

2.2. Deputy P.J. Rondel of St. John of the Minister for Economic Development regarding the attendance of Economic Development staff at the Enterprise Awards on 26th February 2010:

Would the Minister advise whether any Economic Development staff attended the Enterprise Awards on 26th February, and if so, how many, in what capacity, and at what cost to the department?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean (The Minister for Economic Development):

The Jersey Enterprise Awards is the Island's premier business event. The Jersey Enterprise team and their business partners should be congratulated on staging a truly world class event at Fort Regent last month. Jersey is open for business and we quite rightly use the Enterprise Awards to help local businesses to showcase themselves and to increase the international business profile of the Island. The event reflects the diversity of our economy and the entrepreneurial culture that is the mainstay of Jersey's commercial success. This year's event was attended **[Interruption]** by a record 850 people of which 15 were Economic Development staff who were hosting 53 guests. There was no cost to the department as all costs were covered by revenue received from ticket sales and generous commercial sponsorship.

2.2.1 The Deputy of St. John:

The Minister says there was no cost to the department. Given that the tickets were £75 per head, did that also include beverages and the wine, *et cetera*, and given that he is claiming there was no cost to the department, therefore the cost must have fallen on the event; is that acceptable in this day and age that 15 members of staff, including I presume that would have been 17 if the Minister and Assistant Minister attended, or 2 Assistant Ministers, maybe 18. I do not know if they all attended. The numbers in fact start escalating: is that acceptable in time of recession for this number of people to be going to a free bash?

Deputy A.J.H. Maclean:

Yes, it is acceptable, quite frankly. This is the premier business event of the year. It was a huge success. It is laid on to help support and develop local businesses. We had some fantastic guests there. There were networking opportunities for local businesses. We had people from national and international representative organisations. I am afraid the Deputy is down in the weeds on this matter. He needs to accept that this event was a massive success and it is essential, at this time in particular, that these events are carried out. **[Approbation]**

2.2.2 The Deputy of St. John:

Can the Minister tell me what the 15 members of staff could add to the event please?

Deputy A.J.H. Maclean:

The members of staff from Economic Development develop relationships with clients, inward investment for example is a key part of the department's remit. We had the Chief Executive Officer of the U.K. (United Kingdom) Indian Business Council, a very important lady who in fact opened the Commonwealth Games. We had a U.K. representative of the Indian Angel networks. Access to finance is key at this time for local businesses. This event, I will repeat one more time, was a massive success and I suggest that the Deputy considers congratulations and supports local businesses.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Last question, Deputy.

2.2.3 The Deputy of St. John:

I have only been given 3 minutes, the previous question took over 10 minutes. Given that we had these high profile people I would have expected the Minister and his Assistant Minister to be entertaining them, not his staff. Can I please ask why it was not the Minister entertaining these high profile people?

Deputy A.J.H. Maclean:

I can reassure the Deputy that the Minister was entertaining on the night, as was his Assistant Ministers **[Laughter]** quite appropriately and I might add, that as the Deputy is showing such interest in our awards, we will ensure that he is invited next year and I am sure he can also entertain. **[Laughter]**

The Deputy of St. John:

I do not require freebies, thank you.

The Deputy Bailiff:

We come next to question number 3 by the Deputy of St. Martin of the Minister for Home Affairs. Perhaps I can just remind Members that a very similar question, at least in part similar, was in the written questions put by Senator Breckon, and is to be found at written question number 9; so that might assist in speeding up this part.