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4.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the Draft Water Law (Jersey) Amendment Regulations 202- (P.26/2026) and the regulatory limits for PFAS in mains drinking water. (OQ. 27/2026):

Will the Minister advise what engagement there was with her about the Draft Water Law (Jersey) Amendment Regulations 202- (P.26/2026) and the regulatory limits for P.F.A.S. (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl) in mains drinking water that are proposed, and in particular whether any assessment of funding applications and technical solutions was provided to confirm the required changes can be achieved within 5 years? If no such assessment was provided, does she know why not?

Deputy M.E. Millar of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity (The Minister for Treasury and Resources):

I was not aware of the Draft Water Law (Jersey) Amendment Regulations prior to the proposition being lodged. Following lodging, Jersey Water has contacted me and other ministerial colleagues to raise issues about the potential costs implications and the feasibility of delivering the required changes within the proposed 5-year period. Regulatory and operational matters of this nature do sit, however, with the Minister for the Environment, who I understand wanted to ensure that this important issue, which the Council of Ministers takes very seriously, especially P.F.A.S., could be debated within this term of Government. Jersey Water welcomes this work and the opportunity it presents to further increase Jersey's water quality. Our water is already well below all current E.U. (European Union) and U.K. (United Kingdom) regulatory standards for P.F.A.S. The company has been working closely with the Regulation Directorate and the Water Quality Safety Board on the matter of P.F.A.S. limits for some time. An assessment of the funding implications and technical solutions is now underway with Jersey Water to confirm the likely long-term costs of implementing the regulations.

4.4.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Minister for her answer. If no detailed funding and technical delivery assessment was completed prior to lodging P.26, does the Minister consider it prudent to set binding regulatory limits without confirmed financial and engineering feasibility?

Deputy M. E. Millar:

The issue here is that there are a wide range of technologies that could be employed to successfully implement these regulations. Depending on the nature of the technology finally chosen, the cost could be very different. There is a very wide range of potential options, and a very wide cost range. Jersey Water is piloting. It has already done some testing and is continuing to pilot the most promising solutions this year. Until those pilots are complete, we cannot be definitive about the cost implications. Some options may require significant Government investment or borrowing and could result in a substantial increase in water bills. However, cost implications will be brought forward to the Assembly before we debate the proposition.

4.4.2 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade:

Is the Minister prepared to say whether or not the proposed funding for this, which Jersey Water has very clearly indicated it will need help from the Exchequer with, will the appropriate mechanism for delivering that funding be through investing in the Investing in Jersey programme?

Deputy M. E. Millar:

I think there is already some investment in water within the Investing in Jersey programme. I cannot say whether that relates specifically to P.F.A.S.; it may be to do with the mains water extension. It really depends on what option is taken. There are multiple options and we would have to consider whether ... it may be that some are fundable by Jersey Water within its own resources, but what matters is that it is able to do the testing to devise an appropriate system that works for Jersey, because

something that may work in another jurisdiction, may not work so well in Jersey, or may be more costly in Jersey because of the nature of our water. It is, as you would expect, a very technical subject.

4.4.3 Deputy J. Renouf:

Would the Minister agree that it is perhaps not the best example of joined-up Government that regulations were brought forward without considering the implications for the Minister for Treasury and Resources in terms of what the funding implications of those regulations will be for Government?

Deputy M. E. Millar:

I think that was a genuine oversight. I think the regulation division took perhaps too narrower a view and considered that there would be no cost to them. I think they have been speaking to Jersey Water about potential costs, but that did not find its way into the proposition. As I say, that information will all come forward before we debate the proposition.

4.4.4 Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North:

As the Minister indicated, she was not involved in the discussion prior to lodging the regulations, but would the Minister advise if she was involved in any discussions arising from the reports and recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Panel in relation to P.F.A.S. contamination? In particular, because of the recommendations, if any financial assessment and implications were presented to her.

Deputy M. E. Millar:

The Council of Ministers has discussed all of the reports that have come ... I think we have discussed all of the reports at various points that have come from the Scientific Advisory Panel, and we have looked at the recommendations and what might be done. Not all of those will require immediate cost that is not already accounted for, but where there is work going forward, then clearly that work does need to be costed and it needs to be taken into account.

4.4.5 Deputy I. Gardiner:

My question to the Minister was: has she been presented with any potential financial implications for water treatment infrastructure, long-term liabilities or regulatory compliance through the discussions that they had with the Council of Ministers?

Deputy M. E. Millar:

We have had a very broad ranging discussion about the recommendations and the likely responses to them. Those relate to public health matters as well as to future treatment of the water. Again, I really do have to emphasise that our water is already at a very high standard in terms of comparable jurisdictions, in terms of our water treatment. We will look, as we go forward ... this is possibly the first time we have really had to look at a major impact on water treatment and that will be considered very carefully before a final decision is made.

4.4.6 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

The Minister has clearly explained that this is a very technical issue with a potential range of solutions to be able to meet a regulatory standard that this Assembly will have to decide on, that will have to be set within the next 5 years. Could the Minister give us an assurance that the Assembly will see these range of solutions and figures before we debate this on 24th March, which I believe is within a month's time?

Deputy M. E. Millar:

I think I have said more than once already that funding and cost implications will come forward before we debate this. We will be presenting cost implications. I think it is a slightly difficult thing to be prescriptive about at this date, because Jersey Water still does need to complete the testing. It needs a full year to do the testing because something that works in the summer may not work in the winter when there is very heavy rain. So, it does need to have a full year. It needs to test across the Island, because water in one part of the Island can be different from the water in another. So, there is a lot of testing to be done. That will then inform what the best solution is. There may be solutions that will be relatively

inexpensive; other solutions will be very difficult and much more expensive to implement. So, we do just need to think carefully about what the solution for Jersey is, and Jersey Water is working on that. But the Assembly will have details before we debate the Minister's proposition.