

3.14 The Connétable of St. John of the Minister for Economic Development regarding funding of the Jersey International Motoring Festival:

Following the Jersey International Motoring Festival held during the weekend of 6th June would the Minister state whether an application was made to the Tourism Development Fund for a grant to assist in staging this event and, if so, would he give details of amounts of the grant, and if no grant was given would he give the reasons why?

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

An application in the name of the Jersey International Motoring Festival Limited was received on 10th April 2014 for an event that was to be held less than 8 weeks later running between 5th and 9th June. The application was not straightforward however, as it was for a significant grant sum and covered an extended period, not just for 2014 but also annually through to 2018. As Members would expect, the Tourism Development Panel - an independent panel - undertake rigorous and comprehensive examination of all applications prior to any approvals. The panel continued their analysis of the application for the extended period at its meeting on 12th June. As a result of this, further detailed information is being sought from the applicant. The Motoring Festival has made previous applications to the Tourism Development Fund and was awarded a grant in 2010. They are therefore aware of the process which is applied and the timescales which are necessary.

3.14.1 The Connétable of St. John:

Is the Minister being a bit disingenuous here? Given that the Festival themselves wrote to the Tourism Development Fund in January, and in fact received an email from the Minister on 25th March to the effect that the Board of the Tourism Development Fund was in the process of being replaced. A number of members were being replaced. Would he like to review the answer he has just given, given that there had been a number of contacts between the International Motoring Festival Committee and the department? Would he like to review the answer he has just given?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

No, the answer that I gave was perfectly accurate. I can elaborate on the comments that the Connétable has just made with regard to the Board. Yes, there have been some changes to the Tourism Development Fund Board. That did not affect the operation of the Board. New members have been recruited, some members have retired, that is a natural course of event that happens with organisations. As far as the particular International Motoring Festival Limited is concerned, as I pointed out, they have applied previously to the T.D.F. (Tourism Development Fund) over a number of years. There have been instances where they have not supplied enough detail. Contact, I can say to the Connétable, is not enough. There has got to be far more detail than just contact if the Tourism Development Fund or any public body dealing with public funds is to deal with those funds effectively and go through an appropriate process. The formal application was not received, as I have already pointed out, until 10th April, less than 8 weeks before the event.

3.14.2 The Connétable of St. John:

Given the Minister's reply, and knowing full well that the problems he had within his Tourism Investment Fund, yet money was able to be found for the rugby club over that period of time, and for Durrells, it seems odd to me that some society who are trying to bring people into this Island and fill our hotels are not being supported by the department. If the Society were to put a retrospective application in would it be considered favourably?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean:

No, to the last point. That would be against the terms of the fund. It was up to the organisation, which has applied before... it has been successful before in 2010 with regard to grants from the Tourism Development Fund, then that would be perfectly acceptable. They knew the timescales that were necessary. As far as the other points about who does and does not receive grants from the Tourism Development Fund, I think the fund and the panel do an exceptionally good job. In fact in 2013 they had 39 applications for a total of over £1.6 million, which came in. Some really good awards were made as a result of that and I think that is a positive thing. I would also add, I think the Motoring Festival is very positive. I think the Motoring Festival this year, yet again, was a fabulous event. I think it can grow and I think the application that they put in for a significant grant covering from 2014 to 2018 can move the Festival on to another level altogether. I think that is good for Jersey, I think it is good for tourism. I am sure the Connétable will agree with it, and I would very much hope that if the detail is applicable that the Tourism Development Fund may be in a position to approve that and that would be good.

The Connétable of St. John:

Excuse me, Sir, there were lights over that side of the Chamber ready for questions.

The Bailiff:

I see. I am sorry I did not see Deputy Vallois' question. Never mind, I asked you to do the final question.