

**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 QUERPEL**

[Preamble: *“As you know, I am of the opinion that Guernsey is far too dependant and far too reliant, on other jurisdictions to supply us with the vast majority of our food, and that I feel we should be growing a lot more of our own vegetables here on island, because the current situation makes us extremely vulnerable. In relation to that, in a recent media release you stated that your committee will be carrying out a review this year, of any risks to, or opportunities for the natural environment from our current approaches to agriculture, land use planning and fisheries. Also that if evidence shows that our agricultural policy needs to change in relation to future food supplies, then you will prioritise that work. With that in mind, I ask the following questions about the review.”*]

Question 1

What will the Terms of Reference for the review actually be?

Answer

The Committee *for the* Environment & Infrastructure has agreed a rolling work plan for the Agriculture, Countryside and Land Management Service (ACLMS) covering operational delivery over the next 2 years. The work plan includes a proposed review of sectors – agriculture, fisheries, and land use planning – in relation to their potential risks and opportunities for Guernsey’s natural environment. The terms of reference have yet to be detailed or agreed as the project is not planned to begin until later in the year.

Question 2

Can you please provide me with examples of the sort of evidence you will be looking for to establish whether or not the agricultural policy will need to be changed?

Answer

Although the terms of reference have yet to be set out in detail, the proposed review will aim to identify ways in which the agriculture sector has either improved or impacted, or could improve or impact, the island’s biodiversity. The evidence collected through the review will inform whether a change in the States’ approach to that sector (such as a change in guidance, support, or policy) would be beneficial.

Question 3

Will the results of the review be laid before the States of Deliberation in the form of a Policy Letter with propositions attached?

Answer

Whilst the results of the ACLMS' work may be used to inform changes to guidance, support, or policy which may be laid before the States, we do not anticipate that the review itself will be laid before the States of Deliberation, in accordance with standard protocols governing the operational work across all committees.

Question 4

Does your committee agree with my saying in my first sentence above that Guernsey is far too dependent and far too reliant on other jurisdictions to supply us with the vast majority of our food, and I feel we should be growing a lot more of our own vegetables here on island, because the current situation makes us extremely vulnerable?

Answer

While there are various potential benefits of producing more food locally, including a greater degree of resilience, food security is a measure of the availability of food and individuals' access to it and is therefore assessed on that basis. Guernsey's food supply chain has recently suffered unprecedented, overlapping challenges due to the UK's exit from the European Union, the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing crisis in the Ukraine and significant food shortages on the Island have not occurred. Therefore, it would be difficult to conclude that Guernsey is extremely vulnerable to food shortages at this time due to a lack of on Island production.

Date of Receipt of the Question: 4 April 2022

Date of Reply: 20 April 2022