

**REPLY BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE *FOR THE*  
ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE  
TO QUESTIONS ASKED PURSUANT TO RULE 14 OF THE  
RULES OF PROCEDURE BY DEPUTY J. GOLLOP**

**Question 1**

**Is the Committee pleased and satisfied that local bus passengers demand has returned to pre-COVID levels on occasions?**

**Answer**

Yes. Bus passenger figures from January-March 2025 are the highest on record, even before the pandemic, at 382,262 in total. In March alone there were 140,860 recorded journeys, compared to a pre-COVID figure of 136,543 in March 2019.

**Question 2**

**Is the Committee satisfied that the transition to a new operator has proceeded smoothly with good customer satisfaction and passenger or other stakeholders' feedback?**

**Answer**

The transition to a new bus provider has gone well with all services operating as required on 1 April 2025. The feedback received to date has been extremely positive, with customers commenting on improved cleanliness of the vehicles, and buses running on time, along with the improvements made to the website and continued app provision. There were some minor technical challenges in the transfer of the website and app, but this was addressed immediately and swiftly by the technical provider UrbanThings, officers and Stagecoach.

**Question 3**

**This week a UK labour Government Minister Simon Lightwood MP for Wakefield and Rothwell has visited Jersey praising their services provided by Tower Transit Liberty Bus formerly CT Plus as being a lifeblood and a model service for a rural community. Can E&I consider inviting him to Guernsey to discuss effective franchise contracts?**

**Answer**

During a recent British Irish Council Transport Ministerial meeting, Guernsey's bus service provision was explained to and discussed with Minister Lightwood. The minister is interested in the bus provision in the Channel Islands because across most of the UK, bus operators determine routes, schedules, pricing etc. rather than the position held in Guernsey, where the Authority has control of these matters. It is

understood that the UK is exploring how it could benefit from publicly controlled bus services such as those operated in Guernsey and Jersey. The President has already explained the benefits and results of the Guernsey system to Minister Lightwood and, on behalf of the Committee, extended an invitation to come to the island if he would like to learn more.

#### **Question 4**

**It was reported by the BBC journalist Kate Jennings that the Jersey contract has seen a 47% increase due to subsidies over 12 years. What are the overall performance trends and projections for the new contract on Guernsey, building on published trends?**

#### **Answer**

As with Jersey, Guernsey has seen a significant increase in bus passenger numbers over the last 12 years with a 34% increase during this period.

The new contract with Stagecoach aims to build on this success, with the contract focusing on a safe, reliable and efficient service with the objective to continue to increase bus usage year on year. However, it must be recognised that total bus numbers are also dependent on external factors, such as the number of visitors and major events. For example, we saw increases in bus use over the shoulder months during 2024, indicating an increase in regular users but there was a reduction during the summer months relating to fewer visitors.

#### **Question 5**

**UK operators have been known to curtail non-profitable journeys and routes especially affecting minorities and vulnerable people and isolated communities. Will the Committee oversee any cutbacks and ensure we as an island don't suffer reductions in mobility?**

#### **Answer**

The Committee, whether directly or through Traffic & Highway Services, is responsible for setting the bus fare options and prices along with the routes and services provided.

The Committee has been conscientious in protecting the affordability of the bus service, especially given the cost of living pressures that people are experiencing, and especially for people on low incomes or who for any other reason don't have access to private transport, so for as long as this Committee has anything to do with it, we will continue to ensure that we are maximising the reach of the bus service whilst maintaining affordable fares.

There are also concessionary travel and student passes available which help younger and older people be more, or remain, independent. The Student PuffinPass allows

free travel to those under 16, or those in full-time education on all daytime services. In addition, Guernsey and Alderney residents of States Pension age or over may apply for a concession pass to travel free of charge on all daytime services.

#### **Question 6**

**Will the committee suggest improving the community route P2 to provide a better used hourly circular facility and an additional night bus serving Beau Sejour, the Performance Arts Centre, Rousse and Capelles N5?**

#### **Answer**

Routes and service offerings are regularly reviewed by both the bus provider and Traffic & Highway Services. This process takes customer feedback, passenger figures, developments and more, into consideration.

Recent examples include the expansion of the night bus service and improved access to Beau Sejour and UnLtd (which provides services for people with physical and sensory disabilities) where the buses can now drop passengers off and pick them up right outside the door. Further adaptations to the timetable will be considered with Stagecoach ahead of a change in timetable in September.

#### **Question 7**

**Could the Committee confirm that Active Travel ideas will continue to be pursued in conjunction with Health and Social Care, and the proactive and forward-thinking Health Improvement Commission perhaps leading to a joint conference?**

#### **Answer**

In line with the Integrated Transport Strategy, initiatives to further encourage and facilitate non-motorised transport methods such as walking, cycling and wheeling are supported. The Committee continues to work closely with the Health Improvement Commission as well as across the organisation, including the Committee *for* Health and Social Care and the Committee *for* Education, Sport and Culture, and would support a conference on the topic should the required resources be available.

#### **Question 8**

**As part of an integrated transport strategy and integrated policies will the Committee commit to ensuring that public green pathways and school walks for young people are appropriately looked after, accessible, made safe and maintained perhaps in conjunction with voluntary groups, parishes and Education Sport and Culture with solutions being found?**

## **Answer**

Facilitating and encouraging the use of alternative travel methods to get to and from school has been one of the Committee's key areas of focus in this political term. A number of new footways have been introduced in areas surrounding schools and there are others that have been approved but not yet been implemented.

School streets have also been introduced or are being trialled across the island which has enabled children and their parents and carers, to change their routine and walk or wheel to school and then often, on to work. The success of a school street often comes down to the support given by the school, parish and the nearby residents and the appetite of the children, parents and carers to make change.

The recently published statistics from the Better Journeys Project show how the number of people walking and cycling continues to grow, and we want to continue to support and encourage this further.

We know there is still more that could, and should be done, and we would encourage our successor Committee to support these initiatives. Delivering this often requires collaboration with private landowners or organisations operating in the area, all of which have competing needs. Therefore, not all initiatives that this or a successor Committee want to deliver will be achievable, but we believe that they are all still worth exploring and trying to reach a positive conclusion wherever possible.

## **Question 9**

**Is the Committee able to ensure there are appropriate speed limits, signposting and awareness of a green lane network of Ruelle Tranquilles in all ten parishes on the island with encouragement of joined-up proactive thinking?**

The Ruettes Tranquilles network was launched in 2000, led by Visit Guernsey in partnership with Parishes and the then, Environment Department. The parishes currently included in the scheme are Castel, Forest, St Andrew, St Martin, St Sampson, St Saviour and the Vale. Traffic & Highway Services manage the scheme and would welcome suggestions from any parishes for extensions to the Ruettes Tranquilles network, which meet the criteria.

Roads included in the network have recommended speed limits of 15 mph, and have signage to inform drivers that they are likely to encounter people walking or riding bikes or horses that have priority over vehicles.

Consideration has been given to requests for introducing a mandatory speed limit, but to implement this, additional legislation and signage would be required. Feedback received over the years has indicated that the recommended speed limits appear to be working well at this time and the costs associated with such an introduction could be prohibitive. Should this change, the introduction of a formal

speed limit can be considered in conjunction with the parishes, but this is not currently an active consideration.

Information about the Ruettes Tranquilles network is available on gov.gg and there is a free mobile device app available from both IOS and Apple stores, which can be found by searching 'walking cycling Guernsey'. As the better weather (hopefully anyway) comes around, there will be more proactive comms issued to promote the Ruettes Tranquilles.

**Date of Receipt of the Question:** 25 April 2025

**Date of Reply:** 12 May 2025