

3.15 Deputy R.J. Rondel of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding recruitment of a Performance Director of the Jersey Sports Foundation:

A busy morning for our Minister. Would the Minister advise the Assembly whether the position of performance director of the Jersey Sports Foundation is a new post and, if so, what the process for advertising and selection of this position has been?

The Deputy of St. John (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):

This is a somewhat difficult question for me to ask and I apologise if the Assembly thinks that I am trying to avoid the question in advance. I have already explained that the money that we have given to the new Jersey Sports Foundation is by way of a grant. They are responsible, as an independent grant aided body, for running their own recruitment systems and what have you. However, the States will enter into a service level agreement with the Jersey Sports Foundation to deliver performance services to support emerging and established athletes on the Island. Performance services are primarily defined in this agreement as strength and conditioning coaching. Full accounts will be required as part of this S.L.A. (service level agreement) to make sure that the funds are spent in the way that they are intended by this Assembly and approved by this Assembly, and there will be substantial additional funding required, not from the States, to further support our emerging and established athletes, and funding has been secured from the private sector to cover the anticipated broader costs of the programme. So once again this is an excellent example of a States and private sector partnership which will benefit many in our community, and I think that needs to be emphasised.

3.15.1 Deputy R.J. Rondel:

Thank you and I totally endorse the private-public partnership and the One Foundation, but my question was really, being we are using public money, surely we should have a ... there should be a process where we are recruiting which should be similar to what we do within the public sector.

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, I think that is a fair point and I agree with the Deputy, and I feel sure we do have a person, an officer, who is one of the trustees of this new foundation, and I feel sure that those kind of recruitment, you know, very, very extensive and robust recruiting methods will be used as one would expect. So, we are covered every which way around. I do believe that there is a new post involved, yes, the Deputy is right, and I think that that new post, there has been a lot, I know that ... I am told that there has been a lot of interest in that new post, not only locally but in the U.K. It is a fairly limited range of people who would be eligible to apply for that post - this is very, very specialist - and I know that there has been a lot of interest and I am very confident that the right person will be found by the new foundation.

3.15.2 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Given that there would be public money involved and so on, will the Minister recommend to the foundation that they perhaps utilise the advice of the Appointments Commission when advertising this post?

The Deputy of St. John:

I am not sure that that would be appropriate. This is a privately funded, and although it is grant aided it is privately funded. We will have, as I have already said, a full service level agreement and it will cover such areas as obviously one would expect to see. I would be very happy to share that S.L.A. with States Members and the Senator if she so wishes.

3.15.3 The Connétable of St. John:

As the Education Department have a trustee on the board, could the Minister tell the Assembly when the position was advertised, in which publications and on how many occasions did the ad run, and how many applicants have there been for the position?

The Deputy of St. John:

No, I cannot because I am not privy to that information. I think that if the Constable is worried about that he could ask the One Foundation directly.

3.15.4 The Connétable of St. John:

Given that I believe the ad was run for one evening or one night in one local publication, that might help the Minister. Can the Minister, because this is becoming a bit of a fiasco, hold an inquiry and report back to the House before any person is appointed to this position or using public money to appoint anybody to this position because the information I am getting back, that the job has already been promised to somebody and we need to get to the bottom of this. Thank you.

The Deputy of St. John:

I am not aware of any of the points the Constable makes. I do not think it is a fiasco and no, I will not be having an inquiry or coming back to the States Assembly. Thank you.

3.15.5 Deputy R.J. Rondel:

Would the Minister advise the Assembly, please, when a service level agreement will be in place, if it not already is, and would the Minister undertake to find out if employment references have been sought from immediate past employers of those that have been shortlisted, if that has happened?

The Deputy of St. John:

I am not sure, I think the service level agreement is certainly agreed, the draft of it, and I am not sure as we stand here whether it has been currently signed or not. If it has not I know that it is imminent. I do not think the appointment has been made yet. I know that several people have been interviewed and all I can say is that I will ask our officer to just make the One Foundation aware of the concerns of various Members with regard to it. But I cannot ... that was the whole point of having a separately funded foundation to manage these things on behalf of the States. I am not going to go and proscribe things to that particular foundation.