

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

BY DEPUTY K.M. WILSON OF ST. CLEMENT

QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 4th NOVEMBER 2024

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 11th NOVEMBER 2024

Question

“In relation to the Island’s ferry tender process, will the Minister advise –

- (a) what consideration, if any, was given by the Government to improving Jersey’s resilience and reputation during the process;
- (b) whether he has received the support of all members of the Council of Ministers, and the impact, if any, the level of such support has had on the decisions being made;
- (c) what impact, if any, the tender process is having on inter-Island relationships with his counterparts and how the relationship will be strengthened post the tender process;
- (d) what assessment has been undertaken on the impact the actions of the Chief Officer of the Department for the Economy have had on the process, and what has been done, if anything, as a result of those actions;
- (e) the total expenditure on the tender process, including contingencies, and how value for money has been demonstrated; and
- (f) what lessons have been learnt from this process for joint working between the Islands, and to avoid future reputational and financial risk to Jersey?”

Answer

- (a) A range of technical, commercial, financial and legal factors were considered as part of the tender process, including matters related to resilience such as fleet modernisation and maintenance. As to reputation, that is something Ministers consider in all decisions they make.
- (b) All Ministers have been supportive and constructive throughout our discussions, appreciating the importance of securing a sustainable long-term service that best serves the interests of Jersey. This has helped considerably in decision-making.
- (c) The Council of Ministers remain confident in the strength of inter-Island relations, respecting that our counterparts in Guernsey must make their own decisions. Ministers will continue to engage with our sister Island constructively using all available avenues.
- (d) The Chief Officer immediately recused themselves, and a replacement Senior Responsible Officer was appointed swiftly. It is regrettable that this needed to take place, but it has not had a material impact on the speed or effectiveness of the process.
- (e) The tender process has been conducted by existing officials of the Government, including those in the Economy and Treasury Departments, and the Ports of Jersey. Additional costs (including legal fees and expert professional advice) have been incurred during this process as expected when conducting a procurement of this size and complexity. As of 31st October, Jersey’s share of these costs stood at around £750,000 since the tender was launched in 2024.

As to value for money, securing a sustainable high-quality ferry service is crucial for our economy and way of life, and the processes undertaken have been designed to demonstrate and secure this outcome.

It is important to note that the costs of contingency are not connected to the procurement process. The spend on contingency to date has been £2.97m.

- (f) It was appropriate to follow an open and competitive pan-Island process, and the ultimate outcome will be a more sustainable ferry service. Ministers and officials are constantly considering how to improve, and a lesson learnt exercise will be conducted at the appropriate stage, including any lessons for improved pan-Island arrangements and relations.