encouraged more taxis back on the rank, there is no doubt about that. Encouraged more people to go to the Weighbridge.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Is that the late night service you are talking about?

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

It is the late night taxi marshals scheme and certainly something that ... in fact the police like the fact that the taxi rank is there. One of our ideas was we will have more taxi ranks around the place. In fact the police prefer that because it means, strangely enough, everyone is in one place and that is easier to police. The taxi marshals certainly enhance both the service and people waiting in queue now do not mind it. There are some things ... I know what you are saying. I think ...

**The Deputy of St. John:**

But that is not service. If you are up Snow Hill or wherever you are and you want a taxi and you have got to go to the Weighbridge and it is pouring with rain and then you have got to queue among 200 people.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

I do not think we do get over what you can do, and in fact when we spoke to the rank taxi drivers to discuss what ended up being a zero price increase, one of the things we talked about was some P.R. (public relations) out on the street trying to get over to the public how the rank taxis work and what you can and cannot do, and you can hail. You can hail anyone.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

I am not saying that. If you know that your closest taxi rank is, and you are coming out of the old Odeon Cinema and you have got to walk to the Weighbridge where is the service in that? There is not a service. So you have to ring a private hire if you can get them. Private hire will not attend, shall we say, my local pub at St. John's at 10.30 p.m. at night. That is the problem. We are not getting the service. These items need to be addressed.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

I think it would be useful, Mr. Chairman, almost ending up on the other side of the table here at the moment, we are answering the questions [**Laughter**], but I think there are a couple of points that are worth picking up, and certainly it is the view of some of the members of the Scrutiny Panel, if not all. I agree with the chairman, there is not the sort of level of service we would like. It is okay to say at 11.00 p.m. at night when we hail a taxi to get home you will not get one at 11.00 p.m. They are looking for 2 or 3 sort of pick-ups from down the Weighbridge, so they are going to go down to the Weighbridge first, and private hire will not pick you up unless you booked out to go with them in the first place. They want a 2 way journey otherwise they will not take you. So it is almost impossible to get a taxi. Basically, if that is a general experience, have we got enough taxis available per se, and the answer is probably not, particularly when it is raining. So I think really we could labour this one and end up totally on the wrong side of the table.

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

Probably we have got enough taxis but maybe we need to jiggle the times around a bit more. But that is something else we can look at.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Can you repeat what you just said please, Minister?

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

There could quite possibly be enough taxis but maybe we may need to look at the timings of the working hours, et cetera. There is also the question of perception that if 2 planes land together at the airport, one is running late or whatever, then somebody waiting outside for a taxi could think they are waiting 20 minutes when in fact it is 6 or 7 minutes sometimes. But it is like judging a passing car whizzing past you, you think it is doing 50 when in fact it is doing 35. The perception of time, if you are waiting and it is a rainy night, can sometimes be deceptive.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

I think we will on, Minister, because I think you will need to look outside the box on that particular issue. Can we move on to I.T.T.P. (Integrated Travel and Transport Plan) please.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

Update on I.T.T.P. is that it is now called S.T.P. It is now called Sustainable Transport Plan; that is the term that Constable Crowcroft used in his amendment to the Strategic Plan. It fits with what we want to do and we are more than happy to take it on board. We have under our new acting chief officer and our new Minister tried to relaunch our work on this. You had a copy of the previous plan and we have now got a new plan which will start with hopefully a meeting at the end of this month that we have called ... this is preliminary in draft. We know that there are some lines here that are not as long as they should be, so we will keep you updated. But we are planning to launch it with all stakeholders right at the back end of this month and start some consultation with them. We bring on board a peer, somebody to peer review it. We will obviously be talking with yourselves, we are just recruiting some consultants to undertake some work on the bus contract and on bus capacity. We are also doing some work on trying to get a consultant on board to do some stated preference work. That will try and assess how easily or not we can get somebody to change behaviour from driving in a car to going on a bike, to going on a bus, to doing something differently. I have to say quite a lot of this not only necessarily arise from it but really reflects your letter to us on the draft I.T.T.P. and, although we might not have accepted all the criticism, we certainly took on board probably most of it and feel that what we have not done in the previous I.T.T.P. is evidence-based base it, and that is what we want to do doing this work. It is tremendously tight and the reason that we want this tight and we need it this tight is to lead down to the discussion in December, which is the budget debate. It is number 17 here and called Environmental Tax Debate. The main debate on environmental tax is going to be in September but in December, assuming that the September one is approved, will be when the budget debate on the environmental taxes and obviously we need to feed down with our pounds signs in our S.T.P. in order to inform that debate. I have to say the green line there at number 18, which is both yours and ... it should be green for Green Paper consultation 19, but it is actually pinkish, both of those need to be extended. The Green Paper we need to consult on for a minimum of 3 months, so it is pushing it slightly out. The key date we want to meet is that number 17, which is to get a Green Paper out by December to inform the budget debate.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Can I just come in on one point there? Sorry, a slightly aggressive stance, I apologise in advance for that. Can you tell me how we balance about encouraging people out of cars on to buses by putting up bus fares by 10p?

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

I think that is probably somebody ...

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

It is counter-intuitive to what the strategy is saying, but can we talk about that when we talk about the business plan for next year?

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Sorry, talk about what? My ears are not very good today.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

The issue of raising the bus fares works undoubtedly against what we are trying to achieve in the S.T.P., but can we discuss that when we talk about the business plan for next year. We do accept that.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

I notice on your item 17 you are putting a lot of reliance on your environmental tax debate and yet going through many, many of the items which are proposed in the environmental taxes they are not really ... they are too fluffy.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

That is exactly why we are putting a lot of play on this because we are doing now the work. We had already built up the estimates of what we were going to spend ... how we would spend the money. What we are doing now is rebuilding that up again to take into account what we can use, what we cannot use, how much extra bus services are, exactly what it is that we want to do. Evidence-base that so we can have some sort of comfort that is going to achieve what we want to achieve and then feed that into the debate.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

The key answer is if you spend that money what is the consequence and we need the answer so that we can basically try and win that debate.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Is it a case then almost that you are looking at funding options using environmental taxes as a funding option?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Yes.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Irrespective of what it is almost?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We have got to assume some funding and our only funding avenue, beyond a very small amount, is environmental taxes.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Would it be fair to comment then that to call it environmental taxes is a misnomer?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

It is a misnomer, that is correct.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Why do we not just say new taxes?

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Or just taxes, not even new ones.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

It could be pollution tax, could be a better phrase to use so that you tax pollution.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

User pays.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Yes, or user pays.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

But other departments do not say: "We will have an education tax to pay for our schools" and yet we seem to be locked in here to you saying: "We depend on environmental taxes to deliver our transport policy."

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Yes.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

We do.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

I just put it to you, you are doomed if you go down that road. I just wonder what ... it is more a question for the Minister actually. If you go down that road what are your chances of success?

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

Well, we have just got to pay for the service generally. It is a fair point. But I would like to put environmental tax because we get more people on public transport we are preserving the environment.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

It is a bonus but I suppose we are making the point that does it really matter what the tax is called, where the revenue ... if you want to deliver then you have to deliver somehow.

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

Yes, we just have to deliver the plan.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We can confirm openly T.T.S. does not have enough money to fund additional ... T.T.S. does not have enough money to fund its existing service let alone enhancing any service so we need another mechanism to do that.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Which is why you are looking for a pot.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Picking up on that point that the vice-chairman made there; charging people for education to provide schools is one thing but would it not be fair to say the plan you

have in mind cannot be funded from within existing revenues, then the people of the Island will have to take a view on whether they want to increase taxes.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Yes.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Rather than calling it environmental tax because that ... there is a sort of pseudo feel good factor about environmental taxes because people believe that they will be bettering the environment. That is not necessarily going to be the outcome of the environmental taxes.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

No. I think it is a pollution tax. If you could tax pollution or things that are not environmental and hypothecate that tax to spend on environmental and beneficial things then you could get that understanding from the general public. That has been sat within the States for 3 years now and not been pushed forward, so it is a very difficult argument and I accept that. But we have no other mechanism within T.T.S. to raise funding.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

So therefore, will you take it back to your Minister and ask him to rename that tax because for sure the Environment Scrutiny Panel are not happy at all to see the word "environmental" tax being displayed in the manner in which it is because it is definitely not what it is supposed to be. So will you take it back to your Minister so he can take it to the Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers and if they are going to raise taxes they are using a different name?

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

I will certainly pass that on to the Minister.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

I mean certainly the consultation for environmental taxes, as you know, finished yesterday and the Minister contributed to that. Our letter sort of suggested that our view was either the taxes proposed was a reasonable link to sustainable transport because what we are trying to do is to provide opportunities for people to stop polluting, to stop driving, putting the price of that up in some ... and then hypothecating that into additional bus services or better cycle roads or safer roads to school does link. I think that is where our view is.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Do you see there is a danger in going down that route, how is it different from saying this is mainstream expenditure, this is something we should do anyway as a society and it comes out of whatever taxes the States decides to raise, but by not linking it to a new environmental tax, or whatever you want to call it, you are actually protecting that expenditure?

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

I do.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Because you are saying that.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

I have to say I do accept that. I accept it in the knowledge that there is no other revenue funding but, yes, I accept that point.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

The key thing for the pollution tax, it has got to be avoidable. If it is avoidable through behaviour change then I think you can ...

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Sorry, it has got to be ...?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Avoidable. So through your behaviour change if you want to buy a smaller car and pay less, however the tax manifests, if it is an avoidable tax then you can see that by behaviour change you can make, see where you can ring-fence that money and you can spend that money within something which means your behaviour changes and you have environmental benefit. I can understand the argument for it. The simpler argument would be to increase the revenue budget in the States but that is another issue which is a very political issue.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Is it really for behaviour change - it is a chicken and egg - if you are putting on a tax that is compulsory rather than an inducement?

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

Some stick and some carrot I think is ... the S.T.P. will be a combination of the 2.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

On a bit more detail, number 9, stated preference survey. I have a memory of a similar survey done not that long ago, maybe it was longer ago than I remember, sort of 5 year-ish of exactly that kind of exercise. How well done it was I do not know, but my question is has it been already?

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

We have not done one for this purpose, which is to try and estimate modal shift. Certainly we have not. You may be thinking of the surveys that were done round the Town Park, and there was another one I know, when we redid the transport model we had surveyors out asking people their reasons for travelling. They were at the end of Victoria Avenue, by the Grand Hotel, stopping people saying: "Where are you travelling to? Where have you travelled from? Why are you travelling there" and we did that to build up the transport model, the model that we have got at T.T.S.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

I suppose you can calibrate if you have got 50 per cent of trips are 2 miles or less then you have an indicator of ability which you can correlate with willingness.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

On that and also the J.A.S.S. survey picks up quite a lot there as to who ... well, both the census but also the J.A.S.S. survey on where people live and how they are currently getting to work. So there is a combination of those things.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

You have got some basic data. Can I ask on this S.P.S. (stated preference survey), how are you going to do that and how are you going to make sure that you get valid answers?

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

We are just getting some experts on board as we speak. In fact, our timescale is really short. The advice that we first had is that you need to speak to people immediately they finish their trip so that you put to them, and in fact, talking to our policy manager, he says it is a little bit like playing a game and it is a little bit like saying: "Well, you have just driven into work, how much would this have to be in order for you not to drive into work or for you to take a different decision to do something? How much would a bus fare have to be? How much would a parking charge have to be?" It is a calibration like that. I am not sure we are going to have enough time and the main reason for that is because we are just about entering into the school summer holidays and of course everything changes in the school, and that is what we want to try and get is the other 300 days in the year. In order to do this, our feeling was we have to be back in term time and that had to be done in September. Now that is going to be extremely difficult to fit our timetable, so what we are going to do is we are going to do some work with somebody using some U.K. (United Kingdom) indices who will then come over and validate in Jersey. So we will then ask questions in Jersey. I mean, in some ways you are damned if you do that and you are damned if you do not. If we use U.K. indices people are going to say they are U.K.'s, it is not like Jersey. But in the main they are going to be very similar but they will need to be tweaked for Jersey.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

If you validate then ...

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

Need to be validated for Jersey, so that is what we are doing. We are just getting ... we have not actually got anyone on board to do it at the moment. Literally next week or so we will.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Looking at the project schedule you gave us, Caroline, on item 6, Scrutiny, I see you have got a 60 day window there working with Scrutiny. What are you proposing to do within that 60 days with Scrutiny?

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Scrutiny is on holiday, a third of it is.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

I do accept that unfortunately it is right over that period. I mean we want to firstly launch it, sit down with you and have some of the discussions that we had not had the full discussions with as we have had already, particularly on buses. Your

understanding of buses, how the contract runs, how we might wish to change it. So it is really an engagement all the way through there. You have got a separate part to scrutinise and realise that in some ways you need to be kept distant so that you can then undertake that scrutiny. But we want you to feel that you are part of that process, so really in many ways we will be guided by you as to how you wanted to participate.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

The Minister wants Scrutiny to be involved as soon as possible because it is easier to help formulate a strategy with yourselves than, at the end of it, get an external challenge then to fix it, which is certainly the position we have been in the past within T.T.S. I know there is a difficulty there with the relationship but I think certainly for myself it would be key if we could work together and then at the end there is a challenge still, I am happy with that. But I think for good government I think it is ...

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Can I come in there though; my letter that I sent in March covering other issues in fact covers all issues to do with Scrutiny. We want to see what the policies are and we will scrutinise those policies, as we did with your previous I.T.T.P. We do not want to be formulating them. They should be formulated by the ministry and the department.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

In terms of clarification, it is about early drafts getting to yourselves instead of the final draft.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Reiterating what the chairman is saying, certainly I am very clear in my mind that Scrutiny should not be working hand in hand with the departments on policy, however, there is nothing wrong with Scrutiny looking at policy milestones through the preparation of policy so as to avoid wastage on your part and hopefully come out with a better result at the end.

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

That was the policy with the Minister from day one, to involve Scrutiny and, as you quite rightly say, you are not here to make policy, you are here to scrutinise them. But, as has been said, to get everyone involved at an early stage so you know where we are.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

We are not reinventing the wheel here. I mean the I.T.T.P. and the Turning Travel Around document have all fed in to where we are now. We now have what we are calling, and we must find a different name for it, but a punchy document with our policies in. So, if you like, it has taken a lot of the words out and it is now a punchy document which is the policy, and that will be launched on 31st July. That is exactly what we would like your early input into.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

So we might be seeing things like double decker buses and the like?

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

We might.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

I just throw that in.

**Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

I was measuring the bus station this morning. **[Laughter]**

**The Deputy of St. John:**

We will move on then to - I think we have gone through that submission - environmental spending initiative, waste recycling, et cetera. Who is going to lead that?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We have got an item on the agenda called Over Management Strategy which ... we can do the spending initiatives if you like. The spending initiatives which we have been tasked with doing, and based on the letter you sent us, we are going to do, if it is acceptable, a presentation to yourselves when you come to the recycling centre where we will have the full details for your ... which we will hand over to you then.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

The visit?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

The visit, yes.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Have we got that date firmed up? Can we firm the date up while you are here so as to ...?

**Mr. M. Haden:**

23rd July, Thursday afternoon at 2.30 p.m. was one of the dates that was given us.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We will do the recycling ones then. The spending initiatives on the sustainable transport are based on our previous ones but we have also committed some additional expenditure to get the S.T.P. into a format with the evidence that we require for the end of year, which is again we have used one-off moneys because we have not had funding for this.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Sorry, you have to have funding ...? They are all blocked up, I am going to see the doctor in a minute. So can you say that louder?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We have committed some additional expenditure from the transport elements of the money we were given this year, which was one-off moneys, to finish off the S.T.P. and get it into a format with the evidence that you asked for and we require. We have a full breakdown of that if you require it.

**Ms. C. Anderson:**

You will have seen that we have gone out with the minor works, £150,000-odd that we are spending to redo about 11 or 13 jobs around the Island. It is the sort of budget that T.T.S. has not had for years because of budget cuts, and I know it is something that the Minister and Assistant Minister are really keen on doing. It supports the Parishes a lot.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Other questions, officer? Have I omitted to put any questions?

**Mr. M. Haden:**

The presentation you are talking about on waste recycling, is that going to be combined with the sustainable transport as well, the same thing, the same time?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We can do it at the same time, yes.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

We will now move on to your draft business plan.

**Mr. M. Haden:**

The odour control issue.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Sorry, you have 5 minutes on your green waste odour management.

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

I shall be sat here in a paper chair. You kindly agreed to see us at your first meeting back last year to discuss the history of the in-vessel compost facility and the need for us to progress a public green waste collection site and we gave you an update then. What I would like to talk to you about today is where we have moved forward with that strategy. We turn to the third page and it has got an explanation of where we were, which is we were seeking to get an enclosed windrow solution, and I have set out there the advantages which were explained to you at the tail end of last year. Those still apply but, if we turn to the next page, there are also a number of risks associated with a fully enclosed site that we have worked on. For example, there is not a turnkey supplier of an enclosed windrow using a polyethylene tunnel solution. There are unlikely to be process guarantees for odour levels arising from that facility.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Can I stop you there a moment? What is the difference in cost between a conventional building and a polyethylene tunnel?

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

It is in the order of £600,000, £700,000 which is significant on the budget that we have got. It is also the case that we have a limited time span at La Collette potentially, depending on the removal of the fuel farm and other developments at East of Albert. We also wanted the need to potentially reuse that facility somewhere else if that time span were moved forward or backwards at a later date. So the solution does give us that flexibility. There remain risks that the odour levels that we are able to

achieve in the end solution remains unacceptable. That is the case for any in-vessel compost solution. We have not found a single solution anywhere that we have seen in over 30 plants that I have seen which does not have some form of odour associated with it. There are also the concerns about bioaerosol management which is a health risk in relation to all enclosed composting facilities. As a result of that and the challenge on, I suppose rising from our new chief officer coming in and looking at the money that we have available, and making sure that we are using it in the most efficient way possible, the new Minister challenging us on this as well, and the Assistant Minister, we thought that it would be better to take a staged approach to development of these facilities and we have divided it into 5 phases, which is set out there and I will run through those 5 phases. These phases are to be carried out in line with an approach which is to try and avoid odour first and if we are producing odour, to reduce it as much as possible, then to try and enclose facilities from a staged approach to get to a final solution where we are fully enclosed. In terms of odour measurement, we have purchased the bizarre looking instrument before you at phase one. This is called the nasal ranger and it enables us to establish an odour threshold for measuring the impact of odour at particular locations. Now, everybody smiles when we say this, but this is one of the only ways that you can measure odour. What we do is we train up a number of people to see whether they have hypersensitivity or low sensitivity, those people are not suitable for doing odour testing, and we use repeated odour tests to ensure that we have valid results. Now the next page shows you the complaints that we have received from the La Collette composting site, which is the cause of concern and the reason for the need for investment. We have got over 30 complaints highlighted there and we have highlighted a zone which we think is the major zone of complaint, the zone sensitivity, which has been agreed with the Health Protection Regulator, which is responsible for enforcement of the Statutory Nuisance Law. What we intend doing is monitoring the level of odour arising using the nasal ranger at the point of complaint once a complaint is established, and also you will see that we are monitoring at 7 locations around the compost facility itself. That is taking place on a daily basis already to establish a baseline against which we can then compare the complaint level and see what is an acceptable level for the recipient compared to what we are generating on site. If we do that we are able to establish what mostly causes a complaint and what does not, and hopefully establish a level of investment on the site which matches to one which is an acceptable level for the recipient. In order to do that we found ourselves at the cutting edge of odour monitoring, which is slightly disturbing, but what we found is that really any sites in the U.K., for example, where this level of complexity in terms of odour monitoring has been undertaken because there are not green waste sites which are located near to population centres which remain after complaints of a sort that we have had have been received. The next phase is to attempt to reduce odour within the compost facility and there have already been a number of management techniques employed on site to attempt to reduce odour and, in fact, we have seen a reduction in odour complaints already this year. What would happen in phase 2 is that we would add what is called an inoculant which is a chemical dosed with particular bacteria and fungi which encourages the growth of a range of different fungi. Odour tends to be caused by a concentration of one different type of bacterial fungal source. We intend carrying that out for 3 months from this month dosing the inoculant and we have also ... in order to do that we have had to reduce the windrow height. At the end of that phase we will discover whether we have had a significant effect on odour or not through our monitoring. The next phase, if that was unsuccessful, would be to improve our

misting and masking. This is where we have accepted that odour cannot be avoided and we are now trying to knock it out the air and mask it. We already have a misting system which is the odd section of telegraph poles at the back of the site there. It is not very effective we found and there are a number of improvements we can make to focus it on the arrangement of the compost site and also we are looking point source misting and masking within the site. Again it is a low level of investment. It could have a significant impact and on some sites we have got subjective evidence of it being successful. We would also look at the screening and landscaping the site to a greater degree to control airflow which has a major effect on odour. If that again is not successful, demonstrated through modelling and monitoring on the site, we would move to enclosure of shredding and screening in phase 4. These are the 2 largest causes of odour generation on site we believe, and we would look to introduce an automated windrow turner which effectively does the job that our shovels and excavators do at the moment, which enables a more consistent and more frequent turning of the compost which should reduce odour as well. It has again been evidenced to reduce odour elsewhere. Again, if that is not successful, then we are looking to go to the fully enclosed facility that we talked to you about at the end of last year. In summary, what we are hoping to do is the 5 phases that we go through enable us to increase the potential effect and in a staged way introduce the capital we have available to try and tackle the odour problem.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Given that funding was put aside for 2005 to enclose, how much has it already gone up from that original figure?

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

The cost of an enclosure? What we have done is we have ... the original cost of a concrete tunnel system would have been affordable given the original budget. When we were only successful in 2006 in identifying the site for the facility it became unviable in relation to that budget. What we have done is we evaluated in the solution down to the polyethylene enclosed tunnel which should be affordable now.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

Have you thought about putting it back at Crabbe? [Laughter]

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

My ears have suddenly become unblocked.

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

It is obviously a temporary nature to the facility that we are talking about now, and that is partially why we want to look at a staged approach as well.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Just going back to the previous chief officer before John, the other John, there was some suggestion that you were moving up to Warwick Farm and yet we could be looking up to £3 million investment down at La Collette here.

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

Warwick Farm was originally one of the 2 sites that was looked at for the permanent compost facility. The previous Minister agreed that La Collette was a suitable

location for the actual processing plant. Warwick Farm we have just obtained planning permission for a public green waste reception facility, so it is receiving compost from the public, but to my knowledge it was not an intent to site the processing plant there.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

That was not the briefing we had, was it? It was to use the glasshouses as an interim measure at Warwick Farm, to put the windrows in.

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

It might have been for the public green waste collection. That would have been the brief.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Are you saying there is commercial green waste still coming in from the farming community as well?

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

Commercial green waste is received down at La Collette now on the new collection site.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

That is from the farming industry, is it?

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

It is not agricultural waste, it is from landscaping.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

So has agricultural waste more or less come to an end?

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

Since La Collette which is 2003.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

It does not come to you?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

No.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Is Warwick Farm off the horizon now then?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

Warwick Farm was engineered, and as Will quite rightly said, I think we looked at 18 sites for the permanent facility and Warwick Farm and La Collette were the 2 final options, and the option chosen was going to be La Collette, which is why we are down there still. Warwick Farm, the top part of Warwick Farm could be engineered to that, but the closeness to the housing and the potential to be used at Warwick Farm has other issues. We have got approval for reception there because it is set in a very viable place for bringing the general public in, it is central, and off the main road.

The traffic infrastructure is handled up there and we have proved that. So for the reception for the general public it is a very good site and we have got planning permission to do that. For the actual processing that was probably 2 years ago.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

I can take it then that Warwick Farm is off the agenda, apart from public collection. Moving on from that then, how does that fit in with the S.T.P. ideals and that we are now going to be moving public deposited green waste down to La Collette for processing?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

We will bulk it.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Currently you are doing that from Bellozanne which is much closer to La Collette.

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

No.

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

You are not coming through the town?

**Mr. J. Rogers:**

There will be very little difference. The solution at Warwick Farm will involve a different vehicle, so we will compensate for that. Bellozanne is not an ideal place either. We currently run it there because of the fact we have not told the general public at La Collette due to the hazards.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

One last little question, is there a complaints log?

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

There is. That is what the drawing which shows the 30 ...

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

I see what you mean. But I mean through time?

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

Yes, since 2005 we have got all data.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

That is the reward, is it not?

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

What we are hoping to do is do some publicity about this and if people do have unacceptable odour levels they can put something to us.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Well, they are cheaper than a machine.

**Mr. W. Gardiner:**

They are. Then we can go out with a machine and measure it. The machine was not expensive.

**The Deputy of St. John:**

There are no other questions? We will now move on to your business plan. Who is going to ... Chief Officer or the Minister?

**The Connétable of St. Peter:**

Is it not a closed session now?

**The Deputy of St. John:**

We will now close the open session at 3.10 p.m. and close the public meeting.