



Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel

Proposed Budget 2026-2029 Review

Witness: The Minister for Infrastructure

Monday, 3rd November 2025

Panel:

Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity (Chair)

Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South (Vice-Chair)

Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement

Deputy D.J. Warr of St. Helier South

Connétable D. Johnson of St. Mary

Witnesses:

Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John, The Minister for Infrastructure

Mr. A. Scate, Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department

Mr. J. Littlewood, Head of Technical Support Services - Projects, Operations and Transport

Ms. E. Littlechild, Group Director, Operations and Transport

[14:30]

Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity (Chair):

Welcome to this public hearing of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel. Today is 3rd November 2025, and this is our Proposed Budget Government Plan 2026-2029 review hearing with the Minister for Infrastructure. I would like to draw everyone's attention to the following. This hearing will be filmed and streamed live. The recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website. All electronic devices, please, including mobile phones to be switched to silence. Let me begin with introductions. My name is Deputy Hilary Jeune, and I am the chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South (Vice-Chair):

Deputy Tom Coles, vice-chair.

Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:

Deputy Alex Curtis, panel member.

Deputy D.J. Warr of St. Helier South:

Deputy David Warr, panel member.

Connétable D. Johnson of St. Mary:

Constable David Johnson, panel member.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Connétable Andy Jehan, Minister for Infrastructure.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

Andy Scate, Chief Officer for Infrastructure and Environment.

Head of Technical Support Services - Projects, Operations and Transport:

John Littlewood, Head of Technical Support Services - Projects, for Ops and Transport.

Group Director, Operations and Transport:

Ellen Littlechild, Group Director, Operations and Transport.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

So let us begin, Minister, with expenditure and saving proposals. So the department's revenue head of expenditure has increased from £60.62 million in 2025 to £63.27 million in 2026. Beyond inflationary adjustments, have there been any additional items or cost pressures contributing to this £2.65 million rise and how much of it represents genuine service growth that Islanders will feel a tangible benefit from?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do not think there will be significant growth in any of the areas. We have got massive challenges, like all departments. We, within Infrastructure, spend a lot of money that is not on staff so therefore we face challenges. I think, for example, our electric has gone up by £1 million since 2020 on a bill of under £4 million. So it is significant growth in some areas. I think we have spoken before about

the price of chemicals, and we have seen significant growth there. So while we are seeing an increase in our revenue we will be doing well to provide business as usual across the department.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Actually this was my second question about the fact that you have said that before about non-staff costs, it represents the majority of your department's expenditure. You have mentioned electric and chemicals as a big cost, how are you managing to ensure that that is being kept under control going forward, those kind of costs, and is there anything more than electric and chemicals being a significant growth in expenditure?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

It depends where you start and where you stop. Some of our contracting work, which our parks and garden budget is the same as it was almost 20 years ago. That is because we have outsourced a lot of things and we do things differently. But when we have outsourced the contracts, and we have re-let a lot of those contracts recently, and I have to say I am really pleased to see the improvements in how we manage those contracts. For example, the living wage will have impacted on some of those contracts. We are seeing higher than forecast expenditure at the time we outsource things. We keep things under review. Do we continue to do things ourself, do we outsource them, do we do them differently? The team have been doing this for a long time, so I pay tribute to their efforts because when I look to see what savings and efficiencies can I make, you do have to look fairly hard to find them. That does not mean to say that we cannot be more efficient, because any organisation you can be more efficient, but the team have done a lot and the low-hanging fruit, as I would describe, has been harvested a long time ago. We are seeing pressures in a number of areas. You will be familiar with the contract with Serco. We have given the 12 months' notice. If we can terminate that any earlier, we would be delighted to terminate that earlier. But that is a significant overspend for us this year, and we believe that by managing it in-house, we will be more efficient. Hopefully we can have some exciting products in terms of revenue as well.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

In our most recent quarterly hearing, you raised that concern that R.P.I. (retail price index)-based uplifts do not cover costs of materials and energy. Has this gap widened in 2026? Will this widen and how are you managing it? Because you were just saying about it being the increase that we have just talked about is actually from those.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have got to continue to look for opportunities. The team are going through a zero-budgeting process, which is something I advocate, something I am very familiar with. So rather than just saying, chip on costs of living each year, actually go back to see whether you need to do things or

do not need to do things. We can find some efficiencies with that process. We have also had a number of our staff, again, gone through productivity training. I am a big advocate of lean process management. Often, the people on the front line know the answers, how to do things more efficiently. So we are encouraging staff to come up with ideas and suggestions. We are doing what we can where we can. Probably 12 months ago we looked at stopping the bring banks for recycling, which would have been around £250,000 saving. The feedback was not positive at all even in the Parishes that have got kerbside recycling. I think St. John and St. Ouen do not have bring banks. I do not know if you have got any in St. Mary's, David?

The Connétable of St. Mary:

We want to hang on to it, yes.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have introduced kerbside recycling in some places for many years. St. Martin's come online next month, but the feedback was that people wanted to use it. When I was on a visit at Grainville playing fields recently with the Constable of St. Saviour looking at parking for St. Saviour's School, it was really surprising how many people, not just from St. Saviour, because I knew some people from other Parishes that were using that facility. We want to encourage people to recycle, so we continue to offer that service.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I suppose we are really talking about savings there, and the department has to deliver £2.19 million savings in 2026, which is an increase of £760,000 in the last year. You were just talking about the fact trying to do that savings there with recycling and it was not popular, and so therefore that has not materialised. What other plans do the department have to try to get to this target?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think our savings target for this year is £3.8 million savings, which is around 4 per cent of our £90 million expenditure budget. I think that is achievable. I generally do.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

But what will you be saving on? What are the things that will be ...?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Well, just doing things more efficiently. I mentioned the fact that we have re-let a number of contracts, so that is a positive step. One challenge we have got is we are facing more competition for waste - both green waste and inert waste - and there is less activity in the construction sector. So where we have identified revenues that are likely to go down unless we see significant change

in that market. We have got to keep our eye on the ball. I was with the team last week talking about potential savings in one area where we have got practices that have been there for many years, which are no longer appropriate, and so we are looking to change those. We are in dialogue with staff and trade unions.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

You mentioned there competition. What do you mean by competition for?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Other people are offering ... more and more contractors offer a chipping service now, so instead of bringing us large trucks of waste, they chip it all down and mulch it down. We see other people offering solutions for inert waste.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Is that a good thing?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Well it is a great thing, but not from our budget perspective; it is not a great thing.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

So you want to keep the States Department going.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

So whereas we would have received revenue for that, the great thing is it extends the lifetime of our facilities and it is about the predictability. Where we have got staff we need to see what ... if the reduction is going to be sustained then we need to redeploy staff, for example. We have just got to evolve. It is just like being in any business, is it not? You evolve to the market conditions.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Of course that is related to income and the reduction in income, but then you also have at the same time that there is this need for savings. I am still trying to understand what the department has made decisions on how to make those savings happen. What will not be happening because of those savings, to make sure that you reach those targets?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do not see us stopping any services.

Group Director, Operations and Transport:

Not stopping services this year, so we are doing some detailed service reviews to make efficiency savings. What we do, is we have got 2 sections at the moment that we are looking at doing a complete review and looking at making savings. We are also doing energy audits; where we know we have got significant costs to do with electricity, water, gas, on some of those things, looking at what we can do and how we can do things efficiently. We are reviewing our vehicle usage. We have got some really good data now with tracking, looking at what vehicles we can reduce, introducing a new tracking policy next year, looking at other income opportunities as well. There are lots of things that are going on to try and look at how we can stay within that cash limit.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Sport is one area where we will not be spending as much money on staff at Oakfield as we were at Fort Regent. That is going to be a change. But responsibility of Fort Regent, which is from Sport to Property Holdings, so Property Holdings then get the bill for making sure that Fort Regent is secure. It is a balance of time.

Head of Technical Support Services - Projects, Operations and Transport:

There are a couple of savings in there that are self-fulfilling. In the Fort Regent growth-funding reduction that the Minister said there, is a reduction in the staffing and the change in the nature of that. There was a previous bid in for additional maintenance at the ambulance station, and that is falling away. But the office savings as well, the move to Union Street, there are scheduled buildings the lease is given up. Provided we can make those at the right time, then the savings should materialise from those being given up.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

I think the other thing I would just add on the savings target, we also have ... I would call it a hidden savings target within the department, just to stand still. So income uncertainty is one of those where we are seeing less income in certain areas. That certainly affects our revenue. We also see uncertainty around responding to events. If we have a big storm event, which is an unknown cost we have to bear within year. Contract inflation is another one that we do see. There are a number of these other elements of our business, which are added to the corporate saving we are expected to find as well.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you. Finally from me, the funding for the regulation of care sits within the £750,000 budget line for community site improvements relating to safeguarding and accessibility. Are these tied to particular sites or meant for wider community use?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

The care would be under the C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills), and we would be providing the facilities for them. That question would have to go to colleagues from C.Y.P.E.S.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Okay, thank you. I will pass on to Deputy Coles.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

I am going to move on to the question area about capital programme and projects. I am going to start with the Investing in Jersey programme and proposed Capital Investment Fund. Minister, this Budget confirms that the Jersey Capital Investment Fund will, if approved, only be established in principle with separate legislation to follow. When does the department expect the fund to be operational and when will the terms of governance be published?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

A lot of that is Treasury related because it is about funding, but we have been working hard with the team on that project, and I do think that the Investing in Jersey initiative is a good way. I think we have discussed it before, I forget which forum it is in. It might have been in the C.S.P. (Common Strategic Policy) last week but the idea of having longer-term capital programmes in place with surety has got to be welcomed. I would like to think that that will happen sooner rather than later, and when it comes to the Assembly I would expect the governance element to be part of that proposal.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

How far along are the proposals in the Investing in Jersey programme that this budget is seeking agreement for in principle?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think they are a fair way again. We know what we want to do, but the funding element is really a question for colleagues from Treasury to give you the detail of that. I do think, as I say, by having a Jersey Investment Fund where we can get some long-awaited projects going, I think it has to be welcomed.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Can you clarify what the £6 million allocation to Property Holdings is specifically intended to fund, and confirm whether this funding is being sought within this Budget or extended for a later phase?

[14:45]

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think we all know the condition of Highlands College, for example, and we are looking to accelerate the work at Highlands College, which we hope to finish next year, which would be 2 years earlier than previously planned. We continue to have the work on the fire safety in the school estate that we are working upon. I do not know if there is anything else you want to touch on, Andy.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

I think anything going into capital programme relating to properties is welcome. We run a big property portfolio of nearly 1,000 properties. That is one of our big pressure areas. We have a reactive and both preventative maintenance side, and we know we spend levels which are lower than we would hope. So any money that comes into that either goes to a major refurbishment, either a specific property that is subject to specific risks - so fire safety in schools is a good example of that - where we have got known issues that we need to improve various buildings. Roofs always need replacing. There are a whole variety of properties where that money would be targeted to.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Minister, we noted from one of our previous hearings about the mechanics of the funding, and obviously, as you said already, that the Invest in Jersey fund is the responsibility of Treasury. I suppose the question around this is: have there been ongoing discussions with you as the Minister for Infrastructure about the access to this funding that will eventually be in this fund and how that is going to be ring-fenced and safeguarded for your projects?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have worked closely not only with Treasury but with other Ministers around the concept of the Investing in Jersey fund and then also what we believe should be included in there. It is not just about funding Infrastructure Department initiatives, it helps a lot of the departments.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

You have also said that the fund gives Infrastructure more leverage but Treasury will control the allocations. How does this give Infrastructure more leverage if it still has to compete with other departments for the same pot?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think what it does is it gives us, as I have tried to explain this longer-term vision which we do not have, and a personal view is that we should be having longer-term budgets as well, as used to be the case, because we do not have that surety at the moment and we need to have that surety.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Would you accept that there needs to be probably more defined priorities than within the Invest in Jersey?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think the challenge will be we know the areas we want to invest in and then the challenge will be how much money is released to start and then where that money goes. That will really depend on the priorities of the day.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Just for understanding the 2026 Budget because obviously we are discussing that now, but the fund is not set up yet, so this £6 million sits within the Budget rather than going into the fund and would it then ... if the fund is set up next year would that then be diverted ... would it be then put into the fund and within next year's pot?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I honestly do not know the mechanics but we know that we have got to do, for example, Highlands sooner rather than later. I think that is widely known. The mechanics of how future budgets will be designed and delivered will depend very much on the structure and the governance around the Investing in Jersey fund.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I think we are just making sure that that £6 million stays with ... if it ends up in another fund and that could be reprioritised in the new Government. It is just trying to make sure that when we agree with the Budget for 2026 ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

While I am sat here I am going to be fighting my corner, but priorities change. If something changes we, as a Government and an Assembly, will have to respond to those changes. Nothing is cast in stone but I think it is as good as we can get today.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Can I just ask about the Highlands thing; the £6 million going into Highlands. Does that mean Highlands is set to stay there for the next few years or is that still up in the air as to whether Highlands remains on that site?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I would say I do not think the full £6 million is going to Highlands. I think it is around £2 million. But it is to make sure that it is serviceable to operate. So in terms of long-term decisions around Highlands, I do not think any firm decision has been made but this is about making sure that our young and old people who utilise that facility can do so safely. So it is back to making sure buildings are fit and proper and safe.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

I am going to move slightly on to estate projects and because it has been mentioned I will jump into my question plan on Highlands College, because there was more questions than we had. We can see the line for 2026 but there is nothing further beyond 2026. Please can you advise why feasibility work for the future of Highlands College has not been planned by Government particularly as part of the C.S.P. priority for lifelong learning?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Well, the priority for lifelong learning; you will have to talk to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning about lifelong learning. We provide the facilities for different departments to utilise. The reason there is nothing in 2027 and 2028 is because we intend to finish the work in 2026. We brought work forward because of the immediate need. I had the pleasure of attending the graduation ceremony recently at the Freedom Centre, and what a great advert that was for Highlands to see so many people receiving their degrees. I thought it was really something we should be celebrating more widely.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Is this another budgetary challenge that you face with the fact that you are the service provider for other departments and you rely on their funding to be able to deliver?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have to work together to identify the priorities and agreed priorities. We do our level best but there will always be winners and losers. When you go into negotiation someone may not be happy, you cannot always have a win-win situation.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

We have also noted that the crematorium refurbishment now sits under Infrastructure and Environment rather than C.Y.P.E.S. Why was this project redesignated and has the scope changed as a result of the transfer?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Crematorium services are running very well at Trinity. Unfortunately I have been too often to the new facility already and we are going to take the opportunity to see the burners - I think that is the correct term - that are coming to the end of their life. So we are going to take the opportunity to see whether or not we replace the burners in their current location or provide a new facility. I think with the hospital going to the top of Westmount, it is more appropriate to find a different site for the burners and the services. The gardens will not be touched. There is so much emotion attached to those gardens; they cannot be touched.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

It is also just worth pointing out, the crematorium services are now part of the Infrastructure and Environment Department. So the team have transferred into this department as a result of that.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

What is the timeline for that if you are saying it is now to decide ... it potentially may find a new site, et cetera, how long are we looking at it?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

It is not going to happen in this Government. The preliminary work will happen in the next 12 months I would say, but we own sites ourselves and I think we have probably got one or 2 sites where it could potentially go, which would make it more efficient.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

This money in the Government Plan at the moment is for the current sites to improve the current facility at Westmount. Obviously if there was a new facility on a new site that would need additional capital funds.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

The St. Helier Skate Park allocation has been brought forward from 2028 to 2026. Why has this project been accelerated and how was that decision balanced against other competing estate priorities?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do not think it has been accelerated. It was due to be done this year actually. One of the officers has been working very hard engaging with stakeholders to try and provide a skate facility in and around St. Helier, which has not been available since the closure of the harbour. We have looked at dozens of sites, and I think we go to planning on 4th December, I think it is. The idea is that the equipment we put at South Hill, if we get planning permission, once Fort Regent is completed, we will transfer to Fort Regent. The facility that we create will become an area for young and old to

learn to cycle. Something we are trying to do at schools as well is put in what I describe as a cycle proficiency route. That is the idea for South Hill is once we have relocated the skate park to Fort Regent then we will make it a cycle-friendly facility.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Funding for total major refurbishments is identified as £6.7 million rounding up in 2026, but reduces to £4.47 million in 2027. What specific projects account for the £4.47 million of funding allocated in 2027?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I could not tell you that. I am hoping somebody to my left or right can help me.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

Again, that will get spent across our property estate, so that will include ... I mentioned a couple of roofs, so Highlands is separately pulled out there, but we know we need to look at the roof at Springfield Stadium, we know we need to look at the roof at Les Quennevais Sports Centre, as just a couple of examples. So anything that needs major works, we look at this fund as well as our general maintenance monies.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

I was at Springfield on Saturday and survived the rain, so it was not leaking on the grounds thankfully at that point. The gas site has been purchased from Andium for the nominal fee of £1 offset through £1.5 reduction in Andium's return to Government. Why was the site purchased at the nominal value and what assurances is there that this deferred payment structure represents fair value for the taxpayer?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do not think it has transferred yet but again the arrangement of the finances is more of a Treasury question than an Infrastructure question. I can see the sense in not having to find significant capital and to phase that payment over a period of years. I think if we find the capital we would prefer to pay it off.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Do you know if there was an independent valuation undertaken before agreeing the fee?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

There were valuations undertaken yes. So the site does have at least one or 2 planning consents, so a valuation would have informed that as well as a conversation with the owners.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Minister, we will revisit the Fort. Perhaps it would be good to start with: are you currently the Ministerial lead for the Fort project?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes, and if you have not already, you should have been invited to a briefing at the Fort on Friday. I am not sure what time it is but I think it is Friday afternoon where we give all Members an update on where we are with Fort Regent.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

But you are the Ministerial lead for the project?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Ultimately I am the Ministerial lead but I work with the Regeneration Steering Group, and so Property Holdings. There is an officer group, which is led by Andy, and the head of Property Holdings. It has got representatives from around Government on there but, yes, ultimately it comes to me.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Okay. A question about its funding and the delivery of the proposed plans. A big element of the Budget is the borrowing for developing the Fort but what is proposed is to only make it watertight and weathertight and does not provide for actually creating a facility at the Fort. Why was only the £43 million included in this Budget?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

What we are trying to do is to make progress and our aim is to lodge a planning application within days I think of where we are to ensure that we can do the remedial work that is necessary. The roof, you may recall that the numbers able to enter the Fort were severely restricted because of the roof and it is probably more an issue of firefighters being able to tackle a blaze than it is people getting out because there are many exits for people to get out of Fort Regent, but the challenge is to enable firefighters to tackle a blaze safely underneath that structure. What we plan to do is put in a planning application in the coming days, weeks, for that first tranche of work.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

The question I want to understand here, though, is the project has been thrown about to be roughly a £110 million project, £43 million in the Budget, and that funding is between 2026 and 2027. The Budget is a 4-year Budget; is the £110 million expected to be spent over the lifetime of this Budget?

Is the plan to deliver a usable Fort by 2029 and if so, why is the money to deliver that not in the Budget?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

What we do not know at the moment is the detail of the plans and how much we will be funding and if anyone else will be funding any of that. We fully expect the Fort to be on track to open in December 2028. If we are going to have a cinema complex, for example, will we provide all of the capital and charge a higher rent, or will we do a public-private partnership?

[15:00]

I do not know the answer to that question at this time. The same with the nursery. We are looking to replace the nursery onsite with an up-to-date nursery, which meets all of the criteria in terms of standards. Again there has been little dialogue with the operator as to what that would look like in terms of funding. The cost of the whole work will be in the region of £110 million. But the detail is ... you may get a bit more information on Friday but the detail is still to be finalised.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

What can you share about how advanced those discussions with the various private sector bodies that could be funding are?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

As far as I am aware, no commercial discussions have taken place. We have been talking to specialists in a whole range of areas, be that people that are interested in cinemas, concerts, event space, whether that is people interested in skating, play equipment, pump tracks. So we are talking to people to try and get the design well, and I think I have said - again, I forget which forum I have said this in - so the original plan was to have the concert area in the Gloucester Hall, and for the cinema area to be in the Queen's Hall. That now has changed. I think it is much more joined up now with the activity area in the Gloucester Hall, which will link to the climbing area. So all of the entertainment or the majority of the entertainment for younger people will be in one part, and then the Concert Hall, which will be able to seat 2,000 people, a show court with 1,200 people watching, a music venue to take 2,700 people, will be next to the piazza. So if you have got a conference in there, you can have a breakout display area next to it.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

The plans are one thing, the deliverability of those plans is something this panel is quite interested in, and there is clearly a lot of thought in there, there is clearly a business case behind it. But there is not any funding secured in the Budget should it be needed, and I presume the department expects

at least some of the remaining funding to bridge £43 million to £110 million will come from the public sector. So what risk is being, in essence, proposed on non-delivery of the project that we have got work that has to be done within the planned period. We know it will be funded in part by the public sector, yet I am not familiar of any other project in this Budget that does not allocate money for work to be delivered within the planned period.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Doing nothing is not an option. So we have got to make the site safe. If we continue to allow it to deteriorate, then it is going to cost us even more. So doing nothing to make the site safe was in excess of £30 million. The proposal at this time is to make it safe, make sure we have got the mechanical engineering in place so that we do that over the next 18 months, 2 years, ready for the fit out, as I would describe it.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

So as part of the works, we absolutely will need further funding in 2027, 2028, as you rightly highlight. There are works going on in this first phase of works. The majority of that spend is being spent on fixing in the building, if I can call it that, which will not be regretted spend, because either/or we have got to fix the building in any case. The roof needs attention, the glass needs attention, electrical systems, water systems, asbestos, et cetera, so there is a lot of property spend. We are also doing as part of that - I say "we" - working with the Development Company, market engagement on what operators will actually be in the facility in the final form. Then what form does that shell and core fitout take? At the moment, that work has not been done. That is going to need to inform exactly who we are partnering up with, what they are spending, what the form of that shell and core fitout looks like as to what we are paying for, and then ultimately what they will pay for us as tenants.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Has the £43 million got that kind of work as well, the work you are talking about; the development funding within ...

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

Yes, so within the £43 million, a big chunk of that is building works to fix things like the roof and remove asbestos and things. We are expecting the Development Company to be doing market engagement as well with future tenants. We do not have a list of tenants currently. We have got a list of potential uses and ideas as to what we want to see. But as part of this first phase of work it will be market engagement to secure tenants and then understand what their requirements will be and then, as the Minister said, the balance of who is paying for what.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Within the £43 million, what is the funding model to engage J.D.C. (Jersey Development Company) as a partner to deliver that work? How is that funded from the £43 million?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

We will be formalising our relationship with Development Company in the forthcoming weeks. At the moment, Development Company are operating under a mandate from the Regeneration Steering Group. Clearly, we are spending substantial public funds here, so we want to just put that arrangement in a more formal state, whether it be a contract or a more formalised service level agreement with the Development Company. Within that, we would expect, within the £43 million, there will be an overhead within that to pay for professional services.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Because the £43 million is written in the Budget as a drawdown of the revolving credit facility is it intended to then pay money to J.D.C. to deliver this work or is it intended to use the other model, which is a social dividend model back to Government.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Initially we have used the social dividend model because with the surplus from the College Gardens and that ... I am not sure what the detail will be in terms of the split between the drawdown and the social dividend model. But there will be a breakup and that is why we had this initial agreement with S.o.J.D.C. (States of Jersey Development Company) to get us to where we are getting to. Then once the plans are in, we will have more information about what it is going to cost. Typically you would expect to spend around 10 per cent on professional fees; I think that is a rule of thumb. We work with them as close as we can.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

Ultimately, we are probably working with the model at the moment that Government is retaining that £43 million effectively, and we will pay the bills and use the Development Company as our professional advisers. That is the current approach we are seeking to follow, rather than taking that £43 million and giving it to Jersey Development Company, if that makes sense.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Can I just confirm, because I know Deputy Curtis mentioned £110 million, is that on top of the £43 million or will that ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

No, the expected overall figure is £110 million, and you are the accounting officer, are you not?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

Yes.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Andy is the accounting officer for the project.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

So a further £67 million effectively on top of the £43 million.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Did you ask at all for any funding to be included from the Government side in the Budget for phase 2? Was there ever a request within the Budget-making process from Infrastructure to see funding allocated for that from any source?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

No, I think we had to, as I said earlier, look at the priorities. What can we actually deliver? We need to be able to crack on in 2026 and get the work started. Subject to planning consent, we expect works to start in quarter 2, hopefully, to remove some of the asbestos, et cetera. We have already removed some of the kit from Fort Regent. We have asked for what we need, and then in next year's Budget, I expect there to be more funds requested.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Can I ask about the roof? That is a listed and historical roof but also, as you have said, it is causing a lot of issues in the sense from the fire department's perspective. Is there a way and discussion ... I think you have mentioned it before in past hearings about talking with the Heritage Department to talk about how to make sure the roof is fit for purpose from a modern-day perspective?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

The team have done some great work, and I am not sure if we will get to see some of this on Friday, but where they have modelled the roof and they have got all the technical drawings. The question at the moment, which is still ... I am not sure if it has been resolved in the last week. The question is in terms of the glazing around the side of the roof. The roof is, I think it is - I forget the listing of it - it is a ...

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

Grade 2.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Grade 2. The Fort itself clearly is of huge importance in terms of how special that building is, not just in local terms but in national and international terms. We believe that the roof structure, the look of the roof, will stay the same. It is whether the glazing needs to be upgraded to X, Y or Z. So that will depend on the ... I dare say it is the burn time, is it?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

Yes, so the roof is structurally sound. Work has already taken place to check the soundness of the roof. It will need recovering externally. Obviously, the internal makeup of the roof may involve thermal efficiency. That sort of thing needs to be looked at.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I think that was where I was getting at.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

As well as glazing around the, I guess, the lid. As it comes down and meets the building there is a lot of glazing around that and there is some glazing at either end obviously where it goes into peaks.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Certainly the dome, they are looking at how they can manage the acoustics for the Queen's Hall. So that will be inside the roof.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

I have got 2 more questions before we move on. You have mentioned, Minister, that you believe this is the minimum work required to get the site ready to be reused, but to a reuse that must be justified by some form of expectation of visitor numbers. What can you share about your projections or your department's projections about the future use of the site that justify the level of even stabilisation works that phase one suggests?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do not have a full number for you today. I have given you the potential for the Concert Hall in terms of volumes. We are looking to improve the experience at Fort Regent. If you do go to see an event, a show, a sporting event, that you do not all arrive together and do not all leave together, because there will be something for you to do there. But that is the detail that we are working on now with our colleagues from S.o.J.D.C. in terms of we have been out, we have done detailed consultation with young and old alike. We have had that feedback from them. There is no point in us putting facilities there that no one is going to use. We have received terrifically positive feedback, particularly from our younger generation who hopefully will be the users of the Fort for many years. But in terms of footfall aspirations, I keep telling the developers we have got to make sure that it

washes its face. We have got to make sure it washes its face. Far too often the States of Jersey have built new facilities and have not had a revenue plan. So I will not be signing anything off until we have got the revenue plan for the new facilities.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

That is what I was going to ask about, washing its face. Could you clarify what you see that meaning? Does that mean covering debt obligations? Does it mean returning a return on capital for what the site could be worth? To what extent does it need to generate revenue? To what extent do you accept a level of even Government owning the land as subsidy to a cultural piece of asset?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think what is important for a lot of people is to be able to have free access to Fort Regent, whether that is so they can walk around in the dry or whether they can enjoy the gardens. There have to be some social benefits to that, but we are working on the numbers at the moment.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

But you want to see it, I presume, cover its debt, be able to repay its debt itself, perhaps? To what extent is this going to cover it and wash its face?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

The key for me is that we can ensure that we maintain the property to a good standard. It is pointless us building something that is going to fall down in 20 years' time. We have got to learn from mistakes in the past. In terms of the debt structure, we are still working out how it is going to be financed. I do not know what the cost of that will be, and therefore I could not give you a straight answer today.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

Certainly, the big priority is to make sure the operation expenditure of managing that building and also the substantial area around it, is it does pay for itself. Whether we then look about debt repayment on top of that, again it does depend, as the Minister said, what that debt structure actually looks like. But the first priority certainly is to make sure operationally that the big estate up there - it is a very large piece of real estate, it is a very old building - can sustain itself moving forward.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Including depreciation and almost sinking for its next capital regeneration?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Depreciation is really interesting. I was talking to the team today about the value of our sewer network. It is on the books at I think around £260 million ...

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

£233 million.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

£233 million. To replace the sewer network you are probably looking at closer to £1.5 billion, based on the current works that we are doing price per kilometre. It is not something that the Government does very well, in my experience, manage depreciation. I think as we progress, we should be spending more effort and time on that kind of thing. Ellen spoke a little bit about some of the initiatives we are looking at. The fleet; we have got electric vehicles. In my opinion, and I talk with a bit of experience, we should be extending the life of those vehicles so we reduce the depreciation over a longer period of time rather than replacing vehicles which have got a lot of service left in them. The team do a good job in fleet management; it is just, can we get a bit more out of it?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you. Deputy Warr.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

This is infrastructure projects.

[15:15]

The estimated cost of the shoreline management plan for Havre des Pas has widened significantly, now estimated to cost about £75 million and £160 million, with delivery expected 2029 to 2034. Given the scale of the project, why has no provision been made in this Budget for its full costing, even on a forward-planning basis?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

The shoreline management plan is not a “nice to have”; it is essential, in my opinion. I think what we are trying to do is to get as much out of the project as we can in terms of extending our cycle corridor, putting in a parks and gardens area, looking at potential for parking in some parts, but also getting utility conduits underneath that space.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

But I think the question is, why has provision not been made in this Budget?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have got money in this Budget for the ongoing works in terms of the planning for that. We have done a huge amount of stakeholder engagement and we have done some modelling. We have taken on board the feedback and we have got to do some more detailed modelling in the next 12 months.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Do you think this should be put in the Jersey Capital Investment Fund?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes, absolutely. Going forward, that would be where I would see it sitting.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Okay.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Have there been discussions on that so that that can be cemented into any future ... what are the things that need to be funded?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

The Council of Ministers have been briefed on the importance of the shoreline management plan, and they are aware of the level of investment. Now, future Governments will have a choice whether they go ahead and invest that money or do something else. I would strongly recommend that we do that work because if you get a high tide in the wrong conditions, it is not a pretty picture.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Minister, you were talking earlier about the importance of this capital fund to look at long-term funding for important infrastructure projects or capital projects. You have just said that that is then for future Governments, so potentially there is an issue where politics gets in the way again of these capital projects. So, the fund does not necessarily guarantee that there is funding for long-term capital projects.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

While we have got people involved anything can change, can it not? But the idea of having this longer-term Investment Capital Fund would be to give the surety of where the money is coming from and what is included in that area. The work that we are doing is first class, and we have had people come from around the world to look at the work that is being done by the team here. But it really depends on people's risk appetite, and I think we are doing work to prevent flooding in a whole range of areas around the Island, and we have got to continue to do that.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Absolutely, and for us as the Scrutiny Panel, we have talked a lot to you about this through our different quarterly hearings, and we see that - the importance - and therefore that was the question of looking at the future and ensuring, if this fund goes ahead, that you were able to go: "Yes, now we know that there is funding for this long-term project because we know that the cost is between £75 million and £160 million until 2034." It is a lot of money, and it was just trying to pinpoint if this fund will actually help future Ministers for Infrastructure guarantee to have money for this project.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

It is a huge amount of money, but it is a significant investment for the Island. I am just looking for the number in terms of how much we have got in this year; it is just over £1 million, is it not?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

There is £10 million in 2029.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

That is to start the work.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

Yes.

Head of Technical Support Services - Projects, Operations and Transport:

There is some money in feasibility. We are also supporting that through the infrastructure rolling vote, and we need to spend about £1 million on pre-planning at this point. The tranche in 2029 that is identified is a part year of the first year of funding of a 5-year phased approach to that.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

With the Capital Investment Fund, it is like any other significant Government investment, there is only so much affordability, so much money at a time. Clearly, we would seek to look at the Capital Investment Fund balance of priorities within that Capital Investment Fund and the Government of the day, of the future day and the day after that. These projects are very long-ranging and some of them will extend into multiple Governments, so how we balance priorities over certainly the next decade is an issue, not just for this Government, but probably for the next 2 Governments. It is always a balance of the relative priorities at the time. Clearly, this is a high priority for us; I think this is incredibly important for the Island. Undoubtedly, there will be other priorities as well across capital investment and so, depending on the funding envelopes at the time and the risk appetite, as the

Minister said ... that effectively is the equation that we are trying to balance every time we do a Government Plan.

Head of Technical Support Services - Projects, Operations and Transport:

Part of the difficulty we have with capital at the minute is that in Budget 2026, only 2026's number is being approved. All of the other years are indicative so, of course, you can get to that year and by then it has changed. What we need to understand in terms of how this will work in future is what that means for us; how it will fix and help us to plan a bit better on that.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Absolutely.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Change of subject slightly; the panel notes that under table 19 "Feasibility", the provision of £100,000 for a vehicle testing service. Please can you provide more information about the proposed vehicle testing service?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

It is something I have kicked the can down the road on, basically. We have done a huge amount of work with D.V.S. (Driver and Vehicle Standards) over the last 12 to 18 months. We have started to bring more services online. We have tried to improve the customer experience, particularly for the traders and the operators; people that sell vehicles but also people that operate heavy goods vehicles. My thought was that the priority should be there; practical steps that we can help business to start with before building the new vehicle centre. The other thing we are looking at is our current facility we have in Bellozanne, could we do something with D.V.S. and our fleet management under one roof?

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Minister, during the C.S.P. hearing last week, you suggested that the eastern cycle corridor may be more aspirational than deliverable in this stage. Has any feasibility funding been allocated towards that project or has this been deprioritised entirely?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

No, we are trying to get some practical solutions for the eastern cycle route. At the C.S.P. hearing, I thought I made it clear that, in my opinion, we could do some very cost-effective measures - if the Parishes would support them - to enable an eastern cycle corridor from Gorey through to St. Saviour. We are in dialogue with those Parishes. We have been trying to buy some land in St. Clement;

without much luck, I think it is fair to say. But we have spent significant money on the eastern cycle corridor or corridors over recent years, and we are trying to push ahead with some of that.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Please, can you clarify what will be delivered under the project entitled Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Delivery Programme? The allocation was £255,000 within table 19 "Feasibility".

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have got a joint working group with the Parish of St. Helier and Cycle for Jersey, where we are looking at a number of routes through town and to get people into town. That is making reasonable progress; the team work hard in that area. We have invested significantly in cycle parking in St. Helier. The team continue to work, but we are one of 13 highway agencies and so we need the support and co-operation of the other 12 to get networks in place, particularly in the east of the Island; we are working hard there. I do not know if it was earlier this year or the end of last year; we did a lot of work on the new cycleway from Le Rocquier School through to the F.B. Fields, for example, with signage, et cetera.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

I just wanted to reference back to a Scrutiny Panel hearing on 28th October. You stated that: "I think we could do the eastern cycle route very cheaply" and had found: "a route working with interested parties." What proportion of funding allocated to this Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Delivery Programme is allocated to this workstream?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

That is what I have just explained. There is a route which you basically need to put a bit of paint on the road and put 2 bollards in the road, so it is pretty cheap and effective.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Okay. How far away from delivering that?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We are in discussions with the 2 Roads Committees that I mentioned earlier. If I cannot get the agreement of the Roads Committees, then I am going to struggle. In the meantime, we are trying to buy a very small piece of land to improve the visibility splay at a junction to offer another alternative route on bikes.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Okay. Right, thank you.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I personally go out and ride routes with interested parties, with officers, and try and come up with solutions because it is something I am quite keen on.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

So if you get a couple of co-operative Roads Committees, you are in business.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes, and I think one of them has moved towards the solution. We could not get on the October agenda; hopefully, we may get on the November agenda. But the team are passionate about this, and I support their passion.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

The total infrastructure projects allocation for 2026 has risen from £29 million and £96 million to £34.08 million. What accounts for this £4 million increase and which projects are expected to benefit most from the additional funding? Does any of that relate to reprofiling from delayed projects in 2025?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Do you want to answer?

Head of Technical Support Services - Projects, Operations and Transport:

Exactly that; it is £4.3 million that has been reprofiled from 2025 to 2026 in respect of the liquid waste key infrastructure projects, which is the St. Peter storage tank and northern sewer. It is just a timing thing; there is no extra money.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Okay, fine, thank you. Who do I hand over to? Liquid waste.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

The Connétable on liquid waste.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Yes, liquid waste for me. The starting question is: the cost of the liquid waste key infrastructure project has risen from £21.3 million in last year to £51.3 million now; what has been the major contribution to this £30 million differential?

Head of Technical Support Services - Projects, Operations and Transport:

I think we have clarified the timeline and looked at further projects. The first time we had the allocation, it was for a more limited range of projects.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think what is interesting is that the St. Peter works, the salient phase starts today with the work for the attenuation tank at St. Peter. The northern extension, which goes right up the main road of St. John to Sion, we take sewage from your Parish in St. Mary and from further east than the zoo, almost to Maufant. So 20 of the 109 pumping stations on the Island produce sewage to go down the Grande Route de St. Jean. So, it is a significant project. The pipe goes from a 400-millimetre pipe to a 600-millimetre pipe, which increases the volume by 2.25. We have got hundreds of properties that are not connected to main sewers which should be connected to main sewers. I am not talking about properties in far-flung locations; we are talking about properties that sit adjacent to main roads, but we simply do not have the capacity today. This is fantastic investment in our Island's infrastructure, and one that I wholeheartedly welcome.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

That answer runs on to my next question. Which projects are currently constrained by drainage capacity, and how does this Budget provide assurance that those constraints will be addressed? You have mentioned one in particular.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

In terms of constraint, it is 2025 and we have got far too many homes in Jersey that are not on mains drains and are not on mains water, and which are adjacent to major routes. We have got to put in place the infrastructure to receive those goods. In parts, on the St. John main road, they are going to be digging to between 4 and 4.5 metres deep, a lot of that by hand because of the spaghetti junction of services that run above the sewer, including a 90-kilovolt electric cable that takes power to Guernsey. So, it is not insignificant work, and we have got 2 contractors working simultaneously to shorten the time of the works.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Could I ask, given that significant increase and given the project, what breakdown you can share with us about which liquid waste project is costing how much? You have mentioned, obviously, the attenuation tanks coming online as a project, Grande Route de St. Jean. What is the costing what?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

The work on the Grande Route de St. Jean, off the top of my head, is a £7.5 million investment. I have to look to my left for the details of the St. Peter attenuation tank. There is the work on the St.

Peter attenuation tank, and then there is the work on the sewers to get the products to the tank. Have you got the numbers there?

Head of Technical Support Services - Projects, Operations and Transport:

The attenuation tank main contract is just over £10 million. The network extension is £1.3 to £1.5 million, something like that, I think.

[15:30]

The other thing that was picked up; you asked about the increasing cost from £20 million to £50 million. What has been identified in the Budget this time is an ongoing £10 million per annum investment. In last time's Budget, it was limited to the first 2 years of that investment in much the same way that, say, for the Fort Regent project earlier, the initial allocation. The timeline has been extended; there is an assumption about funding streams for that. But it is just, the programme itself is an ongoing investment that spans multiple years and you are just seeing more years of it in this programme, essentially.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have done a lot of work also to separate surface water from the sewers. You will remember the work that was done on St. Aubin's Road and underneath Victoria Avenue. We receive too much surface water at the sewage treatment works. By separating them, it means that it is more efficient for us, but also that when we get peak flows and heavy rain, we can process everything that we receive.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

I may go back to your earlier answer to the constraints, et cetera. I appreciate that, yes, if there are houses which are easily connectable to a mains drain, so they should be. But is it not the case that certain building projects have not been able to be performed because of the lack of drainage capacity?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have got significant works happening in St. Peter's at the moment and the works are underway. We have got around 60 new homes in the Sion area, some in St. Helier, some in Trinity, some in St. John; and the works are underway. We have got planning in for St. Martin. I think those plans have been lodged for St. Martin. I do not know if we have had the result of the planning appeal, have we?

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

On the Maufant tank, yes, I think that was dismissed, so we have got planning consent for that. I think the quick answer is, yes, that all new development is constrained. Our drainage network is at capacity, so that is underlying the business case for these significant investments in our drainage network. The storage tanks especially are designed to add capacity to the network so that new affordable housing sites can be built.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

And also existing homes. We have been talking about this for decades - about getting more properties connected to the mains - and we have really got to start delivering.

Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment Department:

We undertake a drainage impact assessment on every new development; so, that could be one unit all the way up to 100 or 150 housing units. That assessment is undertaken for all development by the drainage authority. There are parts of the Island that are at capacity, so yes, that is a constraint on development.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Going back to the Bridging Island Plan, my recollection is that certain projects were anticipated there, but when it came to it, they could not been done because of the lack of drainage.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have inherited the Bridging Island Plan and infrastructure ...

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Yes, I am just not blaming any particular Minister for that. That is where we are. Okay.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think the work that was done by the Scrutiny Panel in not the last Government but the Government before that's time, was a good piece of work which identified a lot of those challenges that we are trying to deal with.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Okay. Excellent.

Head of Technical Support Services - Projects, Operations and Transport:

Sorry, can I just correct ... I mentioned a figure earlier on, that was just the 2026 figure. The St. Peter storage tank, including fees and start-to-end process is about £15 million.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Fifteen? Okay.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Fifteen.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Moving on, then. The Budget notes that 2027 funding was supported by asset disposals. Which assets are you contemplating in that connection?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We are still in discussion over that.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

If you were to rate assets from likely to be able to be disposed of to impossible - like a school, perhaps - are there assets that currently have high confidence that they could be disposed of?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We are in the process of disposing one or 2 properties, but not to the value of £10 million.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Okay.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

If we do not identify assets, will that hold up ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

That will slow things down because we will need the money to do the work, and we cannot start the work until we have got the money. That is what you tell me, is it not?

The Connétable of St. Mary:

So you are dependent on them. Yes. Okay, thanks. Moving on to the proposed new liquid waste charging mechanism, which is due to begin in 2028, the Budget estimates revenue of £10 million a year from that. What will this mechanism involve and when is it expected to be brought forward for approval?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think we are the only utility which is currently free of charge and we are subject, as you have just identified, David, to government funding, so the terms of reference for the waste charging should be finalised shortly. Hopefully, we can share those with you in pretty quick time so that you can give us any feedback. We then need to go out to consultation about the scope of the charging and the method of charging and what the public expect from their liquid waste. Let us not forget, if you do not benefit from mains drains, you pay additional money to have your sewage taken away.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Certain parishioners have noticed that.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

People get a double whammy, do they not? Is that fair? I am not sure that it is fair, personally.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

In terms of funding mechanisms, would it not make sense to use the rate mechanism as we have in place at this moment in time as a way to charge for waste?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

The Island-wide rate?

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Island-wide rate, yes. Obviously, we know about the size of properties and ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Certainly, something I suggested many years ago was that we used Island-wide rates. Because I was on the other side of the table in 2017 when officers did an enormous amount of work trying to bring in a liquid waste charge for commercial premises and we pointed out that a lot of small commercial premises used far less water than some large properties around the Island. We felt there were a number of different mechanisms where you could introduce that charge. This is why we need to go out to consultation. I think there are a number of mechanisms to use to charge. We will have to choose a mechanism and crack on.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

It seems to be the fairest because it is appropriate to each property.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes, I see that but I think you will find other people will argue against that, depending on the type of property they have. I think it is a good mechanism to use, but I think we need to go into consultation

and look at the detail, because the devil is always in the detail. But the terms of reference, we hope, will be out shortly, which we can share with you to get feedback from yourselves and others.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

You have answered my next question in part. How was this £10 million revenue figure calculated, and what assumptions have been made regarding household and insurance contributions?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do not think the £10 million figure is going to be sufficient to cover all of our liquid waste costs.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Right.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think that £10 million was identified as a shortfall. We should be looking at what are the true costs of managing our liquid waste? Back to Deputy Curtis's point about depreciation, what is it we need to raise to make sure that we have got a sewage system that is fit for 2025 and beyond? £10 million is the figure that has been identified, but I would just look at double-checking that figure. It has got to be achievable; we have got to be able to deliver this.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Okay, thanks for that health warning, as it were. As to developing the charging system, you mentioned a previous quarterly hearing that only around £300,000 was available to fund this, which I think you have said might not be realistic.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

The team in the department probably kicked me under the table when I said that. I think we are capable of working with colleagues in various departments to deliver something. It will really depend on how much time and resource we put into the consultation, which needs to be significant. We need to do a good job on that piece.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

The system will be developed entirely by Infrastructure or in concert with Jersey Water? How do the 2 overlap?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

If we went down the route that David has just suggested, we would not involve Jersey Water, necessarily. If we used the traditional model, we would work with Jersey Water, I would imagine. But that is the detail that we have got to work through. So, do you get charged on what you use and therefore what you release? Or do you get charged on the size of your premise?

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Right, so it is not necessarily the previous idea, which was that what you took, in effect, you would expel, and therefore there would have to be a collaboration with Jersey Water.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

No, so the downside for the Island-wide rate, which is - I support that concept - if you have got a 5-bedroom house and there are only 2 of you in there, you are not going to be using as much water as a 3-bedroom house with 6 people in there. So, is it "user pays" or are you paying on the size of your property? That is why we need to go into detailed consultation. What I have tried to do over the last 18 months is raise the importance of the need to invest in this area of our infrastructure, as well as other areas, but this area in particular because it is not fair and equitable in this day and age that some residents have to pay to have their sewage removed, while other people have it taken away free of charge. We need to find a system where we can continue to invest in that network. We have got Victorian sewers running under St. Helier today, which is a fantastic achievement by the people that built them, but how long will they last?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you. We are turning now back to something that the panel has been wanting to do for a while, Minister, but we have not found the time to do it, which is looking at one of the C.S.P. "revitalising town" focus. Maybe using the last 20 minutes for that. How do you define "revitalising town" and what is your role in this?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I was asked about this at the C.S.P. review and I am delighted to have another opportunity because we have got a retail strategy and a visitor strategy, which both talk about the need and the importance of investing in our public realm. It is a well-documented fact that where there is investment in public realm, you see lower vacancies in retail outlets and you see higher spends. I met with an Islander last week who was talking to me about the need to spend more money tarmacking the roads; this person's children have left the Island. When I sat down with this person, I explained to them that, yes, we need to tarmac the roads but will your children come back because the roads are smooth? Or will they come back because St. Helier is a vibrant place where people want to live and work and visit? It is not a case of doing one or the other; it is about the need to

invest. We had a debate in the last sitting or the sitting before about green space in St. Helier. I am due to go and visit Broad Street shortly; I thought they were putting a soakaway into Broad Street and I said: "What is going on with these plastic boxes?" It is all about being able to plant trees into the ground and a root system network. It is really fascinating stuff. We have got to invest in St. Helier. We have had at least 5 applicants for new or extended *al fresco* licences in the New Cut, New Street area. If you stop and look there, it is terrific what has been achieved there. I am hoping that in December we will have events in Broad Street. I am expecting to see mulled wine and roasted chestnuts at the very least when I come to town to shop.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you, Minister. You were talking there about tangible actions that you can list and, of course, the C.S.P. said "delivering a plan to revitalise town", so it was a plan, not necessarily the actions. Do you still feel that there needs to be a plan to have more for the future, or do you feel that by the end of the term most of those actions will have been done?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

They will not all be done; it is a significant amount of work. I am not sure when you ever finish. But we are working. Halkett Street is a great example where we worked together with the Parish of St. Helier, and Deputy Gardiner brought a proposition that we would do more of that type of partnership working with them. It certainly will not all be done by the end of the term ...

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Will we see a plan? Do we have a plan?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have got a plan which we are happy to share. We are just consulting at the moment around the Blue Note area in terms of the next phase of work, in terms of the design. We are looking to declutter that. But yes, very happy. In fact, it would be useful for you as a panel to have a briefing from the team that work on this area.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

That would be very useful to see. Of course, not just there but this plan for revitalising town as a whole and what that looks like for the future.

[15:45]

You have just talked about that collaboration and working with the Parish of St. Helier; how has the funding and decision-making been shared between the department and Parish, and who ultimately signs off capital works or maintenance contracts? How does that collaboration work?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think it was mentioned in the C.S.P. or one of the reviews we have done in the last week, that Infrastructure have a very good relationship with their colleagues in the Parish of St. Helier with almost daily dialogue. We do a lot of work jointly. I do not know how Halkett Street evolved because it was before my time the works were planned there. But certainly we liaise with the Parish, and the Parish liaise with ourselves on a whole range of things. As I mentioned earlier, we have got this joint group looking at walking and cycling initiatives, also with interested parties joining that group. It is quite a mature relationship.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

The 2026 Budget does not seem to have a dedicated line for revitalising town, so is the funding coming from the public realm rolling vote? Is that where it comes from?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

What is it called? The I.R.V. (Infrastructure Rolling Vote).

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

How does that link with St. Helier and their budgeting and how does that collaboration ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We wait to be approached by St. Helier in terms of the projects they want to work with us on. We are also working with the Parish of St. Helier and the C.L.S. (Customer and Local Services) Department on a buggy for people who have mobility challenges, to be able to move people in and around St. Helier. That is quite an exciting project. It is like an airport trolley, like a golf cart. Our colleagues from D.V.S. and Transport are working with the Parish very closely to try and get that up and running before Christmas.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Would that be a continued revenue line, a service offered by E.S.S.H. (Employment, Social Security and Housing)?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

No, I understand it is the Parish of St. Helier. We are not providing any funding. What we are providing is the expertise and the “When is a vehicle not a vehicle?” and all that kind of stuff; so, we are providing the professional advice on that. So that is quite exciting.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

You talked before about public-private partnerships with Fort Regent, for example. Are there any other discussions of that happening within town itself and potential plans where there could be more of these public-private partnerships?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Not to my knowledge at the moment. The other thing that we are doing is finally putting up ... I think it is called “flags” for the hopper bus. Because we really want to get the message out about the hopper bus and how it is a great way of getting around St. Helier, and the ability for people to use a through ticket. So if they are coming in from one of the Parishes, they can jump on the hopper bus. If you are like me and get the number 5, you can get off at the hospital, walk around the corner to Chimes and get the bus to the market. It is a great way of getting around and we have just got to get that message out more and more.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

At our last quarterly hearing, officials said that the Island’s main car parks currently have spare capacity. Yet, Minister, you said that new parking is needed. How do those 2 positions align? Is this about an overall shortage or issues of accessibility and maintenance?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Some of it is about age and accessibility. Minden Street is over 50 years old and whenever I park in Minden Street, I always end up at the top to try and find a space that is big enough to park in. That is probably more to do with my driving ability than anything else. We know that these assets have got a certain lifetime. It would be wrong to allow Minden Place to come to the end of its life and not have an alternative, so we are better to find an alternative that we can build before doing anything with Minden Place.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Turning to something we have talked about before, which is the market revitalising as part of the plan to revitalise the market. You said in the C.S.P. hearing, and you have said before in hearings, that a £12 million redesign is not what is needed, but to be more smart. What are the kinds of things that we would see in the next 12 months, specific works to the market to make it smarter?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I am delighted that we have got people on new leases rather than a rolling annual lease. I was delighted the week before last to see some stories about businesses who are really pleased to be part of that community. But part of the money in the maintenance will be used on the floor in particular. The fish market is where our first priority is, so we are hoping that some of that work will happen in quarter one next year.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Could I ask, on any of this expenditure - whether it be the market floor or in particular roads - how are you assessing and justifying the value for money on expenditure? Whether it is choosing the materials, the contractors ... given the sums involved, how is that then articulated to the public and to Members that the expenditure is just and proportionate?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We go through a pretty rigorous and robust tendering process for all of our work. In terms of the materials, they are chosen as part of the design. So, that is how we work. I would like that procurement process to be quicker, but it is very thorough which means that we can take confidence from the fact that we are getting good value for our money. I know it is not what you are asking about, but the major works for the sewer upgrades, we have got 3 local companies working on those projects. It is great that we have got local people providing those services, so the pound rotates in Jersey.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Given that you are the main purchaser for public infrastructure on the Island - I presume, for roadworks, for especially the public realm, re-delivery - to what extent does the department have knowledge and is able to baseline that against, for example, the U.K. (United Kingdom) market? Often the private sector might know more; in this case, your department should be the expert on knowing this and then understanding where to value engineer.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Fantastic. I should have brought 2 different officers with me because I had a lesson recently on the different quality of stone and the cost of stone and the lifetime of the stone. Believe you me, the guys and girls in the team are all over this. When it comes to the resurfacing, I think we do almost open book, do we not? There is only one major provider on the Island, and that work is done on an open-book basis and we are working with that partner to try and regenerate some of the plannings that we get. We are looking at different services, and we have got people going to Guernsey shortly to look at what Guernsey do. Because if we could get away from the micro-asphalt, I would, but we have got to seal the roads with something, so we are looking to see what other materials we could use that would give cyclists and motorcyclists a smoother ride. The team are all over it. All over it.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Could you just, because it is very interesting, clarify what that open-book relationship with a supplier means and how that ensures value for money? Because I do not know if we have discussed the Government having open-book relationships with its providers and all parties being happy and finding it constructive.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I will have to pass you to officers because I am not party to those discussions ...

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

It sounded like quite a big step in ensuring governance.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

... but I have asked those very questions and I have been reassured. Who wants to answer that?

Group Director, Operations and Transport:

I am happy to. As the Minister has mentioned, we have got some specific advice. So, although we have got technical experts, we have got a commercial expert who is embedded within the department and who provides a lot of support. Again, it is somebody that is independent into that review. As part of the open book that is tied into that contract so that, again, we have that transparency. We make sure that for most of our major contracts, we are having regular monthly meetings with those contractors on that work, certainly when it is ongoing. Again, everything there is documented and reported up. It is about us learning and understanding what is happening in the market, not just within Jersey, but in the U.K. and Europe. We do a lot of market analysis as well.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Honestly, the detail is fascinating.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Yes.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Linking this, you were talking about asphalt, but in town especially, we see in different places and at New Cut, et cetera, that the material is of different quality. There has been a lot of discussion about that within the public space. What lessons have you learned from those particular projects so far on the potential costs in these areas, and how to show that there has been this analysis with the

material, and that there has been a balance in prioritisation, et cetera? To show that this is value for the public.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think the biggest lesson from the New Cut work was around communication. We did not get it right all the time, so we have taken those lessons into the next phase and I think we are doing a much better job around communication. In terms of the products, we are trying to make the areas somewhere where people are happy to spend time and want to go to those areas. I have seen some of the correspondence about New Cut and New Street. Talking to some of the businesses in that area prior to the works and during the works, their view was pretty different to what it is now in some cases. There are businesses that are thriving following those works, as a result of those works. It is really good to see. If you look at the design and the rounded building faces on the 4 corners and you have got the compass in the middle, it is really clever what they have done. I think the team should be congratulated on their work. We are delivering, as I said, for both the retail and the visitor strategies in trying to help revitalise St. Helier and ensure that it is a place where people want to come and visit.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I know you have mentioned that you want to share the plan with Scrutiny, but what next? There have been a lot of discussions about New Cut and Broad Street, but what is the next plan?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Broad Street is a significant piece of work which will be done in phases to try and not hit peak retail times. We are due to be out of there for I think it is the third week in November and not do any work over the busy Christmas period. But we are happy to get the team to brief you on that. I think it would be quite exciting.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

But what will happen next after Broad Street? What is the next area? There are other areas in town that need some looking at.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes, we want to tidy up Conway Street. We are not paving over Library Place, contrary to some people's commentary. We are looking to tidy up Library Place but we are not looking to pave over it. There are some exciting plans. The focus is about getting things done, so the focus for me at the moment with the team is to get Broad Street consultation finished and crack on with the next phase.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

You have talked about doing Broad Street in phases to minimise that economic impact; how does the department assess that in general? I suppose that is a wider question. We have talked about Broad Street. When there are economic impacts on small businesses or businesses in general or people having access to community spaces, how are those assessed?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have had precincts in Jersey for many years. As someone who used to be involved in delivering to those businesses, there are times when you are able to deliver to them and you schedule your work around that. I was encouraged when I was going through the airport recently with one retailer from Broad Street who said: "Fantastic, Andy. At last, something is happening." I took heart from that person because we have got to invest in the product of Jersey and the product of St. Helier and I am proud to say that that is what we are doing.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Finally, just to confirm, there is a plan for what is happening next? Of course, we have talked about what is happening now, but there is a plan coming forth and that will be funded under the rolling public vote rather than a particular budget line and particular funding?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

That right?

Group Director Operations and Transport:

£2.5 million that is ring-fenced in the Infrastructure Rolling Vote for public realm projects.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

£2.5 million. Okay, thank you very much. Turning to my panel, is there anything else? No. Well, Minister, thank you very much for that. Thank you, officers, for coming today.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Thank you.

[15:59]