



Parishes and Government Review Panel

Parishes and Government Review

Witness: The Minister for Infrastructure

Thursday, 30th October 2025

Panel:

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade (Chair)

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Vice-Chair)

Connétable R. Honeycombe of St. Ouen

Deputy K.L. Moore of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter

Witnesses:

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

Mr. P. Tharme, Senior Operations Manager

Ms. J. Burns, Climate Change Engagement Manager

Mr. C. Dodd, Principal Engineer, Network Management

[12:00]

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade (Chair):

Okay, thank you very much. Welcome, everybody. This is a public hearing for the Parishes and Government Scrutiny Panel, which is currently investigating the relationship between the Parishes and the Government. Today is Thursday, 30th October. We have set aside one hour for this meeting. If I could ask everybody to make sure that their mobile devices are switched off and just to note that the meeting is being recorded and streamed live and the recording and the transcript will both be uploaded at a later date on to the States of Jersey website. If I can just start with the introductions: I am Deputy Helen Miles; I am chair of the Panel.

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Vice-Chair):

I am Deputy Catherine Curtis, the vice-chair of the panel.

Connétable R. Honeycombe of St. Ouen:

Richard Honeycombe, Constable of St. Ouen.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you, and online we have ...

Deputy K.L. Moore of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

Deputy Kristina Moore, member of the panel.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Andy Jehan, Minister for Infrastructure.

Principal Engineer, Network Management:

Carl Dodd, Principal Engineer for Network Management.

Senior Operations Manager:

Piers Tharme, Senior Operations Manager at Solid Waste.

Climate Change Engagement Manager:

Jane Burns, Climate Change Engagement Manager.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you very much. The questions today are largely around your role as Minister for Infrastructure but, of course, you are in a very unusual position in that you are also Connétable of St. John. It is going to be very interesting to hear your perspective from both sides so do not feel that you have to restrict yourself to your Ministerial role. We are going to start with some questions on refuse and recycling. I am going to hand you over to Deputy Curtis.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you. Jersey's recycling rate has fluctuated around 35 per cent in recent years, which is significantly below Guernsey and the U.K. (United Kingdom). What are your thoughts about this?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

My personal view is I am disappointed that we are so far behind and that is not through the lack of effort, particularly of Piers and the team. I visited Guernsey earlier this year to see what they do and how they do it. We have to make some decisions, in my opinion, to encourage more people to recycle, and there is a perception from some that recycling just goes into the Energy from Waste plant, but that is not the case. We have currently got 9 Parishes with kerbside recycling. I am very proud to say St. John was the first Parish in 2006 that introduced kerbside recycling with the then Deputy Lewis pushing that initiative. St. Martin are due to come online in a matter of days, I think; certainly in November. That will leave us with 2 Parishes but those Parishes that do recycle, we firmly believe that we could do more. My personal view is we should be more consistent in how we collect recycling from homes and try to standardise that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, that leads on to my next question which was: with comparisons of Guernsey, they operate a single Island-wide scheme, do you think that split up Parish by Parish makes it more difficult to have that consistency?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do not think that necessarily. Clearly, there are advantages and disadvantages to having a single supplier, but I do not think there is anything wrong with having different arrangements for the collection of refuse. I think it is what is collected and when it is collected where we could get more uniformity and the frequency of collections, we could be more uniform in. There have been some discussions with the Comité des Connétables about how we could try and introduce that. We have a number of different companies that collect refuse and some Parishes collect their own. You would hope that that would drive competition in the market. Recycling is a very expensive process, but I think a very worthwhile process. What we are trying to do is to explain to people the value of the goods that we have recycled, so whether that is tin, card, paper, plastics, what does that look like in general terms? It is okay saying: "X tonnes of paper are being recycled", but what does that mean? How many trees has that protected or how many cards has that produced? We are trying to get some explanatory note.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so you are saying the consistency could come about more with discussions around what is collected, when it is collected, things like that but you think it is okay to continue Parish by Parish?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I can only speak from my own Parish, and we are due to go out to tender shortly for our refuse. If I was in a co-operative with other Parishes, would I be happier? I probably would be, but I do not

think we need to reduce the amount of refuse collecting operatives. We need to try and be a little bit smarter how we go about our business.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, and have you had any discussions with the Parishes who do not offer this service and perhaps the ones who are not planning to at the moment?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think the challenge for the remaining 2, and certainly for St. Martin has been a challenge, to find a provider who is willing and able to provide that service. That has been a struggle and, as I said, cost is a struggle. The cost has to be approved by a Rates Assembly and therefore you are at the behest of your parishioners who either vote the sum of money or do not. I understand from St. Martin, the most recent Parish to come online or to be coming online, it has not been an easy task to get those additional funds voted for.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so that was St. Martin. There was another Parish, I think you said, was about to ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

No, St. Martin are coming on. They will be number 10 and that leaves us with Grouville and St. Clement.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I think a lot of perception is the fact that it does end up in the incinerator. We get a lot in St. Ouen, people saying: "Well, what is the point? We are not going to recycle because it just ends up in the incinerator and we are not prepared to do it." I think this is something that might be ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

You are absolutely right, Richard. I personally promote recycling virtually every month. Occasionally I forget, but virtually every month I promote and remind people that it is recycling week. We have got work to do in terms of education. I think the schools are the place to be because in St. John when we launched that, it was the school children who persuaded parents and grandparents to recycle. We invest a lot of money in the communication of recycling, what can be recycled, what cannot be recycled. Clearly, you want clean product. You do not want to contaminate the product which therefore can contaminate a load. I do not know if there is anything you want to add, Piers, in terms of that.

Senior Operations Manager:

Yes, I think it is a perception, as you say, but it is generally that vocal minority and people will sometimes believe that whereas let us say we have got a limited budget for publicising what we do, recently £40,000, but that is every household quarterly. We have got something in the Parish magazine, so we feel that is very good value. Every household is getting that information. Again, it is what people choose to believe and some of it is, yes, working with certainly a lot of the collectors to reinforce the message that they are part of it. I know I worked very closely with the last Parish that we brought online, St. Ouen, and the collection team really try and reinforce that message, so it comes from everybody taking part in it.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I just come back to ... because I was going to ask you, as Minister for Infrastructure, do you have any discussions about this with the Parishes who are not doing anything about this at the moment? I think you said Grouville and St. Clement.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I have had discussions with them in the past, and I think both of them are struggling to find an operator to do the work efficiently. I know St. Clement are particularly keen to do something. I think Grouville are also keen. I think it is fair to say they both would like to do it, but it is about getting an operator that will deliver the service in an efficient way. We still have, I think, 16 bring banks around the Island. We looked at whether we could save money by removing those bring banks in the Parishes that have got kerbside recycling. We do not have any in St. John because the kerbside is good, but people like me will still go to La Collette and recycle goods. We encourage people if they get a lot of card to get a second box for their card and paper. I think it is about education, but you know in Guernsey they recycle food waste, for example, which is something we should look at because food waste contaminates other waste. There has been a huge amount of work done by Piers and the team analysing the waste that is collected and the type of product that is collected. We have got a lot of work to do when it comes to recycling. The team are working on a strategy for us to bring forward.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

There is a strategy being worked on to incentivise the Parishes as well.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I am not sure "incentivise" is the right word, but I think it is about trying to get a consistent approach. We mentioned Guernsey, what they do, but a lot of towns and cities around the U.K., around Europe, have different processes. Certainly, in my household, we rarely put the bin out every week; it tends to be once a fortnight. We bought a larger bin, and we recycle as much as we can. Now, that may not be tolerable in the summer but if we were recycling our food waste, it probably would be tolerable.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

In the U.K., they recycle food waste every week. We were in Gloucestershire but the other thing that causes us problems - you were saying about contaminating loads - is plastic. In the U.K., it is every plastic. The local authority brings round a massive bag and literally every month they take it away but that is every plastic so food ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think I am just about there now in moving from Tetra Paks for orange juice to plastic bottles because we cannot currently recycle Tetra Paks, although Tetra Paks can be recycled. The challenge we have got is the cost of the recycling, but I do think in the U.K. legislation is coming to make it ...

Senior Operations Manager:

It is where there are multiple factors and I know we are talking a lot about recycling, but it is waste in general. The problem being is that recycling is seen as the answer whereas it is the waste collection as a whole picture that is the really important factor, and the fact that the Parishes are collecting the municipal waste and when the recycling scheme is put in place it is seen as an additional collection rather than segregating that waste stream down. We have collected glass for years as an Island and have done that really well. The fact that we have incinerated for so long, that residual waste is seen then as no cost to anyone but, as you will appreciate, it is a huge cost to the Island. The strategy is looking at how we deal with the Island's waste as a whole and so that will bring out a lot of those areas.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

This could come into the education side of things more, I suppose.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes, we have got some work planned for next month. European Waste Reduction Week happens sometime next month so we are going to be doing some work around that to try and encourage businesses - because our biggest gains are probably with businesses - to separate their waste. When I am away and I see a dustbin which is segregated into 3 on the beach where you can put your can, your plastic and whatever else, is that not great? It looks neat and tidy. We are a long way from that at the moment unfortunately, but hopefully the strategy will help us edge towards that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is good and you have answered my next questions which were about the public confidence by the Parish magazine information and stuff like that. Can I just ask, though, how much awareness is there that revenue can come back from the recycling materials as well?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think currently the contracts incorporate that. When we are going out to tender, we are going to be looking at that specifically to try and encourage the operator, who I think it is fair to say is not a fan of recycling. They are happy to take our money every month, but I do not think they are a great advocate currently for recycling. We are looking to try and encourage them to do that because recycling is a commodity and the price of that commodity goes up and down depending on the markets. I think we will be looking at a different pricing model from St. John so that we get recognised. If we could put the money we gain from recycling into planting trees in St. John or doing something in the school, as an example, would that not encourage residents to participate? We are trying to do things differently if we can.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is good. Thank you.

[12:15]

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Do you think there is any mileage with this recycling with the Government possibly giving subsidies to the Parishes? Because to me the problems seem around that there are too few contractors and the contractors can basically charge what they want. I know our refuse and recycling is very, very expensive but it works very well because we do it all in-house, our own recycling and our own refuse collections.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I would argue that Government does give the Parishes subsidies today because we do not get charged for the waste we receive from Parishes at the Energy from Waste facility. We do not get charged to send away recyclables. That is all done for free by Government. The Parish rate currently covers the collection of refuse and the disposal and there is no charge by Government of that disposal, so I would say Government are subsidising Parishes as we sit today.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Right. Interesting.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Probably not the answer you wanted, Richard.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

No. **[Laughter]** Is it my go now?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes, it is.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Right. Has the department received any feedback regarding public attitudes towards recycling, for instance perceptions that - I think we have covered this - it is not worth it, or it would impact Parish rates too much?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think it does go back to that education piece. I know talking to the Constable of St. Martin that there was a vocal minority among parishioners, some of whom I know really well, who were opposed to that, but I think people understand the benefit in recycling and for those people that do not, we have got to work harder. You mentioned mileage, and that is really an interesting point. People say that you are creating a lot of mileage to take this stuff off the Island and away. Well, boats are travelling from Jersey to the U.K. empty, virtually, with empty trailers. Those trailers go to different parts of the U.K. to pick up goods to come back into Jersey. We are using what is known in logistics as dead mileage to carry the product, so there is very little in terms of mileage created to take the recycling to the plants. The recycling plants that we utilise are clearly identified as being regular corridors where trailers are going up to bring goods back to the Island, so it is a myth, just as it is a myth that we throw everything into the Energy from Waste plant. We are really keen to reduce what we put into the Energy from Waste plants so we can extend the life. We are spending a lot of money at the moment alongside the Energy from Waste plant where we can segregate commercial waste and where we can take away things that currently go into the Energy from Waste plant, and we can recycle those as well. There is a great example in your Parish of recycling where you see the pallet boards recycled. I have been for a visit there and it is fantastic what is achieved. They would like to do more, and we would like to do more so we are trying to find solutions.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Yes, it is quite amazing what that facility has got. It amazes me the way that he has got that magnet that takes all the ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

All the nails.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

All the nails out and he has got tonnes and tonnes and tonnes of these things to get rid of.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Which he recycles.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

He does. I mean he is amazing, yes. Thanks. Anyway, the panel has received a couple of submissions highlighting the fact that there are currently at least 12 separate refuse and recycling collection contracts across the Island. What are your thoughts on this level of duplication?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

As I said earlier, I do not think it is necessarily a bad thing. I think where we need to get to is have a standard service level agreement in place for those contracts to be let against. It does not matter who is collecting waste. In practice what happens, where Parish boundaries are very close by, they tend to work together so that you do not have 2 trucks going down the same road. We have got duplication with ourselves, with Ports of Jersey and with Parish collectors going to some of the harbours and ports. I think we have managed to smooth a lot of that out, so where we identify duplication we try to talk to those parties involved but I think the key is to get some form of standardised service level agreement, so everybody is doing the same thing. Then you go out to the market, you tender for your work and the best price wins because you know what the service is going to be.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Interesting. Has the department undertaken, or would it be willing to undertake, an efficiency review to assess the cost and environmental impact of maintaining separate Parish-level contracts compared with a single Island-wide system?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do not know if that work has been carried out.

Senior Operations Manager:

There was a review done, I think, just pre-COVID. It is always very difficult and certainly the way the strategy is looking is if you compare us to any other jurisdiction, I do not know of anybody else that central Government runs these sorts of functions. They provide a framework for it to happen and then there is agreement around that. It is generally not the way to do it because you lose that level of control. Certainly the review that was done then, it made some assumptions that having the knowledge of running a service, the service level to individuals would go down massively and private roads, et cetera, in the Island, you get that issue where a lot of contractors would turn around and say: "I will only go to a public road not a private road." You would have lots of problems.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

The point Piers makes is kerbside recycling is exactly what it is but, in reality, we do go into private estates and we go down long drives at times to collect people's waste as opposed to collecting from the kerbside, and I think you would lose a lot of that.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

We got to the stage with certain people who will not recycle, we have written to them and said that unless they do start separating their waste we will not collect it any longer.

Senior Operations Manager:

It is certainly the experience with Guernsey. We are in very close contact with our colleagues in Guernsey. Even when they introduced the Pay As You Throw system, they will still go to households where they put no recycling out and they are happy to pay. So by having a paying system, you will always get people like that.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Do you think there is any mileage, like in ... over here, I mean, because it is not run by the Government, they will not empty your bin if it is open that much. They will leave a sticker on it: "Cannot empty it", because it is open too much. So you go down to the local council and you pay 50p a bag - and if they are in Gloucestershire they are a fawny colour - and you can buy as many as you want and they will empty everything that is there but if you put a black bag, it will stay there.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes, there are lots of different models which are similar to Gloucester and slightly different to Guernsey and ours, et cetera. I think what we are trying to do is to see what works well. Can we take the best from other jurisdictions to see whether we can introduce that locally?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I am thinking about doing it in St. Ouen. We introduced, say, a year ago that we would not empty any glass unless it was in a wheelie bin because it is too dangerous for the guys picking up stuff that is weighing half a hundredweight or more. I was thinking that it might be something that we will refuse from a certain date to pick up black bags.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I am excited by your ambition, but I think it would be much easier if we all did the same thing at the same time, and that is where I go back to my view about having service level agreements. You are absolutely right about the glass being in wheelie bins because of the weight that operatives are

expected to lift in some cases and in 2025 that is no longer acceptable. We can all remember the coalmen with their truck humping loads of coal around, but you do not see that now because of a reason. It is absolutely right not to have heavy glass in dustbins, and it should be in a wheelie bin.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Yes. I was surprised at the take-up because we said from a certain date, we would not do it. I think we bought 250 bins and we sold ... I think we have got 20 left.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes. I think we should all be encouraging residents if they do not use a wheelie bin for their glass to do so.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Thanks. What do you think are the key barriers to introducing a unified Island-wide refuse and recycling service?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do not think there are too many barriers. I think what we have to do is to work with the Comité des Connétables, work with the operatives and come up with a standard set of terms and conditions, if I can use that phrase, then consult with people and then roll something out. We are working towards that. Everything takes longer than you hope, but I do not think it is rocket science. We can look at models that work elsewhere, adopt a model and introduce a model but I do think you have got to take the public with you so that key stakeholder engagement is really, really important and that will feature in the paper that we are putting together.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Could there be a hybrid model for collection, for example a centrally-managed contract with Parish oversight? Do you think that would be a good way of preserving Parish involvement while achieving economies of scale?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I am happy to discuss my views on refuse collections outside of this forum. I have got some views which may or may not be commercially sensitive, so I would be more than happy to discuss that outside the forum.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Thank you. In St. Aubin, we understand there are refuse and recycling collections carried out separately by Government, the Parish and Ports of Jersey. Is there any duplication of services between these bodies and, if so, could such services be better co-ordinated or centralised to improve efficiency?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I am disappointed to hear that is still going on because I understood that had been rectified. It is absolutely crazy that we have got that happening. I shall task Piers with taking that away.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Whose responsibility is it though?

Senior Operations Manager:

Sorry, the big thing for us is we are very light on any sort of regulation or legislation around waste. The current Waste Law 2005 is about licensing. A municipal collection is not a licensed activity.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Should it be?

Senior Operations Manager:

That would be down to the regulator. We are an operational team. We receive and deal with it.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

It is your law, Minister, though, is it?

Senior Operations Manager:

The regulation comes under the Minister for the Environment.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Oh, right. Okay. That is interesting. We can ask him.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

For what it is worth, I think it should.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes, okay.

Senior Operations Manager:

Certainly, when you look at going to have legislation around collection, Isle of Man do it as well. Again, across the U.K., I do not know about the rest of Europe, but they will have.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I guess that is potentially the key to this kind of ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do not think there is any point in coming up with service level agreements, terms of reference unless you put in a way of managing that because otherwise you have just wasted a whole load of effort. Whatever you put in you are going to have to manage.

Senior Operations Manager:

One of the fundamental pieces of the strategy is to work with all those stakeholders within Government and outside of Government and look at it holistically.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes, and I guess the issue is unless you have got that legislative framework, it is very easy for one party to say: "No, we are not doing that." Okay. Thank you. That is really handy; we will address that to the Minister for the Environment. Thank you, Richard. Just moving on to parks and gardens, another area where the Parishes have a role and Government has a role, could you just clarify the governance and management structure for public parks and gardens?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes, I think what is really interesting is the quality of the parks that we maintain. I think of Howard Davis Park, Coronation Park and Winston Churchill Park, all of which I visited in recent months, and I have to say the team there do an amazing job to maintain them. Those 3 main parks are maintained by our in-house staff. Millennium Park is subcontracted to the Parish of St. Helier, so they work on a contract basis. We have got an overall operations manager in terms of the structure, who oversees the teams working in those parks, and I am really excited by the work that has been done in the last 12 months within the parks. We are now trying to benefit from economies of scale, working with the sport division in terms of purchasing, et cetera, so we both use fertilisers that are ... why do you not buy your fertiliser together and share it out? Some really good stuff going on there and we then have a contracts manager who has really got to grips with the contracts for a lot of the outlying areas. We have land that is administered by Infrastructure, and we have got land currently administered by Property Holdings. There are areas of those lands which we would be very happy to talk to Parishes about if they wanted to have a licence to look after that. I see this myself in St. John; I have seen the improvement in the last 12 months because we have a new contracts manager and new

contracts that we have let. I am not saying it is perfect yet and we have identified some strips of land which were not included which need to be included but I am seeing better contract management of the contractors for pieces and parcels of land around the Island.

[12:30]

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Does your contract manager see the Parish as a potential contract at the outset or does the contract manager automatically focus on the private sector for those contracts?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think the Parish of St. Helier is the only Parish that we have subcontracted out to, and I am not suggesting that we would subcontract out to a Parish. I am suggesting that there are areas, parcels of land, where it would be appropriate for a Parish to take ... perhaps ownership is not quite the right word but look after that piece of land.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

On a contractor basis?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

No, I would imagine having a licence agreement so that the title of the land would stay with the people of Jersey, but the licence would allow the Parish to maintain that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

At whose expense though?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

It would be at the Parish's expense.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I think that is what I am trying to get at. If the Parish did not want to do that, you would still have to maintain the land. You would still go out to contract and some of the discussions we have had - as we know from Britain in Bloom, the Parishes have got some fabulous gardening teams - and the question we were asking was: why does Infrastructure not go to the Parish first and say: "Rather than contract this out privately, could we contract you to do it and could we pay you to do it?"

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Of course, so Parishes would have had the ability to bid for any of the work that was put out to tender, and I have every confidence in the person who oversees that process. I do not know if any Parishes did bid for parcels of land or did not; I am not involved in that level of detail but certainly, they would have been able to tender for those works.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Not actively approached; it would just go through the normal tender process.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do not know. I would have to talk to the contracts manager, but I would not imagine we went to any contractor, tap them on the shoulder and say: "Why do you not bid for this?" We would have gone out to an open tender which would have meant it was open for anyone to bid.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Given the relationship between the Government and the Parishes, sometimes it would seem a natural progression if you have got really good ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I take your point, but I do think we have to also be mindful of those organisations that are not Parishes who do that kind of work.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes, in the market. Yes, absolutely.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

That is why my view is if you gave a licence to a Parish ... I know we have a parcel of land near Marks & Spencer which is well-managed now but it did not used to be well-managed, and we would get the phone calls to say: "When is the grass going to be cut? We cannot see at the junction." I am pleased to say that does not happen currently, but it had been very easy for our contractor to have just spent 5 minutes maintaining that piece and giving us less headaches. I am not talking about large country parks; I am talking about small parcels of land near junctions which I think could be ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I can give you an example in St. Brelade, for example, the big piece of the ... it is not a big piece; it is a small piece up at the top of Pont Du Val maintained by a contractor. Certainly, as Parish representative, I have said: "Could the Parish not do that?" "No, they cannot because they have not got the capacity because it is not Parish land", et cetera, et cetera.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

That is a great example where if the Parish asked us: "Could we have a licence to look after that piece of land?" I would be more than happy to discuss that with them. I am less encouraged to give away parking spaces which may have a commercial value to them. I had a discussion with one Parish and officers about a parcel of land and the officers were worried about whether services were put under in the future and you can do that by contract to say if there is any financial gain then the owner benefits.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I think the issue is at the moment if you talk about the Pont Du Val land in particular, Infrastructure are paying somebody to maintain that land. The Parish would not get any funds if they agreed to take it over so it would be ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

No, so Pont Du Val would have gone out to open tender with other parcels, and I would like to think that it has been better managed in the last 12 months than the previous 12 months.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Playparks. We have got a play strategy in development. Some of the play is delivered by Infrastructure; some of it is delivered by Parishes. What sort of relationship do you have around public playparks?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Some are delivered by Sport.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes, of course.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Les Quennevais and Springfield are delivered by Sport. What I am trying to be is fair so Sandy Park at Grouville, it did not make any sense to me for the public of the Island to rent the land and to maintain the playpark when Parishes around the Island operate their own playparks. I think it is slightly different when a playpark is in one of our parks, such as Millenium Park, et cetera, and so when the lease expired with Sandy Park, we gave the Parish of Grouville over 12 months' notice that we would not be extending the lease. We extended the lease for 12 months to allow them time to organise what they wanted to do. Otherwise, we would be spending hundreds of thousands of pounds in each Parish, money which we do not have. You see the work that St. Martin have done

and other Parishes have done, and/or are doing, providing play spaces for young people then I think the Parishes have got that capacity to continue to do that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Is it an aim for Government to devolve themselves of ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I am not aware of any other parks that we lease the land for, though I am never surprised nowadays **[Laughter]**, but I do not believe there are any other pieces of land that we rent and then maintain a play facility upon it. I could be wrong, and I will probably be told when I get back to the office that I am wrong, but that seemed to me to be an anomaly, so I did not see any necessity for the Government to enter into a new lease for a facility which the Parish was more than capable of running.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Do you think it is fair that the Parishes should be paying for play facilities that are not just used by the ratepayers' children?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I do think it is fair because if you sit in the precinct of St. John, you will see residents from around the Island coming there to use that facility, whether that is parents or grandparents or carers, and it is the same around the Island. It seems to me that it works itself out. We are trying to encourage Parishes to provide more facilities, and the Constables are keen to do so, I think that is fair to say.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Should Government be providing more funding to play?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Where do we start and where do we stop? We are desperately trying to get more access to the schools because if you come to St. John at a weekend, you can see children happily playing on the equipment in the school playing field, and I have been working with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to make that achievable in other schools around the Island. We have been successful in parts but not successful in others. I think where we have got facilities, we should be making sure that they are well utilised 52 weeks of the year, 7 days a week.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Do you think there is a very clear accountability framework around the decision-making and the funding?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think there is. I do not think it is particularly well understood by Islanders/parishioners. I do not know if we shout enough about the parks that we provide in the play provision. We provide it as a Government and/or as a Parish. I think people see a play facility and will go and use it if it is attractive.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, and if it is not, they expect somebody to pay for it.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

They do, and that is why we pay Parish rates to maintain the land and the facilities that are in each Parish, and long may that continue in my book.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I have got some questions about roads now. Can you outline how your department works with the Parishes in relation to the maintenance and management of Parish roads and whether there are any particular challenges or areas for improvement in that relationship?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I will probably use 2 words to describe our relationship: we work closely and sadly we work slowly at times. We have got 171 miles of main roads and there are 295 miles of Parish byroads. But to be serious, we do work closely. Carl and his team are doing some great work in reviewing the road traffic laws, some of which date back to horse and cart, 105 years old in some instances and some are 26 years old. It is a huge piece of work that has been undertaken over the last 2 to 3 years and we have probably got 2 to 3 years to go. That has included detailed consultation with Roads Committees, the Parishes and what we are trying to do is identify the best way forward, and I think we are making good progress. My personal belief, for example, is that it is not appropriate for all roads inspectors in a Parish to be elected on the same day because you could lose a lot of knowledge from your organisation. You may want to do that, but I think it is foolhardy to do that. I think we should move to the same system we have for Procureurs and Centeniers where people are elected every 18 months, so you get some continuity and you therefore retain some corporate knowledge. I think that is one of the recommendations that has been to the review. I am hopeful that we will observe that. I do not think it is unreasonable to elect one member to the Roads Committee annually so, again, you retain that corporate knowledge as opposed to 3 members

coming up for re-election at the same time, so those things are happening. I think it is really key that we identify finally who is responsible, and my view is that the Parish, as a corporate body, should be responsible for the roads rather than the members of the Roads Committee. We are working hard to encourage asset management. As a Government, we monitor our roads based on the usage of the roads and so we will monitor the busier roads more frequently than the less frequented highways, and we are trying to encourage Parishes to adopt an asset management approach. Some have and some are on varying degrees, and I think this is another example where we could set up a template and people could just work towards that template. In my Parish, roads inspectors still go out and clear drains and blockages and gullies. We do not have any employees in our Parish to do any gardening or any road works. It is still the traditional method of the roads inspector going out with a fork and a rake and off they go. Other Parishes, they have workers who will do that, so I know in terms of inspection of roads, it is really great that we have got volunteers who are willing to go and inspect roads and report those defects back. I think it is terrific that the roads inspectors get an opportunity once every 6 years to stand in front of the Royal Court and have the opportunity, as I say, if they are getting the support to repair the roads as they need. I think that is a tradition we should strongly uphold.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Do you think the system of roads inspectors and Roads Committee is well understood?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Not as well understood as it could be. I think we can do a lot to improve the parochial system in general by just introducing what is expected of each position and I think we should provide more training. I know you met the Procureurs recently. That is not the first time the Procureurs have met together. I have personally hosted 2 training sessions in St. John, one when I was a Procureur and one when I was a Constable to give them updates, really, on a whole range of subjects. I think the Roads Committees, they have met several times and I think we should learn from each other. Times evolve, times change, and our responsibilities change and so we have got to be ... I hate to use the word "standardisation", but we should be more consistent across Parishes. If somebody allows their name to go forward as a roads inspector, he/she should fully understand what they are allowing them to go in for. What I try to do in St. John is I try to have a succession plan, which does not always go down well, but I try to encourage people to retire when it is appropriate and allow younger people to come through so they can learn from those people who have held a position in the past, almost like a mentor-type approach. I think we could do a lot more around that kind of stuff.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You have said that you can do a lot more about that. What influence have you got over the Comité des Connétables to introduce those sorts of standardised measures, be it for Roads Committee or Procureur?

[12:45]

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I think we could do better, would be my honest observation. We have got hundreds of volunteers on this Island who keep the Island running and save the Island hundreds of thousands of pounds a year. The Honorary Police, for example, is a great example. I have got a waiting list of people who want to join St. John Honorary Police. We are very proud of that fact, and we are able to choose who joins us. I think it is a bit like educating people about recycling. It is about education. It is about being open. It is about communication. It is hard work, but it can be done. It can be done.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

When I asked that question about any particular challenges or areas of improvement in that relationship with the Parishes about roads, you have mentioned about the review that is underway, about the particular role of the roads inspectors; is there anything else?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I am really encouraged, so we have got some major road works happening around the Island.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Everywhere.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I think I mentioned your name when I got caught this morning.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

In good taste, I am sure.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Absolutely.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have got major road works and working with the drainage team, in Infrastructure, they are local people. They understand Jersey. They understand the challenges, and they have been out to meet, certainly, the St. John Roads Committee and the Trinity Roads Committee. They have done 7 drop-

in events for the public. We had 31 people last night come to St. John and they have listened. The St. John Roads Committee suggested 2 changes to the planned diversions and the team went away and they have taken those on board, and I know similar has happened in Trinity. That is a great example of Government working with a local highway authority who understand. Tomorrow, I have got a further meeting with the Constable of Trinity, myself and the team, because we are going to be looking to put temporary speed restrictions on a lot of those lanes which are currently 40 miles an hour and it would be wholly inappropriate to make a road one-way and not do anything about the speed limit. Again, it is about education, education, education. We have got to get the messages out there. We have got to communicate with the residents and the people that go through. I am really keen, as an example, to get the signs up that say: "You could face a fine of up to £1,000 if you ignore a road closed sign." I do not think we should apologise about that. We do not want to fine one person but equally I do not want to spend £200,000 a year on security staff standing at barriers because I would prefer to spend that £200,000 putting more tarmac on the roads. It is a good relationship. When I say "slowly", the speed limit review has taken since 2017; is that right?

Principal Engineer, Network Management:

The framework was agreed in 2016. The first Parish to have its review was in 2019 and we have got the last 2 Parish reviews ...

The Minister for Infrastructure:

On my desk to sign.

Principal Engineer, Network Management:

We are currently doing St. Ouen's and the last 2 just started.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

That is an example of where it takes far too long, and we are looking at how we streamline that process. I have had correspondence this week about road safety audits and that takes too long. I will be looking at that area next week because that is predominantly to do with main roads, but we have worked really hard to reduce the amount of consultants we use. We do not consult now, as a department, on planning applications on Parish byroads. What was the point of that when we are not the highway authority and the Parish is the highway authority? We have stopped doing that. Clearly, we will have a look if it is a major development and any impact on a main road, but we were consulting on Parish byroads, which was ridiculous, so there was duplication there. We have stopped that. We are keen to continue to work closely with the Parishes. We have a monthly meeting where all the Parishes are invited to meet with the utilities and the department to talk about upcoming road works. Believe it or not, road works are generally planned. I know that is hard to believe at times. We do a lot of our main roads during school holidays because the facts are there

is 20 per cent less traffic on the roads so it is as good a time as any but when there is emergency works, we cannot control that. The closure of Rouge Bouillon, we could not control that. Our priority is the safety of the public, and we have to take advice on that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

You have answered my next question. Just one extra bit in it about consideration for people using mobility scooters and finding scaffolding or other obstructions in the way, and this is something that has been mentioned to us in the review.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Several times.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

What can Infrastructure do about that or the Parishes?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Infrastructure certainly work closely with both Enable and EYECAN, so people who represent those who may have mobility challenges. When it comes to the roads that the Infrastructure Department are responsible for, I think we do a reasonable job. I have heard this recently about scaffolding being a problem, and I think we just need to remind other highway authorities about what we need to do. In general, we have had negative feedback about the Traffic Works Law ... is that the terminology?

Principal Engineer, Network Management:

The Road Works and Events Law.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

The Road Works and Events Law but that is designed so that people understand the standards. If people are not complying to the standards, in my view, there better be a damn good reason they are not complying to standards. An exciting thing we are working on in Infrastructure is with the Parish of St. Helier on a buggy to help those less able people get around St. Helier, so we are really keen with that work.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Great. Thank you.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

The Road Works and Events Law is fantastic. I mean it has turned problems we were having with cycle races and things with Honorary Police attendance, whereas now they just apply for that, and they are allowed to stop traffic. It makes a huge difference to us.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Over to you, Connétable.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Could you outline the process by which Parish proposals or concerns about roads and safety improvements are considered by the Infrastructure Department?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes, there is a Road Safety Audit Panel ... I think I have got that ...

Principal Engineer, Network Management:

Road Safety Review Panel.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Road Safety Review Panel, sorry, which meets monthly. As I said earlier, I think we need to look at that. Somebody shared with me the automated response, which was not very helpful, I do not think, to the customer. I view residents and Islanders as customers of the Infrastructure Department and for me we need to just think a little bit more about the customer and: "The computer says no" far too often. We get a lot of requests about road safety and whenever we reduce the speed somewhere, we get commuters - predominantly commuters -- complaining that we have reduced the speed. Trinity School is a great example where we have put a traffic calming measure in there. I met with the Constable of Trinity so, again, working with the Parish. I met with the headteacher, staff, and pupils. It was evident that it was difficult for those young people and parents and staff to get across the road. We have introduced a speed limit there to slow traffic down and we still have people who are complaining about the reduction in speed. We may be able to do something working with the Parish further up the road, but we have got a hierarchy for the road, and I think we have got to follow that. Again, we have got to explain it more because people do not understand that the pedestrian and the cyclist have more priority than the person driving his/her car. I think the challenge for us is doing things quicker, not driving quicker but doing things quicker. If a group meets once a month

and we have got backlog, then in my experience in business you would be looking at how would you remove the backlog. How would you change the process? If there are key people that have got to be at the meeting, then why do they have to be at the meeting? I am probably going to go to one or 2 of these Road Safety Review Group meetings to learn a bit more but it has not been high on my agenda. I have been out and visited sites personally where people have contacted me and, quite frankly, been shocked at the behaviour of some people, but a lot of that is to enforcement. We change the speed limit; we do not enforce the speed limit. I was delighted to read the paper tonight to see that there is a new bit of kit which I have been trying to get since I was appointed.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes, it has arrived.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

It is certainly 4 years that I have known about it.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes, so I was very happy to sign virtually on day one, so we look forward to that.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Yes, excellent idea. How does your department ensure then that the Parish concerns are listened to and acted upon in a timely manner?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I can speak from personal experience, the crossing at St. John took some 20 years to install and, I have to say, was agreed before I became Minister, otherwise I would have been in all sorts of trouble, but 20 years. That is just far, far too long. We need to review our processes. We are limited by budget, clearly.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I was just going to say that is your problem, is it not?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

We have to prioritise, but my observation of our department is that we have got some fantastic people there but too many of those fantastic people are involved in too many things. I think we need to empower more people to review things and then let us get the decisions made at the top of the tree rather than the top of the tree doing the work. I think we can improve but I do not take away from the professionalism of the officers we have got working are first class.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I think that is the thing that is difficult for the Constables and the Roads Committee to really understand because they have got a thought, as we have had in the past, but when you are dealing with the expert to look at what you have proposed, it puts a different sort of thought to it.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

My background is logistics. I have run large fleets. I understand a little bit about it and if somebody tells me that a new pavement has got to be ... is it 1.8 metres wide? Is that what you are going to tell me?

Principal Engineer, Network Management:

Are you talking about footways?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Yes.

Principal Engineer, Network Management:

That would be an ideal.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Only 1.8 metres? Thanks.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

My view is that having a measure of 1.2 metres is better than having no footpath at all, so I take a slightly different view to the officers, and that is when we start having some interesting discussions and trying to find workable solutions. As I said: "The computer says no" too often but we are trying to redesign the computer.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Finally, given that both Parishes and the Government employ traffic wardens and that responsibility for roads is split between Parish and States ownership, has your department reviewed whether current parking enforcement arrangements are as efficient and consistent as they could be?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

It is a good question. I do not know the answer to that, Richard, but I have to say I have been out with a parking control officer around town. That was an interesting experience, and I answered this question in a different arena recently. We introduced, for example, the Blue Badge parking with blue paint, but the level of fines is very consistent with the previous year, and I was quite frustrated

at that. However, we have put in far more resource in monitoring those, so we are catching more of the offenders, and I think there are less offenders to catch. Did you want to comment on that?

Principal Engineer, Network Management:

No, not necessarily, but just to say in terms of the enforcement of chargeable parking places, there is a coherent system. Jersey Car Parks provides that enforcement so there is a single model in relation to chargeable parking.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

The problem that falls down with that, though, is that we have had in the past, when I was Centenier, having to take a case to court and someone said: "I was not driving on that day. Nothing to do with me." I think the fine structure is not enough; £75 - I think it is - is just not enough.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

I am waiting for feedback on this, but I would like to see some offences higher than others and misuse of a Blue Badge ...

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Should be £200, should it not?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

...I would double compared to the normal parking fine. Again, we do not want to collect any fines, but we collect over £1 million of fines a year. We do not want to collect any fines but unfortunately, we do have to police the roads, and parking often is unsafe and dangerous for other road users. Often people are not considerate to other people so sadly we need to continue monitoring parking, and there are some good examples where we have got relationships with some Parishes who work with Ports of Jersey and other Parishes together so combined they employ people, which is a great use of resource.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you very much Do you have any further questions?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

No.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Deputy Moore, did you have any questions that you wanted to ask?

Deputy K.L. Moore:

Nothing from me. Thank you very much.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. Connétable?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Sorry?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Any further questions?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

No, I am fine.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Well, right on time. Thank you very much.

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Thank you.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is there anything that you would like to ask or tell the panel while you are here?

The Minister for Infrastructure:

Well, once the meeting closes, perhaps I will.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, in that case, I am looking to my left. We are off. Thank you.

[13:00]