Minutes of meeting to launch final Report 3 of PFAS Panel into testing, and interventions to reduce blood serum PFAS levels and Government response

10 September 2025 – Les Quennevais School 6.30-8pm

Attendees

Prof Peter Bradley, Director of Public Health
Minister for Health and Social Services, Deputy Tom Binet
Kelly Whitehead, Group Director for Regulation
Dr Sofia Tosounidou – Health and Care Jersey
Support Staff from Government of Jersey

Apologies

None received

Introduction

Peter presented the Government response to the independent PFAS Panel for 30 minutes.

Questions and Answers

An Islander asked if there have been trials done on [colesevelam]. Peter replied that it is a very well known drug and has been used for a great number of years. The Panel has made recommendations on the basis of scientific evidence. In their report they have clearly reported how effective it is. The advantage of a long history of use is that although there are side effects, they are very well documented and can be explained by the clinician allowing Islanders to make their own informed choice about whether to take the drug or not.

An Islander commented that they were informed their son would mirror their PFAS results, however he is untested. They asked if he was able to be tested by Government of Jersey, commenting that emails to GoJ asking this question have not been responded to. Peter confirmed that if her son lived in the plume area and drank borehole water, then yes, he would be eligible for testing. He confirmed that age does not rule anyone out, and that the important eligibility criteria is having drunk borehole water in this area. Peter requested the Islander provide specifics on email so that they can be responded to directly.

The Islander continued, commenting that the doctor they saw previously indicated that their triglycerides are high which is common contraindication to that drug and asked if there is a level for triglycerides cut off. They expressed disappointment that they have been discharged from the PFAS clinic, indicating that they believed they would be continued to be monitored and treated. Peter answered reminding Islanders that the PFAS clinic was a short term clinic as detailed on the invitation letter and was a pilot for the PFAS clinical service planned for later this year. Invitation letters will be sent to eligible Islanders as before. There is no triglyceride cut off, but the clinician needs to review

the entire clinical case to determine the best way forward for the individual. The initial clinical service would not have provided any intervention, as the results of Report 3 were required before this could be offered.

An Islander commented that expanding eligibility by changing the criteria is good. They asked if there was a set number in mind for testing and intervention so that this effort can be recognised as an international study, as the PFAS Scientific Advisory Panel suggested. They indicated that the Panel have mentioned 2000 people should be involved. Peter replied, confirming that Jersey does not have the required infrastructure and capacity to run an international research study in an appropriate timescale. There would be a delay of 1-2 years if this programme was to be considered as international research. It will however be closely monitored and evaluated to ensure that the intervention is successful for Islanders.

An Islander commented that the PFAS Scientific Advisory Panel had discussed their medical situation and had commented that they would produce a report with their findings. This has not happened yet. Dr Sofia Tosounidou replied that the full data set from the clinical review is not available yet but will hopefully be available in the next few months.

An Islander made the following points:

- **They believe the authorities don't understand how serious or widespread the problem is and are drawing a smoke screen across the situation**
- **PFAS bioaccumulate in the body**
- **Legally accepted levels in mains water is not the same as safe levels.**
- **Jersey Water tested 2 streams and Queen's Valley reservoir for PFAS, but the Government is focusing efforts around the airport and the plume**
- **They had asked their GP for PFAS testing but was informed that this was not available**
- **They asked why the government didn't let people know that they were drinking contaminated water, and that it took a letter to the JEP to make people aware**
- **They commented that an Islander has been investigating levels of PFAS in blood much earlier than 2022 using their own funds and asked how much the Government had paid the Islander back**

Peter replied to say he was notified about PFAS in 2021 and has read a large amount of information since. The Government of Jersey response at this time happened because he personally took on responsibility, sought political support and put actions in place. The government is taking action currently in the known contamination area around the airport. The source of any other potential PFAS contamination elsewhere in the Island is required before action can be taken. Decision making about wider testing will occur in a short time from now after Report 4.

Deputy Tom Binet reminded the audience that the current PFAS situation is not the current officers' and Government's fault, and requested that the audience treat the officers with respect as they address the situation.

An Islander made the following points:

- **They believed the Panel are not independent**
- **There has been no public consultation in accordance with Government's guidelines**
- **Report 3 does not make reference to the Swedish Supreme court decision regarding high PFAS in blood being an injury and eligible for compensation**
- **Report doesn't cover blood transfusion and whether donated blood should be tested for PFAS**
- **That they believe the Panel chair has no expertise in PFAS and that the Panel members are not allowed to speak in meetings**
- **They questioned what was happening to the report between May and September and what was changed in the report, and that this will identify that it is not an independent report**
- **That they believe the report is prepared to protect the Government who is responsible for the PFAS at the airport, sewage works, water supply, La Collette, The Esplanade, incinerator and spread across fields**

Peter answered inviting the Islander to contact the Panel about their work. He commented that the people who are invited to give evidence and the other scientists on the Panel are eminent scientists. The chair always says that he is not an expert, and that his role is to coordinate input from the Panel.

It is not known whether donated blood is tested for PFAS, as Public Health do not operate the service. Donated blood in the UK is not tested for PFAS. The question was taken away to be answered at a later date.

Kelly Whitehead commented that the interim report 4 from the Panel about levels of PFAS in mains water in Jersey is currently out for consultation, and the Panel wish to receive comments. She commented that the Panel indicated that levels in water are known is only a small percentage of what we intake, the majority of PFAS is in food. Food testing is underway, and there was a public meeting in August at which the Panel have reserved the ability to adjust regulatory limits in water depending on intake from food. In December we will have full picture and at that point the Ministers will make decisions about levels in water.

An Islander returned the question session to Health, and asked about bile acid sequestrants. They commented that the Panel referred to two research programmes, Canada and Denmark which use cholestyramine. They believe that no research has been done on the ability of colesevelam to reduce PFAS levels and asked why the Government is saying that it has. Dr Sofia Tosounidou replied stating that in the latest Swedish study, the research team used colesevelam, and that the study in Denmark

intended to use colesevelam, but had to use cholestyramine due to supply issues. She agreed to forward the link to the studies to the Islander.

An Islander asked whether Jersey is talking to other small airports around the world to gather intelligence on whether generic illness can be attributed to PFOS from 3M, as they recognise that the sample size is small in Jersey. They questioned what sample size would be required to attribute illness to PFAS? Peter answered indicating that there are other Panels around the world also looking at this issue. The scientific research produced internationally indicates potential exposure sources in their work. The PFAS Scientific Advisory Panel in Jersey is at the forefront of this research. It is very difficult to define a sample size to attribute illness to cause, and it is not only about numbers. It is dependent on how the study is set up. The conditions indicated by the Panel in Report 2 have many causes which makes it very difficult. If a large increase in illness occurred, then we would be able to identify it, but this has not happened.

The author of the Islander data referred to in the Government response commented that figures reported on page 12 of the response are inaccurate and requested that they are addressed or removed. They asked how the government is stopping the bioaccumulation of PFAS in the studied cohort. Peter replied confirming that the whole of report 4 is looking at the issues of bioaccumulation and exposure sources. He acknowledged that it is frustrating to wait.

Deputy Jonathan Renouf addressed the audience. He reminded the audience that he was the Environment Minister at the time. He commented that he understands the scepticism, the strength of expertise in the community and the need to ask questions. However, he cautioned that it is was not helpful to question the integrity of the scientists and their credibility. They are highly qualified scientists with reputations to maintain. The political supervision of the Panel revealed no signs of them being put under pressure, and Health Scrutiny Panel has seen no evidence that the new Ministers have compromised integrity or put pressure on either. Any Government would require advice on dealing with issues such as this.

An Islander commented that there should be a water treatment plant before giving people drugs. Deputy Renouf answered commenting that it will be addressed by Jersey Water. However, no Government will spent multiple millions of pounds on a solution where it is not known what the best option is yet. He recognised that sometimes the expert advice is not the same as the community would like, but this does not mean that it is not working. It can be corrected and made better by community input, but it is not corrupt and biased, it is being run by people who are doing their very best. The Scrutiny process is working, and it is a very vigorous screen.

An Islander commented that they believe their stem cell transplant reduced their blood PFAS level. As part of their ongoing medical treatment, the hospital in Bournemouth are questioning their blood PFAS levels which is below 20 ng/ml. They asked why are they questioning this level when the Panel have recommended a level of 20 ng/ml to intervene? Peter answered noting that the Panel have based

recommendations on existing evidence such as clinical trials, where they felt people would benefit from having an intervention. They have also answered the question about when does having an intervention benefit you. Advice was taken from all over the world and this is what forms their report and advice to Government.

An Islander commented that it was different in America, less than 2 ng/ml is considered no risk, 2-20 ng/ml some risk, 20+ ng/ml has lots of risk. The Panel have stated in a meeting that there is no safe level of PFAS. They believe the Government is determining levels much higher, and are disregarding what America, believed to be the world leader, is saying. Peter replied to state that we are following the Panel's recommendations. We need to distinguish having PFAS in body is different to when is treatment going to help you.

A representative from Jersey Water addressed some earlier comments about water, confirming that PFAS is in every stream and that this data is published. They are working as fast as they can to try and pre-empt what the Panel advise Jersey Water does. In the meeting in August it was clear that their recommendations are heading towards 4ng/L for 4 compounds and that Jersey Water are working on this. They recognised that the mood in the room is that this should be 0, but we have to be pragmatic, a level of 0 is impossible. In the public meeting with environment specialist Prof Cousins, they learnt that sea foam has detectable, natural background levels and that bottled water also has a detectable level. Jersey Water are trying to find a way to get the levels in water down, and that they appreciate 5 years sounds a way off. There is a big engineering challenge to overcome. They are aware that the recommendation is still in draft because of the ongoing food studies, and that it is estimated that 80% exposure is from food, and 20% from water.

An islander asked about other boreholes. Kelly commented that the PFAS Scientific Advisory Panel are looking at this aspect.

An Islander commented that they have good cholesterol, and if they take the medication, how will it affect their health if it results in low cholesterol? Peter commented that the patient would have an individual consultation with a clinician to advise the best course of action and any side effects they might experience.

An Islander commented that Peter said the best course of treatment, and therefore is phlebotomy available to choose as an option? Peter replied that it would be based on a conversation with the clinician. The patient may decide not to take up any intervention and instead choose a different strategy to lower PFAS levels, for example limiting how much intake by changing lifestyle. There will be a delay in operating a phlebotomy service.

An Islander commented that in the PFAS clinical review, there was promise of a lot of things, however the letter which they received did not reflect what happened in the consultation with Dr Ahmed. They have now been discharged from the clinic and agreed actions have not happened. Peter confirmed that he would discuss with Dr Sofia and there may be the opportunity to have a discussion with the community to hear about what we can organise to make sure this clinic runs properly.

Several Islanders asked questions about environmental and planning aspects of PFAS. Kelly addressed the questions and Peter commented that Report 4 will provide future information on PFAS exposure in the island.

Deputy Tom Binet asked the audience to remember that the Government is not endangering the health of the population, and is gathering evidence to sort out the complicated issue. He welcomed the helpful comments in the meeting.

Peter's final comments were that he confirmed that Public Health do not influence the Panel. The Panel are in place to get the best science to inform the decisions taken by Government. Peter left the meeting at 7.50pm.

An Islander made the following environment related points:

- **They believe the Arcadis hydrogeological study identified two contaminated sites, to the west of the airport and the southern area. Excluding the southern area is hiding the truth**
- **PFAS has gone down 6m to the fractured shale which drops down to St Helier. Water runs downhill and passes through fractured shale very easily**
- **They asked why the Government does not release the maps of the pollution area and comply with it's own planning, waste, water pollution, health and safety and pollution laws. The Government promised to release this information in 2005 in SPG on land contamination. In 2017 this was removed. The Islander commented that these maps are available in France, UK and America but not Jersey. They request this information is made available so that Islanders can take action and make sure the polluter pays. This eliminates fear. Mental illness exists due to PFAS exposure – recognised in PFAS Panel's second report**
- **That legal action is seen as the only route because the Government has the information but they will not release it**
- **They urged the audience to read their household insurance as it does not cover PFAS. If PFAS moves from one site to another, and therefore increases blood levels in a neighbour then the insurance will not cover any action taken against the homeowner**
- **That we need a new Government because the current one doesn't know what it's doing**

Deputy Tom Binet did not address the Islander's environment related points and closed the meeting at 8pm.