

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. JOHN
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 15th MARCH 2011**

Question

Following the decision to ask the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) to supply a lifeguard service for the Island, can the Minister explain whether he asked this charity to undertake this service at a lesser figure than it has cost in previous years?

Will he further explain whose idea it was to use the RNLI, which relies upon public donations, and is the Minister concerned that the arrangement takes advantage of the charity?

Has the Minister got the full backing of all of the members of the local branch of the RNLI, and, if not, please give details?.

Answer

The Economic Development Department and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) have signed a Letter of Intent regarding entering into a partnership to introduce a range of changes for the 2011 season that will modernise and improve the Island's beach lifeguarding service and ensure its long term sustainability. Whilst EDD is reducing the cost of the service to the States of Jersey the nature of our partnership means that the RNLI are, in turn, making a substantial investment in resources which means that the total expenditure on the lifeguard service in Jersey in 2011 and beyond will significantly increase.

The States of Jersey has been in discussions with the RNLI's Lifeguard service since 2003 and the decision to enter into partnership was taken after extensive research and consultation. The Department is entering into a standard arrangement with the RNLI lifeguard service which they have with 25 local authorities and a handful of private beach owners across the UK in order to ensure that vital lifesaving services on Britain's (and eventually Ireland's) beaches are protected. As a charity which exists to 'save lives at sea' it was a natural progression for them to extend their services to lifeguarding bringing the high standards that have become expected within their lifeboat service to the beaches and thereby save more lives.

The ongoing negotiations are between Economic Development and the RNLI Lifeguard Service. I understand that all local RNLI members have been kept fully informed of developments and the reaction has been overwhelmingly positive.