



STATES OF JERSEY
Environment, Housing and Technical Services
Scrutiny Panel

Review of Environmental Policies

FRIDAY, 20th MARCH 2015

Panel:

Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary (Vice-Chairman)

Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier

Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade

Mr. D. Stanley (Expert Adviser)

Witnesses:

Deputy S.G. Luce (The Minister for Planning and Environment)

Mr. A. Scate (Chief Officer)

Dr. L. Magris (Director for Environmental Policy)

Dr. I. Skinner (Head of Strategic Planning)

Dr. T. du Feu (Director of Environmental Protection)

[12:03]

Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary (Vice-Chairman):

As Vice-Chairman, I am taking the chair today. Welcome to the Minister, his officers and the public and the press. Perhaps we can begin by, for the record, going through introductions. By the way, I begin by saying we have our own adviser here, Dave Stanley, who will make his comments when he is introduced, and we look forward to hearing your questions. Again, welcome all. We have a number of questions here and we will perhaps start off with some specifics for a general view. Renewable energy: the State of Jersey report refers to achieving an 80 per cent reduction in hydrocarbons by 2020.¹

Director for Environmental Policy:

2050.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Sorry, 2050. Yes, could you tell me what progress has been made there?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Nice of you to give us an extra 30 years to achieve our goal.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Sorry, the question basically was how are we doing in achieving that ambition?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

How are we getting on with achieving our targets for 2015 hydrocarbons? Since the States debate last year when the Assembly agreed that we would adopt the plan - which I would like to say is, I think, a very important move; it could quite easily have got into existence without the States agreeing to it - but as a Scrutiny Panel, when I sat in your position this time last year, that we were in agreement that we felt it was an important enough document for the Assembly to have to agree, so we are really pleased that that happened. It is obviously a long-term plan. It is very important with long-term plans that you do not always take the view that: "Oh well, it is a long-term plan. We can start next year or we can start the year after." While we accept that there is really difficult things that we need to get over, we have made a good start and it is identified inside the plan the two key ingredients. If you like, the secrets to really getting to these targets are two, and that is transport and the other one is housing. I will deal with the housing one first. We have some quite stringent bye-laws in place at the moment for the insulation of buildings and the heating of

¹ The States of Jersey has signed up to an 80% reduction in carbon emissions by 2050 based on 1990 emissions levels.

buildings. In doing that, we do two things: one, obviously we reduce the use of energy and hydrocarbon energy to heat those homes, but we also make it much more palatable for the sector of our community which struggle with paying for their energy bills to keep their homes hot, so we are making progress there. In very short order, in the near future we will be increasing the bye-laws even further to make the quality of the homes we are building from an insulation point of view and from a heating point of view even more stringent. I am sure Louise might want to say a little bit more about that in a minute. The other one I want to talk about is transport and...

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Steve, before you go on to transport, I want a supplementary: you are looking at insulation of houses. Are you looking at any bye-laws to make more energy efficiency, like solar panels or anything, because we have looked at figures in the U.K. (United Kingdom) and although they are insulating better, people are not necessarily over...good statistics are saying that the energy use is not going down.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Okay, that is interesting. Obviously in theory the more you insulate, the less energy you use for heating your home. There may be other reasons why the energy consumption is not dropping, obviously computers and stuff like that use quite a lot of energy if people are leaving P.C.s (personal computers) on all night or other items of electronic equipment, that could well account for some of it. But certainly as regards the energy used to heat your home, I would like to hope that the energy consumption is going down. There is no reason why it should not. White goods account for a bit of that. In the olden days, people used to do a lot more stuff by hand and everybody expects electronics and technology to cope with all sorts of things these days, so there may be other reasons why energy consumption is not dropping. I am sure if we...

Deputy J.A. Martin:

But from your bye-laws, you have got no intention of saying all the buildings that are being built now...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Getting back to your question...

Deputy J.A. Martin:

...going to the 80 per cent, using alternative energy to heat the home.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Okay. Microrenewables in the Island is something that we touch on in the Energy Plan. It is quite an important one. The definition of the word "micro" is the hint here, and while we would encourage everybody to try to do their bit, it is not the secret, but lots of little bits do add up to big bits and it is an important thing that we need to look at moving into the future. I am aware that there will be some policy and certainly it is worth - and I am considering at the moment - when it comes to photovoltaics on the roofs and ground-source heat and things like that, it may well be that the Planning and Building Department need to look a little bit sympathetically at how we want to encourage that type of thing. I am aware that it is not so straightforward, where you have maybe a street or a road of houses where one person may apply to do something, the neighbour might not be quite so happy. It is not so easy to retrofit, but certainly moving forward into the future, where the States may be - or whoever, developers - responsible for coming forward for new housing estates or new housing developments, it will be much more consistent to apply an approach where we say: "We would like an array" whether it is on the roof or in the back garden or somewhere, it may be something that we can do across the board so that every unit is exactly the same. In that situation, you do not have an issue with one neighbour saying: "I am not happy about my neighbour next door putting up something on this roof. I do not want to do that. I do not like the look" and if everything looks the same. It is a policy that I think we should be looking at encouraging, and certainly in the future that is something we have got to look at. There is a number of young Jersey folk now who are approaching me, and I am passing their enquiries on to other officers who are experienced in this type of work; they are coming back from the U.K. I think another one approached me this week who is quite interested in getting involved in photovoltaics in Jersey. Again, he is another one I am passing on to the Department, so there is a lot of interest in it. We do not seem to have embraced it as other places have, but of course there are reasons for that. In the U.K., there was considerable government money and subsidies available for schemes and a lot of people got involved in that. That money is not available locally and I do not expect it to be available locally, but there are other ways that we can encourage people. I do not know if you want to mention anything more about that, Louise?

Director for Environmental Policy:

Yes, thank you, Minister. I think I would go back to the B.B.L.s (building bye-laws) maybe to start with. You asked about the energy input. The most recent iteration of the B.B.L.s, which is bringing us up to the next level, are still based on energy use per square metre of property, so although the Energy Plan is about carbon reduction, we appreciate that for reasons of security and affordability, we would want everyone in Jersey to use less energy, whether it be electricity or hydrocarbon fuel. So the latest B.B.L.s will still be asking that buildings are heated with the least amount of energy, so when you are looking particularly at some of the smaller units, very, very well insulated, fabric-first approaches, what you are finding is that those units do not even need much

energy to heat them at all. Then you can look at the second stage by saying: "What am I using to heat? Is it hydrocarbon fuel or is it electricity or is it something more obviously environmental, like solar thermal or P.V. (photovoltaic) air-source heatpumps?" I think the Minister is right, it is difficult to see the uptake of P.V. and other purely carbon-free alternatives at the moment without the use of incentives which you have in the U.K. The difficulty is finding the money to cross-subsidise energy users so that those who install those devices can get the benefit by having grant subsidy. We need to work with Jersey Electricity to see if there are options. The General Development Order has made it easier for people to fit solar thermal panels to their properties and P.V., assuming that they are not special heritage buildings or they are not on the flight path, which solar panels can cause glare. So it is easier for people to apply these measures to their homes, but it is still the case, I think, that the difference in the U.K. is very generous subsidies - which have been recently reduced substantially - have incentivised people to fit those sorts of installations and that is not available in Jersey. I do not know if it would be helpful for me now just to briefly say why that would be the case.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Can I just ask, so you are saying these are maybes and possibly not so good in Jersey. Sorry, to get at the figure, in 35 years, the maintaining of the 80 per cent reduction is not including new solar panels, just...

Director for Environmental Policy:

No, it does. Yes, so what we have done is when we have modelled the assumptions that give us the trajectory to get the reduction in the housing sector, we have made an assumption that by, I think, is it 2035 - I would have to look at the spreadsheet, but it is all there and it is publicly available - we made the assumption that we are using primarily low-carbon sources of space heating, so what we are saying is within the next couple of decades, we imagine that the technology will have caught up to the point where people are using air-source heatpumps probably, ground-source heatpumps maybe, solar thermal as a matter of choice. Now, at the moment, if you were to install particularly air-source heatpumps to a property, it probably is not much more expensive than a normal heating system, so people can make that choice and be financially neutral to maybe using a boiler or something else. We see those prices dropping and we see the market uptaking. That process has been accelerated elsewhere by the availability of grant subsidy. Without that in Jersey, we feel it is going to be a lot slower, but we do feel that the market will catch up. People are doing it already, particularly with air-source heatpumps.

[12:15]

Of course with our electricity being very low-carbon, using air-source heatpumps that are fuelled, as it were, or powered by electricity, that will make that home much more, firstly, energy efficient, but secondly, much lower carbon as well.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I think the other thing I want to talk about, individual homes and using microrenewables, there are two aspects to that which I think are worth touching on. One is the system which heats your home and saves you buying energy from the Jersey Electricity Company mainly, and the other one is the system which creates energy which you could use yourself, and if you do not need it, put back into the grid. Now, the putting back into the grid, as Louise has touched on, is not straightforward in Jersey, inasmuch as Jersey Electricity have a very firm policy on the amount of money they pay for buy-in. They are very clear that they purchase electricity quite cheaply from the French, the nuclear energy, and they are very clear that they cannot pay more than that to people who create their own energy at home and want to put it into the grid, because they say that in doing that, that would reduce their profit. If they want to keep their profit up, they would have to subsidise the buy-in tariff, if you like. In subsidising the buy-in tariff, they may have to raise energy prices, and in doing that, the people who cannot afford to put in the wind turbines in their garden would pay more.

Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

Do we have no say, do we have no influence on what Jersey Electricity and their policies are?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Jersey Electricity, they are a quoted company on the stock exchange. I do not think we have the influence on them that you might think.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

We are a shareholder, a major shareholder, of course, but yes.

Director for Environmental Policy:

Sorry, if I could add I think that is a very sensible question: 'surely we have some input on that?' I think at the moment Jersey Electricity work at arm's length and they set their own policy. It may be that Government decides, as we continue down the road into the Energy Plan, that Government decides it wants to make use of its position on the board as a major shareholder and start imposing policy or suggesting policy to the board. That is not how it works at the moment, but it is an alternative.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

That is useful to flag up.

Deputy M. Tadier:

But I would say for the Government though, we make the laws as an Assembly and if we decide that we want to compel the company to do something they are not otherwise willing to do, then it is up to us to do that.

Director for Environmental Policy:

That would be another way. If I could just add...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I am not trying to defend them, but certainly there would be a school of thought that says that the Jersey Electricity Company have operated very properly in the last 20 or 30 years. They have invested very heavily in the sustainable future of our energy source from the French. As we all know, they have spent tens of millions of pounds recently, and again, in the very near future, to make sure that our electricity supply is stable. We have one of the most stable electricity supplies in Europe now. It is certainly much more stable than the U.K.

Deputy M. Tadier:

It could be economically stable, but the point is if we want to introduce microrenewables, then we have to find a way to do it, so what is your plan?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

No, the point I am making is that your microrenewables fall into two distinct camps, if you like, and on the one hand, the ones that I think we need to look at very carefully are the ones which save you money, not the ones that create electricity that you want to put back into the grid. These systems are usually quite a bit cheaper, but what they are doing is substituting the amount of money you pay to the J.E.C. (Jersey Electricity Company) to buy in energy to heat your home, so your ground-source heat, your air-circulation pumps and things like that.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Yes, I did understand that. Just to follow off on the 80 per cent, so what is the current target for energy reduction by the Department annually and who is monitoring it, because I got a bit concerned when you said you were hoping by 2035 most homes, people would be looking to use low carbons, but there is no laws in place. Who is monitoring, what is the annual target et cetera?

Director for Environmental Policy:

That is all outlined in the Energy Plan, so you can see what we are trying to achieve by incentivising and helping people who are able to pay to improve their energy efficiency of their home. They can make substantial savings and we can make substantial reductions in energy use by a lot of behavioural mechanisms and a lot of fabric-first approaches, so insulation, draft-proofing, all the very boring but very effective measures, so improving the buildings, the quality of the building stock both in retrofitting the existing stock and improving the performance of new buildings through building bye-laws has an enormous effect. We are monitoring that through the application of looking at emissions as calculated from the Island against our hopeful trajectories, and there is a raft of policies, it is not just the B.B.L.s, it is looking at energy behaviour, looking at the potential for renewable energy. But maybe I could just go back and touch on the question that was raised earlier, that I think we are getting into a discussion about whether Jersey Electricity should be subsidising or helping people to put low-carbon electricity-generating devices in their home. I think the debate is more complicated than that. Jersey Electricity, as the Minister says, provide low-carbon electricity already. The people who provide high-carbon energy to Jersey are the gas company and the oil companies. Now, there is a school of thought that says if someone is going to subsidise low-carbon individual generators with P.V. on their roof, who should be the subsidiser of that? Should it be Jersey Electricity, who already provide low-carbon electricity, or maybe somebody else should be funding that? Now, one mechanism that we looked at a long time ago, and it was before its time and it is certainly not what we are proposing at the moment, but it is worth thinking about as probably the lever you would use, is something like a carbon tax that would put a taxation on heating oil, L.P.G. (liquefied petroleum gas) and you would use that money to cross-subsidise people who were generating low-carbon electricity from their own roof. Like I say, this is not something we are proposing, but that is the fair and equal way of making that cycle work correctly. Now, we are not proposing that at the moment, but if it is the case that the other mechanisms we are using to reduce energy use are not working, I am sure this Minister and ones in the future would have to look at those more obvious solutions because, like I say, the person whose detriment it is to provide subsidy probably should be the person who is emitting the most emissions. In this equation, it is not Jersey Electricity, it is the other suppliers. But of course what you always have to take into account is that energy is affordable for people, and putting any kind of taxation on energy quite often is totally regressive and that would not be something we would want to do for environmental purposes, so we would have to look at that very carefully.

Deputy M. Tadier:

As you said though, it is only one point to say that it is low carbon, but it is also nuclear, and there are people who are uncomfortable about the use of nuclear. It is also not a local energy source, so we do not know what is going to happen in the future. We have got good relations currently

with France, so it seems to me we need to find a way for people to be able to not just generate their own electricity but to put it back into the local grid so that we can build up our sustainability.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Certainly we are thinking about that at the moment. It is no secret that the French are developing wind farms in the waters surrounding our own territorial water. I think there will be opportunities in the future for discussions with the French as to how that might move forward. Certainly our waters extend to 12, 13, 14 miles away, but there is no doubt that outside of our own remit, the French Government have the ability to place wind turbines much closer to our shores than that if they decided, for example, to put wind turbines in their half of the water between ourselves and Granville and the Cotentin Peninsula, that those wind turbines would only be a matter of 10 miles away from our shores and outside of our waters. You are quite right, there are some opportunities there and discussions are ongoing, I suppose, is the easiest way to say it. We have got matters of the seabed, and again, it is no secret that it would be a matter for looking for European Union (E.U.) money because the building of wind turbines is something you do not just do out of the cash in your back pocket. It is a very expensive process and at the moment the only way to do that is to have access to E.U. funds. So there is some major constitutional things which need to be looked at.

Chief Officer:

Yes, I think underlying all of our strategies here, the biggest win both financially for individuals as consumers from a carbon perspective and for energy security is to reduce the amount of energy we are using. That is top of the tree in all of our work through our Energy Plan, reduction of energy consumption delivers on all of those agendas first of all, then managing our energy better before we get into the investment debates as to do we need to invest in more infrastructure to create energy. The biggest win by far is in terms of reduction of use and insulation and managing our energy and behaviour better. So that is where our Energy Plan is certainly very focused on that part of the hierarchy before we get into investment decisions, on creating more energy. I think that is why we see a lot of work on our energy efficiency service, and the energy planning is all around demand management.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Just going back one stage there, it comes back to J.E.C., and I fully appreciate the commercial reality of the situation and J.E.C. have done well over the years, and I also appreciate the interests of shareholders come into the equation, but that is something that needs to be looked at in a separate guise. I do not want to get this whole thing deflected.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Yes. There are interesting comparisons to be made. Certainly in Guernsey their electricity supply is regulated and that costs them a lot of money to just pay for the regulators, if you like. Over in Jersey, as I am sure we all know, there is sort of an agreed profit margin that is accepted by Government and the shareholders and Jersey Electricity work to that. We accept that as a commercial body they need to reinvest, and it is hugely important that they do continue to reinvest for the long term. In order to do that, we need to be able to generate profit to reinvest, so we accept that it is always as important for the company as such to make profits in order for them to reinvest for the benefit of Islanders in the future.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Okay. Just going back to the general question about reduction in energy, the States are leaders in this field. Do we monitor how much energy the States use and what decrease we have achieved over the last few years?

Director for Environmental Policy:

The Department has been running a programme, the Eco-Active States programme, which is about identifying the energy use of the organisation, along with other factors like water use, the amount of waste we create, how we transport ourselves around. We had some targets for energy reduction. In the Energy Plan, I think it is 20 per cent reduction by 2020. I would have to check that in the action statement - it is action statement 7 - but we have a programme of reduction in the organisation itself. Back in 2010, one of the modernisation projects was around resource management within the States and we cut £1.6 million off the organisation's energy bill. That was just taken out of budgets in order that people could no longer afford to buy that energy, if you like. It was not in their budgets and they had to very specifically use less energy as a result of that, and that was done and energy is monitored across the organisation. There are challenges. We are a very disparate organisation. We have several hundred buildings. Some are very well-managed with very good building management systems.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Sorry, when you say "the organisation" what does that mean, all States Departments?

Director for Environmental Policy:

The States of Jersey. Yes, all States Departments, so everything from the prison to buildings like we are in at the moment and all the schools, so you can imagine a huge diverse property estate, some of which is very well-managed, it has got relatively recently-built units and we know very well what the energy use in those buildings is and they have building management systems. Other buildings are much older and we are less well able to monitor the energy that we are using and

improve, because we do not know our baseline as well. That is not to say we are not trying very hard. Treasury, as part of their sustainability reporting in their annual report, are keeping a close eye on our energy use. Every month, Jersey Property Holdings circulates dashboards for 68 different properties and shows the energy use that month and obviously the target is for everyone to drop below their target for that particular building. We support all of that work with behavioural change campaigns across the organisation, so you might have seen the “switch me off” stickers.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I might add including the schools.

Director for Environmental Policy:

Yes, including the schools.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

There has been a major project in schools of education. Only recently, I have been to Trinity School to award them their green flag. They have done some major work with their children on reducing energy within the school, and along with that, with the education bit, those children take that stuff back home and encourage their parents to use energy more wisely. But I would just take over from Louise and say that the Government in general - and this is not the whole of the States portfolio, because education and hospitals fall out, but Government in general - works out of some pretty antiquated and difficult buildings from an energy point of view. There is no question that if we wanted to reduce our energy consumption that everybody sitting in one building which had been built to properly-insulated standards would save Government and the States Assembly an awful lot of money.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Can I just ask - because I think we are dancing around the elephant in the room - what is the biggest driver for energy consumption in the Island?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Are you talking about reducing carbon emissions or energy?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Energy.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

The biggest driver? I would imagine that probably the answer is the same, transport, I would have thought.

Director for Environmental Policy:

It is the built environment and transport both account for about a third of emissions each.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Yes, so the way I look at it is that we are looking to increase the population probably by 20,000 by 2050, and that is if we stick to targets, and we have not stuck to targets recently anyway, so it seems to me there is an element of alchemy, if not sophistry, in what is being proposed, because it is not just about domestic usage, which will increase anyway with the more units that we build and its sewerage systems, obviously the water, it is the road et cetera. It seems to me that if you want to tackle energy and reduce it, you reduce the population or you maintain it at a steady level, you do not sign up, as the Council of Ministers have done, to increasing the population in a drive ostensibly for economic growth.

[12:30]

Could you discuss those issues?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

That would be your view. Certainly what I would say is...

Deputy M. Tadier:

I think that is about the evidence.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I do not know that it is, because if you are looking to increase the population and you put every extra person in a newly-built building which is eco-friendly and neutral carbon, you could make a claim - and if they walk to work every day and they went to work in a new office building which was grade A and had all the latest technology and environmental glass and what have you - that those people contribute very, very little to the extra energy requirement or carbon emission. You need to look back at what we have got at the moment. That is where the improvement needs to come. It is not moving forward.

Deputy M. Tadier:

It is because they all live like monks, is it, because certainly what I have seen in the Red Houses in my district is that the roads are busier, Waitrose is busier, the amount of packaging that people buy their fruit and vegetables in, which is imported in Waitrose et cetera, is increasing and there is absolutely...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

That is personal choice. You could go to your local farm shop. We are trying personally to encourage people to buy local produce. They can all...

Deputy M. Tadier:

What, from Amal-Grow perhaps? You could go to Amal-Grow, which has just shut down because there is not enough support for organic farmers. These are...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Amal-Grow do not grow organic crops.

Deputy M. Tadier:

The evidence is that the local...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

No, hang on, Amal-Grow and organics is a separate issue, if we get that right.

Deputy M. Tadier:

It is locally grown, but there are organic farmers which are struggling.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Yes, we have said that.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Certainly the evidence that we have seen is that the tendency is, I would imagine, from 1980, which is 35 years ago, to 35 years in the future is that the population has increased and energy consumption has increased, so I would like to know how you are going to reverse the trend if we stick to what we have been doing in the past.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

When it comes to carbon emissions, I think you will probably find that we are reducing carbon emissions. Energy consumption, I am not sure of the total energy consumption, but certainly when it comes to liquid hydrocarbons, it is reducing annually and has done for a number of years.

Chief Officer:

Yes, I think some things in society are a direct line, the more people, the more impact you see. I think it goes back to my previous comment around demand management. I think by applying demand management to our resources, you can in effect carry the capacity of our Island in terms

of what we need in terms of water and energy. I guess what that is saying is we have a better reduction in resource use and management of those resources, you can see more people using those resources, so it is not a direct one for one correlation between population and resources. Some of the impacts, however, are direct one to one, flushing the toilet, for instance, is a fairly direct one-to-one consequence of population. We can certainly look at travel patterns and travel impacts and some of the spatial planning framework that we have is all centred in St. Helier. We need to reduce the demand for travel by making sure that people are housed and work in the right locations. It is a complicated equation and cocktail, if you like, but generally, for some things, more people equate to more pressures; for some things you can offset some of that pressure by other behaviours, so it is a complicated matrix.

Director for Environmental Policy:

I think, if I could add, you are absolutely right, managing demand gets harder with an increased population. In the Energy Plan, we modelled a population increase of 350 heads per household in our model, so we did account for some population increase. Whether that is what the final figure is that Jersey decides upon is yet to be debated. But there is a recognition that if there are more people living in Jersey, we have to be even more stringent with our demand management programmes, because as you say, the resource requirements just do not equal what is available and we do not reach our targets, so there is a point at which we have to balance off the needs of the economy, the needs of the community and the environment. As with all sustainability arguments, it is a fine balance.

Deputy M. Tadier:

When we balance that off, that is the conventional logic, that is applying which bits of the economy do we forego then and which bits of social policy and environmental policy do we give up in order to balance the economic growth.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I want to just go back, there is something I wanted to concentrate on, and it is something that we have not done particularly well - which addresses a lot of the concerns you are talking about in the last five minutes - which is the sustainable transport policy, which is one that we have had for a number of years now, which we have not really, to be quite honest, made any gains in. It has not been a success, we have not addressed it seriously enough; in my personal opinion, we have not addressed it seriously enough. I think it is time that we did, because there is no doubt in - I know I am changing the subject a little bit here - a lot of the discussions we have at the Planning Department around building houses surround parking and the need for parking and people's desire to have cars and what have you. We have not cracked a sustainable transport policy, because we do not have enough people travelling on public transport. To my mind, there are

some reasons for that, and one of them is that people still have too much access to too cheap parking in town and that we still need an even more attractive bus service. I think we are getting there with the bus service and I am absolutely convinced that LibertyBus have made fantastic strides since they have come into being. They will continue, I know, to do even better, and the community buses that they are just about to roll out in the northern parishes is an indication of the way they want to go and I think that is great. But I think that the Minister for Transport and Technical Services has got to look at his transport policy again and see where he needs to go with it, because it does seem to me that we still have too many people travelling in vehicles. I know I am one of them and I am guilty; I put my hand up.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, in answering that question, I want to ask you about a few relating to transport. Maybe we should go on to those right now. Are we thinking of introducing any fiscal measures to encourage the use of transport or punitive measures or incentives?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

That is not for me to do, it is not my policy, but as I just indicated, I personally do not think that the sustainable transport policy has worked. Certainly it has not hit any of the targets that it set. It does not appear that the States or the Assembly have paid enough heed to it and we need to work a bit harder. As I said, every car park we build in St. Helier, for example, makes it easier for people to park in town, but it drives more people to think: "I can get in my car and I can drive into town because there is car parking space" which in turn blocks up our roads, which causes more aggravation for annoyed motorists, because they get in their car, they cannot get anywhere because the roads are full of cars. The idea of course of a sustainable transport policy is that people get on to public transport, they come into town quite quickly because there are not any cars on the roads, but we encourage cars on the roads by building car parks. There is a really big discussion to be had. The Minister for T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) has his views, the policy is there. We have our views and we have not cracked the nuts yet.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Okay, thanks. As you know, this Panel is also the Panel which calls to account the Minister for Transport and Technical Services, so I think we note that and note that the Minister for the Environment is happy for us to pursue that.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Absolutely. I have already had discussions, and Deputy Martin will know, even around Gas Place. I am not going to talk about the application itself, but there is a lot of discussion every time we have a major development. In St. Helier at the moment, one of the major concerns is parking. I

have attended - and Deputy Martin as well - the car users' group. I opened myself up to questions for however long, half an hour, three-quarters of an hour, and 90 per cent of the questions concerned parking. A real issue with parking in town, and it is one that we have got to address and we have got to solve and we have got to make a decision and we have got to stick by that decision. Either we are going to give everybody as much parking as they want or we are going to say: "Right, this is the way we are going to handle it. This is the way we are going to run public services and public transport" but we need to decide. What we have at the moment is policies which we are not following stringently enough and we are getting nowhere.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Again, we come back to the tension, because on the rural strategy, I notice it is the Minister for Economic Development, along with yourself, who is on that, and it seems to me from his point of view he would want to do as much as possible to bring as many people into town, to park as cheaply as possible so they can buy stuff that they presumably need to make their lives more fulfilled, whereas from your perspective, you seem to want to do the opposite. It is probably...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

All I said was I think we need to have the debate and we need to decide which way we are going. Certainly all I was doing was not necessarily expressing a personal...apart from the fact that we had a sustainable transport policy which we have not got to grips with. We have had some targets and we have not met them. If we are going to revisit the sustainable transport policy, that is fine, but if we decide to keep going with it, we need to do whatever is necessary to hit those targets.

Deputy M. Tadier:

But now the Council of Ministers are working collectively, so who is the individual that would set the overall target and say: "This is what we want you to do, because we know that there are different opinions about economic growth and protecting the environment, but I want you to pursue this"?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

You have already touched on the Minister for E.D. (Economic Development), myself, the Minister for T.T.S. I guess all three of us would want to have some input. The secret about getting people into town to purchase things is to make it easy and done in a sustainable way. Now, whether that means park and ride, whether that means car parks on the outskirts of St. Helier, but what it certainly does not mean from a future St. Helier point of view is lots of cars blocking up the middle of town. From that perspective, we want to make it easier for people to get in and when they get in have areas which are nice from a pedestrian point of view. That is going to involve public transport, I would have thought, because at the end of the day, you can get a number of people on

public transport, and if you put them all in a private vehicle, that is where things come to a grinding halt.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I think we want to touch on a larger aspect of it later on when we have dealt with a couple more individual points. I think we have done energy in isolation. Can we go on to water? Do you want to take water?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Yes. It has been proven in the U.K. that the usage of water meters is good for stopping consumption. Do you know how many percentage of Jersey properties, domestic and commercial, are supplied with water meters and also the target and how far into the future it is going?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I have got my resident water expert with me and I will hand over to him in a second, but I would say I am fairly sure that for a number of years now - and he will tell me how many - any time Jersey Water come to your property to do any work, you had a meter installed as part of the package, but certainly they are rolling out water meters and they have been for some time now.

Director of Environmental Protection:

That is right, yes.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

It is not in planning bye-laws, new properties today? I have just moved into a new property and no water meter, so it is not...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

It is a brand-new property and there is no water meter?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

It will be two years in June.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I am surprised.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I think there is an issue with flats, if there is a block of flats.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

No, it was just a question. Yes, carry on.

Director of Environmental Protection:

Yes, if I can just explain, but it is a very important point, water metering, and it is part of the Jersey Water 25 year resource management plan which, like energy, looks at resource use and demand capacity in the Island. Metering, it is fair to say, is number one on that list and Jersey Water have been very proactively metering, fitting meters to all properties in the Island. Their target - your question - is 100 per cent. They are now, I believe, on about 80 per cent of the Island. They are into St. Helier, which obviously is a bit more tricky with various old connections. What it has done is enabled Jersey Water to keep the supply of public water at the same level, despite the increase in population and households for about five, six years, I think, so it is showing real benefits. The largest of those benefits is when they fit a water meter, they will go in at night, 2.00 a.m. in the morning, say, and look at that usage to identify leakage, and that is the major factor, the private leakage they are able to stop and identify, so...

Deputy J.A. Martin:

That was my next question: do we know what leakage is, the private and under the ground? Does Jersey Water know what the leakage is?

Director of Environmental Protection:

They do. As I say, it has drastically gone down and that is where the savings in the water is, as well as you are paying for a valuable resource, what you use, so you are less reluctant to waste water.

Deputy M. Tadier:

What are the stats on leakage? Not so much the private domestic leakage, but before it gets to the properties?

Director of Environmental Protection:

I can get those to you. It is Jersey Water that are in charge of the metering programme, but I can assure you it is...

The Deputy of St. Mary:

They have gone down?

Director of Environmental Protection:

They have gone drastically down, that is where the big saving is.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Did you say water meters have affected leakage or do you mean wastage?

Director of Environmental Protection:

No, leakage from the systems, so the fact that you have...

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Oh, that is because they are going in and checking, so they are making sure that literally what is going through the pipes is being paid for and metered?

Director of Environmental Protection:

That is right.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

So if they do not add up, there is a leakage and they are sorting it out? I see what you are saying.

Director of Environmental Protection:

Exactly right, yes.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I might add to that, I think certainly over the decades, Jersey Water, when they were the Jersey New Waterworks Company in the 1970s and 1980s, the mains technology that they were putting under our main roads proved to be rather...not as good as it might have been and there was a lot of burst water mains and leakages, but the newer technology and the newer types of pipes they use these days as they are replacing everything are really much better. They really are in a position to look at meters, and if the meters are ticking over in the middle of the night, they can identify fairly quickly where the water is going.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Can we move on to waste then or general resources?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Are we doing nitrates? Unless you want to do it after, but having mentioned it now, I suppose. Sorry to jump the gun. It is just to talk about the nitrate issue, which will tie in with soil and the countryside. As you are aware, Minister, there is still a dispensation which is in place for the times when the water nitrate levels reach over 50 milligrams, and in a submission from Jersey Water, we were told that it reached 58.2 milligrams, I believe, in April 2013.

[12:45]

Is that something that concerns you, that we still need to rely on a dispensation under the law?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Absolutely. I am very concerned about it, and even more concerned since I have become Minister, because I was not aware the problem was quite as difficult as it is appearing. One thing that is changing is that the medical advice from around the world is different and certainly there is more emphasis being placed on the levels of nitrate in water. We are advised, as the Department which issues dispensations to Jersey Water, that our advice will be quite soon that we should not be continuing to issue dispensations, so we are fully aware now that in the coming years we may well not be in a position to issue those dispensations. From a political point of view, it is very much down to me, in the short term, because this is not something that is just going to be allowed to go on, certainly in five years' time I probably will not be allowed to issue or I would be advised not to issue any more dispensations, so it has brought it very conveniently to a head. I will hand over to Tim in a minute, but certainly the Nitrate Working Group are working very hard and we are talking to farmers, and certainly where I have the opportunity now, I am telling the agricultural industry that this is an issue that cannot be brushed under the table any longer, it has got to be addressed, it has got to be addressed in short order, as it turns out. Even now, the vast majority of the inorganic nitrates that go on the land have been put on this year now, so potentially our ability to affect what happens in 2015 is reduced. We have got to be looking very seriously at what we do in 2016, and on the basis that it is not an immediate fall-off in nitrates in the soil that happens. Just because we sow less next year does not necessarily mean that the nitrates next April 2016 will be reduced. They may well be two years...

Deputy M. Tadier:

What is the delay, do you know?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I think it is about two years. Tim, do you want to say a bit more about...

Director of Environmental Protection:

Yes. I think, if we are all honest, nitrate has been a problem in surface waters, ground waters in Jersey since probably the start of the potato industry. Things have got better. In 1994, we were showing levels of 70 milligrams per litre. The European or local limit for drinking water is 50. That has gone down through better agricultural practice and our own work in the Department to just above 50. However, there is still a long way to go. Jersey Water, between the months of January and April, during the planting season, need to apply for this dispensation. This is only part of the

equation. The other big issue in the Island is we have got eight per cent of the population on private boreholes and wells and 50 per cent of those are drinking water above that 50 European limit or local limit. What are we doing about it? As the States, during the 1990s we had a nitrate working and pesticide group. That resulted in the Water Pollution (Jersey) Law. The major pollution issues in the Island were from point sources, from leaking oil tanks or defined points. Diffuse pollution, which is nitrates or pollution coming from a variety of sources into a stream, is much more difficult to handle. But as of last year, we reformed the Nitrate Working Group, and importantly reformed it with the farmers that we had been working on and training and providing advice during our Diffuse Pollution Project, which started 2009, so it is an ongoing issue. The Nitrate Working Group is comprised of Jersey Water, because they need dispensations, members of the potato industry and the dairy industry and the big producers, officers from the Department and also health officers, because obviously in granting any dispensation we, as a Department, the Minister has to go to the M.O.H. (Medical Officer of Health) to say: "What does that look like on the health front?" The recent concerns or potential concerns the Minister refers to has really tightened up that programme and it means action is needed now. I can tell you that for the first time the farmers are starting to take ownership of the problem, as being the major producers of nitrate through inorganic, and have come up with an action plan. The details of that are yet to be formalised but that action plan will be fed into the Rural Economy Strategy. It will also be fed into our water strategy which will be up for debate in October this year, and nitrates will be number one on there to address.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

That is good to hear. I think we went to a presentation shortly after the election hosted by Environment and the Minister for Economic Affairs and that is one point really. You say you are the Minister in charge of this. It does overlap with Economic Affairs. Are they involved in this panel, in the nitrate producers...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I think the economic development angle is probably more so from the point of view historically we have been in a position to use Government money in the form of grants to give to farmers, and whether it was a Single Area Payment, quality milk payment and other forms of payment, the monies have come out of Economic Development and then been administrated through a joint policy, the Rural Economy Strategy, administered by staff from the Environment Department so it has always been sort of a joint issue. It may be in the future that Government money available for those sorts of schemes may not be as available as they were in the past. If that is the case, it may be that reducing nitrates in our water supply may have to be done more by regulation, so more by stick rather than carrot because our drawer full of carrots, unfortunately, is running particularly low. Notwithstanding that, regardless of whether we have money to do it or not, we have to address the

nitrate issue. That is a given. Whether we like it or not we have to address the issue and we will use what tools we have available, but if we do not have the tools available, we may have to resort to saying to people: "We are very sorry, but we are going to have to regulate new policy or whatever to address it because it is not going to be an option for very much longer."

The Deputy of St. Mary:

That is the crux of the problem, is it not? In a sense, the whole prosperity of the Island depends on...it does not depend on it, it is a major factor, clean water, and we have to have it by some form.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

We have to have it. We cannot afford to be the only people in Europe, if you like, where we do not have drinking water which is which is of a suitable quality.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yet the agricultural industry will presumably say: "We cannot do without help."

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

It is unfortunate, but the critics will say: "The agricultural industry is responsible. They need to address the situation."

Deputy M. Tadier:

It seems to me it is in everyone's interests - and clearly in the farmers' - to make sure that nitrates, whatever they put into the soil as a fertiliser, is effective and it is not running off into the water table.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Absolutely, yes.

Deputy M. Tadier:

But how would a polluter-pays scheme work? Is it possible to pinpoint offenders?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I think it is going to be pretty tricky to pinpoint offenders, specific offenders, but there is no doubt that in certain areas of the Island, the levels of nitrates in streams is much more elevated than it would be in other areas. Historically, it is difficult to retain nitrates in sandier soils because they wash out, they flush through so much easier because of the type of soil they are. Invariably, you will find the areas of the Island where potatoes are grown in lighter land, the farmers will put on more fertiliser because they need to retain a certain level of fertiliser there for the crop to take up.

Unfortunately, because of sand and the water washing through, those are the areas of the Island where you are going to find more nitrates in the stream, so it is a really tricky problem. You could address it by an Island-wide policy; we could address it by area-specific policies. It is a discussion we are going to have to have along with Jersey Water, because there are other answers. If you wanted to, we could forget about the farmers and the nitrates and address the water at the point at which Jersey Water put it into the system. That is obviously not sustainable, but it is an answer. Jersey Water could blend a lot more expensive water coming out of the desalination plant, we could put in filters to take the nitrates out before it comes out of your tap, but I do not think either of those are an acceptable issue when we have a problem with nitrates in our ground water, in our streams.

Deputy M. Tadier:

It seems that in other departments when there is an issue with a minority spoiling it for the rest, they are not slow to introduce sanctions even if it affects people adversely, so is that maybe something that you could consider?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

It obviously has to be at the end of the process, if we cannot get to where we need to be. I have already said this is not something we can put off any longer, it is not something we can brush under the carpet. It is an issue we have to address and it is an issue that we have to get a resolution to in the very relatively near future. If the industry, working with us, cannot get to that solution we might have to look at other ways of addressing it. It is as simple as that. There is no point in hiding behind it. We have to get to a situation where we have limited nitrates in our water, below that 50 level. We need to do it, and we will have to get there somehow, one way or the other. We would like to do it working with others. If we cannot, we will have to look at alternatives. You cannot say it any other way, really.

Director of Environmental Protection:

We are heavily interlinked with the E.A. (Environment Agency) and S.E.P.A. (Scottish Environment Protection Agency) in Scotland on this. Their results shows it is incentive, it is advice, it is working with farmers, but it is also the enforcement angle. The difficulty with diffuse pollution, you are changing behavioural changes on the farm and those behavioural changes are hourly decisions you are making, so it is a change in behaviour that is needed. Where the regulation will come in is tightening up receipt of government payments, the Single Area Payment, which we have been doing, into good agricultural practice. Why should the public pay for a farmer through Single Area Payment for polluting and then pay again to clean up? We have been doing that quite successfully with our farm management plans, the slurry storage, and on-farm risk maps. Quite

how that continues in the light of no Single Area Payment or less subsidy, it will mean more compliance checks, but that is something we are currently investigating.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Having said that, I would not want to give the impression that the farmers reducing the level of nitrates to where they need to be is an insurmountable problem. I do not think it is. I know it is easy to say, but I think it can be addressed quite easily: there are growing techniques; there are ways of applying the fertiliser; there is timing of the applications which all can be looked at. It is not convenient for farmers particularly, but there are certainly ways of doing it and getting to the result we need to have relatively simply. As I say, maybe a little bit more expensive for the farmer, a little bit not what he would choose to do at that particular time, but at the moment we mainly have a regime of applying all the nitrogen before the potatoes are planted, and we have to accept that there is certainly a period of time between applying the fertiliser and the plant being in a position to take any amount of it up. That block of time, if you like, is quite crucial. Obviously the moment you put the potato in the ground, it does not require any fertiliser at that moment to get going. It is only when the root structure becomes established and it is in a position to absorb that nutrient that it takes the fertiliser on board. If you could stagger your applications of nitrogen and only put it on when the plant is in a position to use it to its best ability, you will reduce the amount of nitrogen available to be flushed into the stream, so there are techniques to think about. There are ways of approaching the problem and it is not insurmountable. The industry does not need to reduce its levels of inorganic fertiliser by vast amounts. It is not tinkering, but it is not...

Deputy M. Tadier:

We could go on a lot about this, but I guess the final point, which does not need to take long, is when it comes to the dispensation expiring on 31st December 2016, do you envisage that is likely to be renewed or not?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I think the indications - and Tim will correct me if I am wrong - are at the end of 2016 we may be allowed a little bit more. The timeslot after 2016 may well be the very last one we would ever get, but we might be allowed to do a little bit more.

Director of Environmental Protection:

Yes. As a regulator of wholesome water, we will be able to issue a further dispensation to Jersey Water. However, the M.O.H. has clearly stated - and I think quite rightly - that that needs to be accompanied by an action plan against nitrates and that is the output from the nitrate group, that will be fed into the water strategy. Undoubtedly the new dispensation in 2016 will be tighter than it is now. What we must not do as a Government is lose the urgency of the problem.

Deputy M. Tadier:

What would happen if you did not issue the dispensation at that point and the emissions are still higher than that?

Director of Environmental Protection:

Then as regulator of the Water (Jersey) Law that would be a regulatory approach.

Deputy M. Tadier:

What are the consequences?

Director of Environmental Protection:

It would be actions against Jersey Water, really. Already in a dispensation we need to be assured as regulator that if a limit is reached, then Jersey Water have done everything possible to reduce levels.

Deputy M. Tadier:

But is that not the stick to use? You are the regulator, you are not Jersey Water, so just say: "Look, you have had time to regulate. You have not sorted this out" and then fine them as the process requires? They will quite quickly find a solution, I think, in combination with...

[13:00]

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Jersey Water have got solutions to the problem. The question is whether we think asking every person who is connected to the main water supply to pay for the solution is the fair answer. I would suggest it probably is not, but Jersey Water have solutions that they can put in place. They will cost money and the only person who is going to pay for the extra expense and investment is going to be the end user. As a regulator, if we are prepared to say: "We are going to let the farmers carry on. Jersey Water, you will have to sort it out" they are quite happy to do that, but we must expect that the end users will be paying for the investment needed to sort out the nitrates. We are saying we do not think that is the answer. We want the problem sorted out at the source. Until now, we probably have...not tinkered around the edges, but we have not addressed it seriously enough. We know, because of the advice we are getting on health, that the situation is changing. We need to address the situation far more seriously and we are intending to do that. We hope very much that by the time we get to 2016/17, the spikes will have ended. If they do not and we do get one particular sample that goes just over the limit - because we are not exceeding the limit greatly, but we are just going over the limit - there may be some sanctions, but we are not

in a position of turning off water supplies or anything like that. It is just a blip, if you like, that happens every once in a while that we have to address.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Can I ask, while you are working with farmers, because we have a massive problem with the Jersey soil, are you discussing that, because you have made little or no reference in your written submission to...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Sorry, I do not know what problem we have with Jersey soil.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Yes, the over-farming and the eelworm, is it, in...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Oh, potato eelworm?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Sorry, yes.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Okay. Sorry, yes.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Yes, because it is the same people doing the nitrates and the eelworm and the over-farming. This is what I have been told, but as I said, we do not have much of a reference.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

At the moment, putting nitrates in streams and the level of the eelworm in an individual field are very different issues.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Oh, yes. No, I was getting off water and going on, because it is the same people you are dealing with, your working party, farmers, same people.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

At the end of the day, it is slightly different insomuch as if a farmer has a particular field and he sows fertiliser on it and the nitrates from that field end up in our water supply, that is an issue for

us. If the farmer wants to crop that field in a particular way and we end up with a highly-elevated eelworm count, that is a lot more an issue for him individually. It is a decision that he has made. If he wants to continue to grow potatoes in a field which is going to be really difficult because it is full of eelworm, it is up to him, in a way. I know where you are going to and it is an issue that needs to be addressed, but it is not an issue that needs to be addressed quite as much by Government. It is not affecting the public. It is very much an issue for the individual farmer if he chooses. In the past, farmers have had chemicals to deal with these problems. Those chemicals are being withdrawn from the marketplace.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

That is the point, that the chemicals eventually find their way into water, do they not, that they are linked?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

The chemicals are not being used any more.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

As I say, when they could be. Yes, all right.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

The reason that the eelworm count is rising is because the chemicals available to cope with the life cycle of the nematode are no longer available.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Basically you just said as the Environment Minister, because we have got the World Health Organisation breathing down our neck on water and nitrates, but that is a problem that Government can fix, but if the farmers want to put eelworm in X amount of vergées across the Island, it is not our problem, it is not the Island's problem?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Unless you want to grow potatoes or tomatoes, eelworm in your ground does not make much difference one way or the other.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Right, okay.

Director for Environmental Policy:

It is not a health issue I think is what the Minister is saying. Nitrates clearly have an impact on health.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I would not suggest eating soil, but if you did eat soil, whether it has got eelworm in it or not, it is not going to make much difference. But certainly it is the way you operate your business and I accept the fact that if you have got a high eelworm count in your soil, that is not great. We would rather you did not have it. We have unfortunately or fortunately over the last 100 years, depending on which way you want to look at it, had a potato industry which has been very good for the Island. The consequences of growing and cropping potatoes in the same fields for decades after decades has been that we now have a situation where we have got a lot of potato eelworm on the Island. That is down to the fact that the chemicals that we used in the past to control it are no longer available.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

In the global environment, do you not think that these fields could be put to better use in growing different crops and rotating more?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

You could. The problem is that the farmers will probably go out of business because they will not be able to make any money; that has always been the issue. We know in Jersey that we have fantastic farmers who are capable of growing any crop you like. We can grow really good crops, super quality, and we can do it maybe earlier than a lot of other people. The difficulty we have is making any money and if the farmers cannot make money they will not bother to grow the crops. It is as simple as that.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Do we need to maybe not look at agriculture as...change how you look at it, not look at it any longer as an economic driver and just see it as an intrinsic good to provide food for Islanders? Is that maybe...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

We could, but what we would have to do is to find a great deal of money to give to the farmers to keep them in business, because farmers cannot stay in business if they cannot make a profit.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Right. We could nationalise the fields, could we? Create jobs for our children.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

It is an ever-changing industry. The potato one is particularly interesting, because in the past it did involve an awful lot of local people and it involved a lot of people regardless of whether they were local or not. These days with mechanisation and all sorts of other things coming along, farming is a lot less labour-intensive than it was in the past.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Not at St. Mary. I saw hosts planting them by hand yesterday morning, but yes.

Director of Environmental Protection:

Sorry, Minister. Yes, it is not to say the Department is not looking at P.C.N. (Potato Cyst Nematode), an important issue, looking at soil run-off, looking at alternative crops, pharmaceuticals. All of that is being wrapped up in the Rural Economy Strategy and it will go before the States later this year. That is a five-year strategy looking at how agriculture looks and that has had extensive consultation with stakeholders, farming groups, national trusts and everybody, so that document will be coming before the States and that document then considers P.C.N. rotations and alternative cropping.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Yes. I am a great supporter of the potato industry, but at the same time please be under no illusions that to me the diversification of the countryside is hugely important. I am trying my best to find money for organic farmers. I am working very hard at the moment to solve the problem that will be Amal-Grow if we do not find a way of substituting the locally-produced goods that Amal-Grow have produced for the last 30 or 40 years. I am also a great believer in the dairy industry in the Island for any number of different reasons. Jersey Royal potatoes have been very good to the Island for 100 years, but there is no question that intensive mono-cropping of Jersey Royals is not something that we can do for ever and a day and we have got to look at other ways of making the countryside vibrant and keeping it profitable, which is the most important thing, because if farmers cannot create even the smallest amount of profit, they will not be in business and our countryside will not look like it does at the moment. I am glad Tim mentioned pharmaceuticals. We are certainly, within the Environment Department, looking very hard to try to find any new angles that we can for farmers to look at alternative crops, and one of those will be pharmaceutical crops. It is a very difficult industry to break into inasmuch as - as you quite rightly might expect - anybody who can think of a crop which might help a pharmaceutical product or medical product...

Deputy M. Tadier:

Any particular product?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

No, absolutely not. The reason I am going to come on to that is obviously this is a highly profitable industry if you can come up with something which is new and leading right out there at the forefront of new technology and very, very secretive in getting any information on what crops might be the super-crops of the future is pretty tricky, but we are trying our best. We are looking at every angle we can and if we can find anything which helps our farmers to grow something which keeps them profitable, we will be there doing what we can.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I think our party has got contacts in Helmand Province with a farmer if you are interested, or Amsterdam, so it is up to you.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

It is certainly an interesting angle, because irrespective of the legalities of it, we would be very successful growing it, like everything else.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes. You have been very helpful so far and I am sure will continue to be so. On two items in particular I have identified, one is the reduction of hydrocarbon et cetera by looking at the transport policy et cetera. We will pursue that when we have the Minister in front of us. You also brought to the fore the water problem. Now, that touched on a more general point. The States recently approved the proposed strategic priorities for this term: health and wellbeing, education, economic growth, St. Helier, which is all well and good. In the Millennium Report, it makes reference to integrating all action with environmental and sustainability concepts and we have the States of Jersey vision of a kind, but we do not quite know what that vision is. The problem I am really getting at is your ambitions and beliefs et cetera, how they fit in with an overall Council of Ministers concept and...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Okay. I am pleased you asked the question because it does give me the ability...there are three things I will say before I hand over to Ian - and Ian is here for a very specific reason, but I will get to him in a minute - is that you are right, there are four strategic priorities that have come out of the Council of Ministers, but that does not mean to say that we are not focusing on everything else as well, but those are the four priorities we have chosen to really home in on. The St. Helier one, people are saying: "It is good for St. Helier, but what about the environment?" but I see it in the round. We know that we will have more population to house; we are going to look to put those in St. Helier. We want that to be as good an experience as possible for those people, hence the Future St. Helier. But concentrating on St. Helier allows us to leave the countryside relatively

alone for large-scale building of residential units. The reason we have done that is that I would like to think that people, Council of Ministers, politicians and general public are starting to appreciate our wider environment, our countryside, our coastline and our waters and accepting the fact that we need to pressurise that as little as possible to keep it a green and pleasant land. So we have policies in place to protect our countryside and we are going to do that through both Planning and Building and the Department of Planning and Environment. But on top of that, we are hoping - and I think I am right in saying - that in the near future all policies that come to the States will have a sustainability angle to them and everything we do that seems to have a possible effect on the environment generally, we will be looking to see how the new policy will affect not only just the direct subject it is addressing but other subjects as well, mainly the environment with sustainability and environmental angles.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Is that sustainability policy going to be an over-arching one which covers all departments is what we are asking?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I believe so. At the moment every proposition that comes to the States at the end just has a financial and manpower requirement. In a similar sort of a vein, I do not know if it will be done quite like that, but when we come up with new policy, we have financial, manpower and there will be some sort of environmental angle, so we will always be looking to see how new directions that the Assembly takes or the Government takes, how that might affect the environment, the Island and sustainability. So we will be trying at all times to look at the wider implications of a particular policy and I am sure also things like population and transport...

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Does that mean you are anticipating a formal sustainability policy to be adopted by the States to be imposed on Ministers?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

No, I would not have said so. I think it is just an understanding that everything we do sometimes...and whether we have chosen to address it or not in the past, I am not sure, but I think it is just an acceptance that we need to look a bit more generally at the indirect consequences of a particular policy on the countryside or the coastline on the sustainable angles of the Island.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, I am not disagreeing with that. Like I said, and as to the extent to which individual Ministers might observe it?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I would think it would be general across all Ministers. Obviously some Ministers will have much more influence on policies that affect the environment than others, but it will be incumbent on everybody when they decide on new policies and new directions just to stop and take into account the environmental consequences of what we do. I think we would like to hope that everybody is doing that more and more without being told and we will in the future stop and look at the consequences. I would just like to talk about the Island vision. If I could hand over, because there is an even bigger over-arching policy on top of the St. Helier and the countryside.

Head of Strategic Planning:

If I can, I would just like to briefly talk about our strategic planning process, because what we talked about is a fundamental change to that. If you go back to 2005, that is how many strategic plans Jersey has had: we have had five strategic plans since 2005. If you compare that with what is happening elsewhere - because a part of my role, if you like, has been looking at best practice elsewhere - typically elsewhere you look at plans looking 15 to 20 years ahead, sort of 2030, 2035. Some places go even further in terms of saying: "Where do we want this place to be? What do we want it to look like? What do we want it to feel like?" That is what other places are doing. The best ones, I think, are saying: "It is not just a motherhood and apple pie broad vision of wishful thinking" they are saying: "Where do we want to be? What does it look like in setting some targets?" It is almost addressing the issues you have raised about balancing economic, social and community themes and target-setting, of saying: "This is what it looks like." There are countless examples from Australia, America, Canada and the U.K., of examples where cities, in particular, are doing this sort of planning.

[13:15]

They set a long-term plan, say out to 2030. That plan is dynamic. Each new council or government that comes in looks at it and says: "Let us have a look at an assessment of how we are doing against target. Is this vision still achievable? Are we making the progress we wanted to? Are our strategies designed to deliver it working?" Then you can either recast the vision if you need to and say: "We need to make some changes to it" recast the vision, but then say: "What are we going to do during our term of office?" So for that three or four years, you create a priority plan that says: "In the context of the longer plan, which is addressing economic, social and community themes, what are the priorities we are setting for this term of office?" I think it is important to look at the current plan in that context. If you go back to those first three that were produced, so that is 2005, 2006 - because ministerial government came in and the law says you have to produce a strategic plan within 4 months of coming into office - and 2009. Those three effectively try to cover more bases around economy, community and environmental themes. There are 16 priorities in

some of these; they touch all bases. In 2012, what the Council decided to do was say: "What are the priorities we are focusing on?" They came up with six themselves, there was a seventh one added in through Scrutiny and they focused on the priorities, but they said in there: "We will create a sustainable long-term planning process."

Deputy M. Tadier:

Are you saying in a sense that this document is more honest, because I would suggest you could argue that the Council of Ministers, not intentionally, essentially do not care about the environment, they care about economic growth? The two, in my opinion, are mutually exclusive. Basically, the whole point of not putting it in there, we have got a much more honest document?

Head of Strategic Planning:

No, what I am saying is that the long-term plan needs to cover all the bases of economy, community and environment and say: "What are you trying to achieve? How green do you want Jersey to be? What do you want our air quality, our water quality to be like over the longer term?" Because these things you do not address in the course of the three-year term of office, they are long-term issues. If you set a long-term plan which is built on the building blocks from an environmental perspective, just take that, sustainable resources, whether it is water, air quality, waste, natural environment, marine resources, and so they are core elements of the long-term Island vision and you need to say: "Where are we trying to get to with those things? The same resources that built the environment, what do you want that to look like?" Obviously, St. Helier is an element of focus at the moment and the natural environment. They are there, they are enduring and that is probably the key word in that. They are enduring elements of the planning process. They are set in the long term and then the Council comes in and says: "Looking at what progress we have made, what do we need to change? Where are the significant improvements required during our term of office?" Business as usual carries on across all these things, but is the education strategy we have got currently delivering what we need or are we falling behind in terms of standards, in which case, you need to rethink that strategy and do something different. You invest in it...

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Maybe I misunderstood. What I was trying to get at was, yes, the four immediate objectives, fine.

Head of Strategic Planning:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

But they need to come within the overriding thing...

Head of Strategic Planning:

That is right.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Are you saying that is already in place in some form?

Head of Strategic Planning:

No. Basically, what happened was the last Council developed a framework. They took the view in the spring of 2014 - we produced an initial first iteration of it which is on gov.je - saying this is called Preparing for Our Future. They decided that they were coming to the end of their term of office, if you like, and a new planning cycle was about to begin and that was probably the right time to introduce that long-term Island vision. They effectively just gave the responsibility to the new Council. The reality for this Council is you have four months, by law, to produce their statement of common strategic policy, so what they have done is they have fulfilled their obligation in producing the Draft Strategic Plan and they have said in it, under "Sustainable long-term planning", we need to create that Island vision, a longer-term context which will, as the framework proposes, touch the economic, social and environmental themes.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Not being hostile on this, but in a way it is the wrong way around simply because of time restraints is what you are saying.

Head of Strategic Planning:

Yes.

Chief Officer:

Much of our work endures for many decades so we have seen the Council agreeing the Island Plan, for instance, the Energy Plan, for instance, and agreed long-term environmental strategies for the Island. The Strategic Plan, we call it the Strategic Plan, but it is a shorter window of life. It is a three or four-year focus on the immediate priorities. Much of our work endures beneath that and there are references in the latest Strategic Plan to water, to climate change, to energy, to the spatial vision for the Island in terms of St. Helier. I guess what could possibly be a bit more explicit is how the two interrelate, but undoubtedly there is ongoing Government work to think in a much longer environmental thing. I guess what we have not done obviously through a strategic planning process previously is to try and pull the threads together to explain how it all works and how they all interrelate. Much of our work sort of sits outside of the strategic planning framework because it is a three or four-year focus, but a lot of our work, it works in decades. I think what Ian is trying to

describe is that we think it would be better for us, and where we take our Island vision, I think, will just make that a bit more obvious as to how...

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, that is the point that I am saying. Is our Island vision in print now or does it have to be...

Head of Strategic Planning:

It has to be developed and agreed.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

It will shortly be though, yes?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Can I ask about that? You are saying the vision for the Island for the next probably 20, 30...some go further...so who decides where we want to be? Who decides that vision? I would have thought before we write that vision, we would have much more consultation with other States Members and the community.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Absolutely, yes.

Director for Environmental Policy:

Absolutely.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Once you have done that, then we would start, but then who monitors it, measures it and then manages it? Quite a bit of questions there, but it is a 30-odd year vision, and will it be a woolly thing like the Strategic Plan? I want something to now...measurements on sustainable appraisals and I want something that we can...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I am sure there will be some parts of it...

Deputy J.A. Martin:

We will move on, Steve, but we need to have this...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

No, you are quite right. I was at a Council of Ministers meeting yesterday bashing on about targets, and if you do not have targets, how do you measure whether you are making any progress? I brought it back to the point that the Chief Officer has just made, is that underlying the very short-term political cycles, which make it really difficult to have any long-term vision at all, there is always work in the departments, and not just in the Department of Planning and Environment, the Chief Minister and all the departments have long-term work that is undertaken by senior civil servants which is ongoing and hopefully pretty much irrespective of the politicians who might steer different angles, but long-term visions carry on underneath. I have a vision for the future of St. Helier and I am hoping very much in the short time that I have got, if I get to the end of my three years, I will have sown the seeds with other people of how we can achieve a sustainable St. Helier moving forward. If I can get people to buy into that in the next sessions of the States, we will start the consultation process for the next Island Plan 2021. If I am successful in the next three years and the input to the next Island Plan, how the Future St. Helier stuff is going to work, then all of a sudden we have the ability; the next Island Plan goes out to 2031, so we can start to do something really good there because...

Deputy J.A. Martin:

The Island Plan is internal; we are talking about a vision and where the Island wants to be and...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

I know, but I am just trying to use the Island Plan as an example of how the bigger vision might work.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Yes, but we are talking about two different plans. I am going to see an absolute written version of this vision going out for up to 30 years?

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Absolutely, and you will be involved in it. I am certain that it will be Green Paper, White Paper or is it going to be tackled differently?

Head of Strategic Planning:

What we have produced so far is a framework, basically. We have not filled in the details, if you like. We have identified...I have provided David with a copy and it is the latest iteration. The Council needs to spend some time looking at it, but it has got the core themes of economy, community and environment and they have broken those down into strategic goals. All we are saying is that at the moment your Island vision needs to look at things like where we are with

waste, where we are with water quality and pick those things off because these are the enduring building blocks of that long-term vision. It has not said: "The target you should be aiming for is this" but it gives you the flexibility to say where are we now and where do we want to be? I think the true Island vision comes out of making those choices. The framework is there, but it is a skeleton and it needs to be filled out and I think that is where you have the consultation. You can look and say: "Some of these things we have already signed off." There has been consultation on a lot of things. There has been consultation on health and where we want to take health. There has been consultation on energy plans. Some of it is about collating what is there already and saying: "Does this all sit together and create that long term shared vision of where we want Jersey to be for the future?"

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

One of those three strands is environment. We will, as a Department, be really involved in that and we hope very much that you will be involved with us on that as well, but I am sure, as politicians, individuals, we all come at it from the other angle as well, so...

Head of Strategic Planning:

Just to give you an example, if you look at some of the plans elsewhere, Singapore, for example, I often cite this one; I think it is a really interesting one. They have said that by 2030, they want a 50 per cent increase in the number of Singaporeans who have professional, managerial, engineering and technical skills. They have taken a baseline of where they were in 2013 and said: "That is where we want to be by 2030." Setting that stretch target, if you like, has immediate implications for their education strategy, skill strategy, of how you turn that into reality and that turns into delivery strategies of how is it going to happen? New York is saying a million new homes by 2030 but they are also saying every New Yorker should live within 10 minutes' walk of a park or green space and they are developing about 5,000 acres of land within New York to make that happen. There are real tangible targets of what they are aiming for and that creates a real sense of purpose.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Some cities in Canada are talking about really large percentages of locally-grown produce available to local people.

Head of Strategic Planning:

Yes.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

There is one that we can immediately bring back here.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

And we will have targets in our vision...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

If we decided that was a policy we wanted to follow in Jersey, to back it up, we would have to find some money to help the farmers grow those crops profitably.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, at the moment, the over-arching vision document is not a document, as such.

Head of Strategic Planning:

It is a framework, which if we agree that, we can then populate that framework with targets and...

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I think it would be good public relations (P.R.) for the whole environmental movement, would it not, as soon as we have the debate? But where are we in the timing of all that?

Head of Strategic Planning:

Now that we have got some breathing space, having put together this document, we are able to start looking and saying: "Right, here is the framework, Council of Ministers." They have very briefly seen it. We need to develop that now and so I would like to, this year, 2015, produce the Island vision.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

You will have gone through all the hoops, you reckon...

Head of Strategic Planning:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

...that have been in discussion, all that? Good. Yes, okay.

Head of Strategic Planning:

I think it is really important to set this in that context of the current Strategic Plan.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

It is pointless saying that came first before timing restrictions...

Head of Strategic Planning:

Process...

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Okay, I understand now fully. Okay, all right.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Louise wanted to say something. Sorry, Louise.

Director for Environmental Policy:

I think if I could add we see this as a real opportunity. It was interesting for me, taking part in this review, and I reminded myself of Mike's report and I remember when it came out the first time, and it pulls no punches on the challenges that Jersey faces and it pulls together very, very clearly the challenges between balancing the community, the environment and the economy. I think we all recognise those challenges in a small island and I think that perhaps the work of the vision, we hope that will allow us all to agree a shared future for Jersey and to pin the hopes and aspirations of the community and the way we would see the environment being preserved and enhanced central to our economy. You balance off the impacts of economic growth with environmental impact and community aspiration. We see this as an opportunity to come full circle, I think, and the work Mike began in the Millennium Report, so I think that is an important opportunity for us. We have been engaged in this process and we are very excited about it. I think we are in a good place to contribute, because as a Department, for a long time we have been monitoring environmental trends, so when you quite rightly, Deputy, pick up on the points around: "Give me numbers, give me something to look at and to tell me whether I am succeeding or not" I think that is quite right, because nice words are nice but what do they tell you ten years down the line? You cannot measure, you have no metric. We have already been looking at 30 environmental indicators for a decade now. In the most recent State of Jersey reports, some of you might remember - this works well for the transcript - but it is the report card on the different environmental aspects that we monitor and they are red, amber or green depending on their trend and whether they are going in a way we would hope or not. Obviously there is a real opportunity to take those indicators and the trends that we are observing and building them into metrics that the vision eventually will be reporting back on. What we would hope to see, a good example would be a continued decoupling of nitrate levels in water from area farmed. In 15 years' time, there will have been numerous fiscal cycles and Councils of Ministers, but that aspiration to reduce nitrates and improve the quality of our drinking water should have endured and we will be able to nail where we are on that. I think we feel this is a really good opportunity for us to take work that has begun and has been going on for quite some time and build it into the bigger picture.

[13:30]

Like I say, to balance the needs of the environment against that of the economy and the community, and we know that they are all interlinked and the way that is has been presented in the vision, we can clearly see that they are linked and that sometimes we need to make trade-offs, but we make those based on the evidence and understanding of all the impacts.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I think the Panel has always supported that. Sorry, I neglected our own adviser, Dave, through this. We are out of time, but have you any succinct comments you want to make before we close?

Mr. D. Stanley:

I think if I had one point, having looked through the documents, it related to soil management, or rather, the concerns that you would have over it. Minister, you have already identified some in particular, potato cropping and mono-cropping and so on and so forth. I think the point that is worth raising on soil management is how critical it is in terms of mitigating flood drain, indeed, run-off. It also filters the water that goes through to your ground water there. If it is in a good state, it also is fertile and it also produces top-quality food, biodiversity and all the rest of it. Your soils, I would suggest, here in Jersey are potentially in a very poor state and it is important to understand the critical levels of soil organic matter in terms of carbon. The Irish Government measure the soil organic matter levels and they penalise farmers if they drop below two per cent because it is so critical to the future of the ecosystems and also farming. If there is one point out of these discussions I would ask you to consider, please, it is that management of the soil, to get some measurements in place there so you know what is going on and know potentially how you improve it in the future.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Thank you for that. I will take that on board. My heart says that you are wrong, but I will reserve judgment because I have not heard of this metric before. I only say that because, as an ex-farmer, I think we probably do better and the quality of our soil is in better shape now than it was 20, even 30 years ago. We do not work the soil wet, we do not mistreat it in the way we had done in the past, having to use it when it was not in the right condition, which to me, as an ex-farmer, is the worst thing you can do, is to have to work with your soil when it is not in the right structure. But I certainly take your views on board. Organic matter in the soil is hugely important. I completely accept that and I will certainly be very interested to see and to look at those carbon figures that you mention, so thank you for that.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Can I just say, when we went to the...it was the farming conference, was it not?

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, in October, November, yes.

Deputy M. Tadier:

November, yes. I do not remember the exact figures and I think it would be helpful if both the Scrutiny Panel and you were given them afresh. They are divided in four quartiles about the soil quality. I am not sure what the criteria were, but we were quite shocked and so was the reporter, or your department, or whichever department was saying that those in the third and fourth quartile...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

But you are talking about potato cyst nematode now. It is not the structure of the soil, but...

Deputy M. Tadier:

But he was...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

...the eelworm contamination.

Deputy M. Tadier:

That is what would be interesting to find out. He was saying basically that those fields that fall into the last quartile, and even the ones in the third quartile, of which they are quite a number, I think there is about 40 per cent...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Yes, yes, yes.

Deputy M. Tadier:

...he was saying that it probably should not be farmed.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

No, I think for potatoes, there is no...

Deputy M. Tadier:

That is what we heard, but I am not...

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

It is not going to affect the growing of grass, it would not affect the growing of cereal crops.

Deputy M. Tadier:

No, true, but we do not ship grass to the U.K. That is the point, or we do not eat grass, yet. We have not developed the gut for it. But anyway, I am saying it would be really useful for us to have that information afresh just to know what it meant.

The Minister for Planning and Environment:

Yes, absolutely.

Deputy M. Tadier:

To help...

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I think we have gone beyond our time, so can I thank you all for coming in and making your contributions? Thank you.

Director for Environmental Policy:

Thank you very much.

[13:33]