

STATES OF JERSEY

Economic Affairs Scrutiny Panel Rural Economy Strategy 2011-2015 Review

TUESDAY, 13th JULY 2010

Panel:

Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville (Chairman)

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier of St. Saviour

Deputy D.J.A. Wimberley of St. Mary

Witness:

Mr. C. Kelleher (Skills Jersey)

Also Present:

Mr. D. Scott (Scrutiny Officer)

[15:05]

Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville (Chairman):

So, these are quite formal as you know. You have got your notice in front of you telling you about your evidence. We are temporarily one panel member down; he is just at the dentist, Daniel Wimberley. We will start off by introducing ourselves for the benefit of the Rebecca and her tape there. I am Caroline Labey, Deputy of Grouville and I am chairing the Rural Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier of St. Saviour:

Roy Le Hérisssier, Deputy of St. Saviour.

The Deputy of Grouville:

This is Darren Scott, our officer, and Rebecca over there. Could you introduce yourself?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

My name is Chris Kelleher. I am Strategic Policy Manager, Economic Development and I am representing Skills Jersey here today.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Right. Would you mind starting by telling us about Skills Jersey?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Skills Jersey was formed in 2008. There are sort of 3 tiers to the actual body. At the political level there are 3 Ministers from the departments who have responsibility for skills and workforce developments, that being the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture, the Minister for Economic Development and the Minister for Social Security; and the actual chairperson for those 3 on the Skills Executive are rotated on an annual basis. It currently stands with Deputy James Reed as chairman. The tier down from that is the Skills Jersey Board, and the Skills Jersey Board is an employer-led board chaired by Richard Plaster from the J.E.C. (Jersey Electricity Company) plus 6 other members made up from a number of organisations and individuals including an academic from the U.K. (United Kingdom); and officers from those 3 departments mentioned earlier also sit on the Board in an advisory capacity. Skills Executive and Skills Jersey Board are collectively known as Skills Jersey, and the level below that is the actual Skills Service which is officers who have responsibility for training workforce development. The 3 main areas that we look at are the so-called demand capture aspects where we try and ascertain where the skills shortages are at the moment and where they will be in the future, an integrated careers information advice and guidance service which has combined the careers services from both Education

and Social Security, which is an all-ages abilities service and backgrounds; and then Managing Provision which primarily looks after Highlands College, but also works with other training providers. So, while it is 3 divisions they all work very closely together.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Right. But you personally work for Economic Development.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

That is correct; yes.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Right. So, as this is an Economic Development - well, and Planning Environment - initiative, have you had any input into this paper?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

I have; yes. Quite a large part with regards to the training skills aspect of the people section, something that I have been closely monitoring.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay. So, would you like to just explain the section that you have been involved with in here?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Sure. I think we could put it in the wider context of what we are doing with the Skills Executive, or Skills Jersey, should I say. What we have looked at this year: we have had some work undertaken in the past by the Learning and Skills Network, the L.S.N., with regards to the employability of people, 16, 18 and 21 year-olds. In summary, I can say that young people if they turn up on time, have a certain level of literacy and numeracy and are enthusiastic, most employers will take them on. However, we wanted to have a bit more substance than that, so we then started looking on a sector by sector basis. We have undertaken work and had a report on the construction sector; we have had another report done on retail, wholesale and the fulfilment industry. Just recently we have had one undertaken on the tourism and hospitality sector, and we have also had some work undertaken on trust and compliance - what skills employers are looking for in that sector. On top of that, we have also had a review undertaken by an academic from the U.K. looking at adult literacy and numeracy. Now, it did seem that of the various sectors that we have on the Island, agriculture and horticulture are probably another sector we could look at as a distinctive sector within the Jersey economy. So it is quite important and timely that we sort of got involved with the people section of the actual rural strategy. What we are looking at at the moment is an industry where approximately - and this is only based on the Annual Social Survey which is sort of qualitative information rather than quantitative - that 46 per cent of people in industry are under the age of 24. You then sort of get a flat graph, and then it is sort of at 50 plus we start to see about one-third of those individuals in industry working. So as far as succession planning goes, the industry certainly sort of needs to wake up a little bit and see what opportunities there are for individuals coming into the industry. But tying into that, there is obviously a lot of cross-compliance work if farmers, growers, producers are going to be receiving

funds from government. There is a certain: “We will give some money to you but we would expect something from you for doing that”, and the environment is playing a big part, be it through the dairy or going through one of the multiples: “Should we pay you, we demand very high standards.” So, it would seem appropriate that as well as looking at training or opportunities for individuals coming into the industry, we need to look at Continual Professional Development (CPD) for individuals in industry in the first place as well. So, sort of a combined effort. Looking at the other sectors we have been working on, one of the things we want to work with is representative bodies, be it the Jersey Farmers’ Union, the Royal Jersey Agricultural and Horticultural Society, Jersey Dairy, as I say some marketing organisations, working with them to find out where are the skills gaps now, where will they be in the future, how can we look at sort of some form of succession planning; how to encourage people to come into the industry; what are the opportunities for individuals to develop themselves where they are now? It is no longer just sort of managing farms, but managing businesses. But a lot of people would say that has been the case for a very long time, that it is really very expensive to farm now, and you do have to have a good business head on you if you are going to survive. So, as I say, it is quite timely that we are looking at that. The industry collectively needs to sort of look at some way of marketing themselves to young people, or people thinking of transferring from other sectors, coming into the industry. We need to look at training opportunities for people to come into the industry, training for those who exist in there, even higher education initiative as well; take it we need to have a good business head to run a business; and then also looking at how to engage with people once you put the kind of thing into train, how you get people from the industry engaged into the good things about training and continuous development.

The Deputy of Grouville:

This piece of work has not started yet?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Not for the actual rural economy, but it will be in the not too distant future that we will be doing that. It is just that we have had 4 reports that we have undertaken for Skills Jersey to date, and we are still ... we are going to end up having a lot of reports and not building strategies. So we want to sort of get those in order first, and then develop the other ones.

The Deputy of Grouville:

So, what is the sort of timescale?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

I would like to see that we start that some time towards the end of the year, the work could be undertaken. It is not a large piece of work when we look at the other sectors that we have got involved with - a sort of 6 to 8-week time span to complete the work. Then, once you have undertaken the research, it needs to be sort of validated by the industry, and then working with the industry as to how you sort of develop the strategy of overcoming the issues.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

You mentioned - Chris mentioned - in the report the issue of succession. Now we know historically of course it was automatic: if you had a son or daughter who wished

to go into farming they inherited the farm, and that was the major barrier overcome, the barrier of property costs. Do you see that as somehow continuing with other forms of entry?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

I would like to think so. I mean, there is sort of a juxtapose of position at the moment where you have certainly a very large potato organisation that is structured in such a way it would be very difficult for new ventures to come into that particular area as sort of like a farmer as such. But, you know, there may be a position with that, in an organisation that an individual may be able to fill, wherever that may be. But there are producers on the Island where there are opportunities, but because it is almost like a generation gap. People of my age may have children who have no affiliation with the industry, and it is very difficult for them to understand what the opportunities are. But, you know, agriculture is an integral part of Jersey's history and long may it continue so. Succession planning is a big part of what we want to do with the R.J.A. and H.S. (Royal Jersey Agricultural and Horticultural Society). I mean there are opportunities of potential share farming.

[15:15]

I think if people are going to want to work in this industry it would not necessarily be the case that they are going to be a farmer per se. They may be doing related industries, maybe diversifying the actual working. So, to class themselves as farmer, possibly not; but they may be doing things within the rural economy. I guess that is why the rural economy is quite broad, rather than just specifically farming.

The Deputy of Grouville:

We had one of the employers in today who employs 500 plus staff, so obviously it is not just the farmer. It is all different elements. But have Skills Jersey focused ... you highlighted the fact that there might be a shortfall in connecting young people with farming. Is Education planning to do anything to make this reconnect?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

I am not sure if it is Education's job to do on their own, but I think it is Education working with industry. If we look at construction, if we look at retail, if we look at tourism, there is no sort of policy to say how to encourage people. As an industry body there is no one body going into schools and talking to individuals about what the opportunities are. If you were to talk to somebody about retail, personally I think you would be working behind the counter. If you were working in the hospitality industry, you would probably think it would either be working in a bar as a waiter, whereas there are lots of other opportunities. Likewise in the agriculture industry; yes, you may be somebody who is head of looking after the pesticides and the fertilisers. But there again, if you are working for a marketing organisation you might be involved in P.R.(Public Relations) or H.R.(Human Resources). It is not just a case of you farming with a tractor and a few cows.

The Deputy of Grouville:

So, like the careers fairs and things like that, there has never to my mind been a stand for the rural economy.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

There has been.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Has there?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Well, the rural economy ... one of the actual produce marketing organisations has been there for the last 3 or 4 years. The person who looks after the H.R. for the largest marketing organisation has been there talking about opportunities.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

In your investigations - and I am sorry, this is trying to, in a sense, get you to pre-empt the report - have you looked at the idea of a dedicated training centre which of course used to exist on the Island at Trinity?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

That is a difficult one. I mean, you are not talking huge numbers of people. There are ... if you look at those going off on higher education which are, sort of, countryside/farming/degrees since 2005, there are probably about 3 and 5 people. There is a kind of a generation where there are a number of farmers whose siblings are thinking of going into the industry but would like to get a qualification. I do not think it would justify having a centre over here for the numbers of people that we would be talking about. We would be talking less than half a dozen people who would be wanting to do it. I mean, we do have apprenticeships. We have set the

framework now for apprenticing for gardeners and green keepers. There is no reason why we could not look at something - elements of things which industry is calling for and calling the expertise at that particular level. Because when you are looking at the 16 to 18 year-olds, you are not looking for high skills, but when you are moving up into sort of running businesses then you are.

The Deputy of Grouville:

But you said that there would not be more than 6 to 8 people. But that is just looking at being a farmer, owning the business. But there are, as we know, lots of other opportunities, especially with the bigger enterprises. So how do you quantify that statement?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

I think what ... certainly the biggest organisations, and probably a few, if you talk to them, they would ask you to go outside the Island to get experience. I certainly know a few organisations who do - people go and see them and say: "Go and get some experience outside the Island, and then come and talk to us, you know, in a couple of years' time and see if there are opportunities." So business is multi-million pounds' businesses now; as I say, it is not small enterprises, and there are specialisms, but you do need to be a good business person if you are going to go into the industry.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

In terms of specialist training, be it tree lopping and all that, what you might call the first level of skills as well as the more generic business skills to which you have alluded, is it the view of the Skills Agency that wherever possible this should be

initiated by the employer, but in certain circumstances you would be prepared to offer a degree of financial support?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

I think what I would say is that if it is compliance - to do with compliance - then I think it is something industry needs to do. If it is for their customer requirement thing, you know, I think they should be ... where there is sort of more generic training then maybe that is something we can look at. You talk about apprenticeships. At the moment they are traditionally in the sort of craft areas. We are reviewing the scheme at the moment for the purpose I think of widening the actual scheme and broadening it and deepening it. So there could be elements that you could catch on. As I say, if you do not have expertise over here you could call upon trainers from outside the Island, and that is where we could see some sort of financial assistance. In essence, it is to the individual rather than the employer.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

But at the moment, as you have said earlier, Chris - and in fact we have just had a witness whose son is hopefully about to go to Royal Agricultural College - they would fall under the normal grant awarding higher education schemes. But we have been told there is a group who fall between the cracks. Basically people post-16 who wish to follow pre-degree or alternative degree studies off Island. What do you do about that group?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

It is interesting, because the Student Finance orders were updated in 2001, and it is sort of an area where previously funding was available for those students to go off to do National Diplomas at the age of 16, but because there were dwindling numbers, not for any malicious reason, that was not included within the actual orders. So, there have not ... I mean, the issue is that a lot of these students will do, say, one year of their A-levels and then want to go off to college and have to do a foundation year. That is no different to people who want to do a degree in art and you have to do a foundation year to do that - unless you do a full year arts course to get your required level to go straight on to an arts related degree, and that is seen as your foundation year. But obviously there is an appeals' procedure which can take place. I mean, it is not a huge number. There is also a fund which has been set up by Education that people can apply to, to help them through the foundation studies. I mean, there are lots of instances during my tenureship, I suppose, at the Student Finance Office where people had to do foundation years. We almost had as many people doing extra years; so it is an additional burden on the Education budget if everybody was accepted to do a foundation year. As I say, there are exceptions.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Is it something that you are going to look into, because obviously a child that is interested in doing, sort of, manual work might not be the sort that is going to study A-levels?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Absolutely.

The Deputy of Grouville:

So, is it something ...?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

It is something that ... I mean, this was brought up at one of the meetings we had open to the public, and it is something I have followed up with the Careers Service who look after Student Finance. I have not heard any more, and I spoke to the person who brought the subject up at the meeting, just to make sure I had got all the facts, but it is something which is being investigated.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Because in Education we are looking at the 14 to 19 year age group at one point.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

They still are.

The Deputy of Grouville:

They are still looking.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

The 14 to 19 curriculum is something which is under review at the moment. A paper will be coming out shortly on that. But with regards to the sort of fixed 14 to 16 curriculum, from September this year 60 youngsters from all non-fee-paying schools can have access to vocational learning, with an additional 60 starting in 2011. So we will have 120 assisted. Currently these are going to be in the construction areas, food

preparation and hairdressing. With regards to those who want to work in the agriculture industry there may be room to sort of do ... I mean, agriculture is quite broad, so they can do areas of engineering which is quite an integral part of the industry as well.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

On this issue, of course we talked about the fact ... well, we have not, but I will now talk about the fact that traditional entry into agriculture is changing, and I think you did allude to that, and you have mentioned that the very big marketing/growing group has been taking a stand at the Careers Fair. What other initiatives have been taken to bring in untraditional applicants to agriculture, so to speak?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

I would have to say pass on that at the moment. I mean, I speak to the likes of the larger growing organisations. Their numbers are probably made up of people, migrant workers for the main part of the season. I think people from the industry would love to sort of see successes coming in from the local indigenous population, but they are sort of unsure, I guess, the best way to approach it, and that is where I think we could help - Skills Jersey can help - to sort of steer them in the right way. There are lots of initiatives they can get involved with, talking about the Apprenticeship Scheme: Enterprise Education would be another great example where, you know, schools and businesses work closely together. Business can go in and talk about what their businesses do. I think a lot of people who are in the finance industry would love to work in industry if they had the same sort of income - guaranteed

income - as they do in that particular industry; that is for sure. But there are young people coming into the industry.

The Deputy of Grouville:

So who is the emphasis on for this work? We have been speaking to employers in the industry, and some of them are really not interested. You know, if somebody applies for the job they will take them as face value. But who is making the connection between school children and the industry?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Well, that would be the industry who would be working with Skills Jersey. It will be up to the representative groups to sort of come forward with a strategy how you encourage people - how you market yourself. How do you market yourself as an industry? I mean, you cannot compete with the finance industry on salaries, but it is more a sort of way of life that you can see something more tangible if you work in industry. Not really dissimilar to the tourism and hospitality industry - you can sell that in lots of different ways as well. Not everybody wants to work in an office.

The Deputy of Grouville:

No, absolutely not. But you think the emphasis should be on the industry.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Well, it is a combination. That is why we are setting up the strategic group. If there are growers or producers who want to work with the steering group which we will set up - I mean, it is only after we have done the actual bit of research and it will be when

people have a different strategy for each of the sectors of the Island. But it will be down to the actual industry to initiate coming into the schools to talk to them. I mean, careers teachers' time is quite precious and they will not be experts in all areas. With Enterprise Education, something that I am working on, we will be able to work with people in the industry and they will be able to offer certain projects - initiatives - that we can work with; and for them it will be at certain times of the year. I mean, for potato producers the quieter time will be from sort of August until Christmas. So, there are lots of things they can do. I think that from the Skills Jersey perspective, it will be about showing them the possibilities rather than sort of doing the actual work.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Is there use made ... now, I forget at the moment, you know, the long-running programme in schools which introduces students to work placements, and then we have Young Enterprise, which I know is not a work familiarisation as such, but it introduces the whole idea of entrepreneurial activity. Is agriculture/horticulture in its many spin offs, is it brought into these in a properly structured way?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Well, I think their approach, but again it is seasonal, the actual work experience.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Trident.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Yes, Trident is a great example, and again that is possibly where industry can sort of help itself a little bit. After someone has had a work experience it is for them to almost have a debriefing about, you know, what the opportunities might be for that individual at the end of it. So, there are opportunities, for sure. I mean, lots of it goes on in the U.K. Open farm days is also a good way of showing people; I mean, we had the West Show the other day which sort of encourages people to get an idea of what the industry - well, it is more the sector than an actual industry - what it is all about. A lot has been done, but I think there is a lot more to be done.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

What about allied parts of the industry, Chris, like as you do with that much loved organisation, the National Trust? It has a Lands' Department, for example. It has people who look after the land; it has people who take the scientific interest in some ways in the land as well. We have similar people in the Environment Department of the States and so forth. Is it sold in that broader sense to young people?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Yes. I mean, one of the initiatives that Economic Development runs is the Jersey Undergraduate Internship programme, and since its inception 5 years ago, both the Environment Department and the National Trust of Jersey have taken on undergraduates for the summer and given valuable experience, and you can see the young interns and individuals that are away doing specific work and, you know, obviously it will be at the back of their minds seeing what the opportunities are for young people. But it also gives young people the opportunity to see what

opportunities there are outside in Jersey as well. It is not sort of a specific traditional area.

[15:30]

The Deputy of Grouville:

I just wondered if there is any way of encouraging industry to get involved.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

With what in particular?

The Deputy of Grouville:

With apprenticeship schemes and training people within the industry.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

I think that there is. It is a time factor more than anything for those individuals. I mean, it would be great to have ... the problem with the likes of the potato season, that starts from sort of January through to August, and it is difficult to ... I mean, we want to have a sort of flexible apprenticeship schemes and we will look at ways of being as flexible as possible. I do not think they really know necessarily what they want themselves and what they are looking for, for an individual, and that is where they will need guidance from ourselves or from experts from elsewhere. But it is not a case that they do not want to get involved, but I just believe that they are not quite sure how they should get involved.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Well, that is it. So I wondered what role Skills Jersey would play in that.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Well, it would be very much to explain to them what the opportunities are and what is happening in other areas, in other jurisdictions, be it Guernsey or other islands or in the U.K. When we look at apprenticeship, there are apprenticeships in the U.K. for the agricultural and horticultural industries. We can sort of mould similar models to what they are doing over there. What would be quite useful is that with our new model we are looking for with the Jersey Apprenticeship Scheme is that there will be certain on-the-job sort of expertise, how they can demonstrate what they have learnt in the classroom; and we will be calling on people from the various sectors who have had many years experience to come in and determine if they have and can manage to do what they are supposed to be doing in the workplace. But no, there are lots of opportunities. It is just putting something down on paper that people will know the best way to approach it.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Because the people that we have spoken to in the industry and Jersey Farmers' Union, they would not know how to go about encouraging people in.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

No. That is what we are there to do. Skills Jersey is there to say: "This is what we think working with them. This is the best approach", and tries to find out what the opportunities are from them. You know: "Where do you see a growth there; what sort

of individuals are you looking for, and which particular - what sort of qualifications do you want this individual to have?" Until we have undertaken that bit of research it is difficult to say.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

It is almost like Soviet Union command economy approach, but do you ever take the view of, not only will we chase the market, so to speak, seems to be the view you have just expounded; but there are some industries that are socially very useful for the Island and they need to be encouraged, and if we are going to lose a bit of money at the beginning so be it. Do you take that view with industries like agriculture and hospitality?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

I mean, it is a personal view rather than speaking for Skills Jersey: I think there has got to be a certain amount of realignment within the various sectors. Both those industries you have talked about have in the past had huge sums of taxpayers' money. While it is good to see, certainly in the agriculture industry, that individuals are not just getting sums of money, it is not a case of hand outs, it is hands up really, and if money is going to be given to the industry for aiding them then there will be certain cross compliances they have to abide by, which is good to see. So the taxpayer can see what they are getting there, giving the money over.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Just to summarise, you recognise that there is a disconnect between our school children and the industry.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Yes.

The Deputy of Grouville:

There is no funding support for the 16 year-olds if they want to go away to agriculture college?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

No, I did not say that. I am just saying that in the structure of when the Student Finance orders were put together, that was omitted from the actual paper, not for any particular reason, it was just ... there is not. But there are people who want to go away and do a National Diploma which you would do at the age of 16, then there are funds available for individuals to sort of go away to do that qualification in the U.K. There are certain funds which have been set up. But also it would be possible to go to appeal to the Education Department to actually maybe apply for that funding.

The Deputy of Grouville:

I have to say that is contrary to some of the practical experience that was brought to us from the Jersey Farmers' Union.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Okay. I mean, I cannot comment because I do not know what they said.

Deputy D.J.A. Wimberley of St. Mary:

When you said “appeal” do you mean that these funds are not there as of right with scales as they are at university, which is pretty well: “Go to such-and-such a university and I am going to study chemistry. Right. How much are you prepared to ...?” and you are saying this is on a different basis for 16 plus?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Sixteen plus is ... I mean, for people going on to higher education there is Student Finance orders which are in place which ... they are discretionary orders which if you do want to go to university and the course is full-time, then there is a method of funding which is available. If someone at 16 wants to go away to sort of agriculture college, we are talking ... the fact that there have only been 3 people who have sort of done an agriculture/conservation/rural qualification - 3 people since 2005 - shows the sort of numbers of people who are going off to university to study that subject. But for the actual National Diploma which is at 16 to 18 year-olds, then there are funds which are ... have been set aside in Education that individuals can apply for if they would want to go away and do a National Diploma.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Would it be viewed rather positively or rather negatively, like as a hurdle? “Well, I do want to do this. I hope you do.” How would that be viewed at that stage of the process?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

I think we have seen it as a hurdle because you do not have an Island provision to do it. So, if there is an alternative, and that means an individual can go off Island, then if

an individual was staying here, £6,500 would be spent on that individual to do that course if it was available. But there is no reason why that £6,500 could not be used to fund that individual to go to the U.K.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

That would not cover all the costs, would it, of fulltime education at that level?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

For a National Diploma the actual tuition fees are significantly less than what they are at higher education level.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

There is no possibility of your agency introducing some kind of indenture system where you promise to go and work in the industry for a certain period after training; or like the armed forces do, you get some very good incentives at the beginning, but you have to agree to work in the industry for a while, as a way - and of course you get that with maths and physics teachers in the U.K. at the moment - they get some quite nice incentives. No chance you would do that in areas where you feel you are struggling, maybe for economic reasons as you mentioned earlier - finance obviously totally eclipses salaries you can offer elsewhere - no chance you would do that as an agency?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

The agency does not have those sorts of powers. I mean, it is the Minister for Education, I think, who will make a ...

The Deputy of Grouville:

He is chair of the Skills Executive?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Skills Jersey Executive. Deputy James Reed is chairman. He is also there as Minister for Education, Sport and Culture. I mean, that would be his decision if he wanted to do that.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Is Skills Jersey putting that to him, making recommendations?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

I think it would be a very difficult thing to do. If you look at those individuals who go off to higher education, you have individuals who go off to do primary school education, and the number of redundant primary school teachers on the Island is something of a ratio of 4:1, but people still keep going away. It is very difficult to say to individuals, you know: "We will fund you if you go and do this and then you have to come and do ..." you could get yourself an awful lot of people there to try and find ...

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

No. All I was suggesting ... I take your point. It is similar if anyone wants to do nuclear physics; it is going to be very hard to practise in that sense in Jersey. But

there are some areas where you might wish to give an incentive and lock people in for a while.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Yes. I do not see ... I think an incentive potentially would be a good idea - or a disincentive for those who do not possibly. I am not quite sure how you would work at this. I could see where there are shortages on the Island and, yes, some incentive would not be a bad idea. I guess from our perspective, developing these strategies and going into schools and advising individuals where the opportunities are will make them think about where they will go in the future. That is the whole point of doing it.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay. Is there anything that you would like to add to your submission?

Representative, Skills Jersey:

No, apart from the fact I think it is a very good document; it is very rounded.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Even though I wrote it. **[Laughter]**

Representative, Skills Jersey:

It does encompass a lot of the Skills issues which ... well, not necessarily Skills issues, but what we are sort of looking for with regards to other sectors. So, from our perspective ... and it is good to see that it is the triple bottom line, that it is the profit for people and the environment. So everything is taken into consideration. I also like

the concept that it includes Fisheries as well now. You talk about rural: it is very difficult if you measure it just purely in economic terms; you know, it pales into insignificance with the finance industry. But if you take in the sort of environmental and social aspects of the industry or sector, then that counts for a lot.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay. Has either of you 2 got any questions?

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Well, I do not know if it has been covered while I have been away, but the sort of general question of if you have got a sector like agriculture, how do you assess the future of the sector? We have had people in here saying: “It is going to get - in terms of numbers of people - smaller;” and then you have got other people who say: “No. There are plenty of niches for people to get stuck in and you know, do veggies(?) and sheep and all kinds of different things.” So those are 2 very different approaches, and I just wonder how you can ... you know, where Skills sits in that, because you have got to predict a future for some people saying it is going that way and some people saying it is going that way.

Representative, Skills Jersey:

Absolutely. I mean, that is where the actual review will identify if there are, there are. I mean, depending on who you talk to, once that is validated by industry then we will be able to put something together which will take into account hopefully the juxtaposed positions of both, really. The fact is some are saying there are positions and others are saying there are not.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Right; and you have covered that already.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay. All right. If that is all, thank you very much for coming.

[15:41]