

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE BY  
SENATOR A. BRECKON  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 22nd JUNE 2010**

**Question**

“Can the Minister advise if a Service Level Agreement is in place with SERCO for the operation of the Waterfront Pool, and, if so, what are its provisions and what value was achieved for the public for the payment of £455,866 in 2009?”

**Answer**

On 23rd August 2001 a service level agreement was reached between Waterfront Enterprise Board Limited and SERCO Limited. This covered areas of opening times, levels of charges, staffing and maintaining standards consistent with good industry practice. It is also required to provide swimming clubs with the equivalent time and on an equivalent basis to that which they enjoyed at Fort Regent pool before it closed.

Since opening in July 2003, the leisure pool has provided a valuable service to local residents and visitors and offers an extensive “Learn to Swim” programme for children and adults, provision for swimming clubs, public casual swimming and membership benefits.

Responsibility for the administration of the agreement relating to the Aquasplash was transferred from the Waterfront Enterprise Board to Education, Sport and Culture on 1st January 2005. The ESC Department subsequently reviewed the terms of the agreement in consultation with the operator, and during 2009 a variation to the agreement was agreed between SERCO and the Department. This variation came into effect on 1st January 2010, and under the new terms the levels of financial subsidy paid to SERCO for the next five years are fixed. In addition, a performance related bonus arrangement has been included where both parties can benefit if the financial deficit is reduced below set levels.

These changes will allow the Department to budget effectively and also ensure SERCO maximises the performance of the Leisure Pool.

The maximum levels of subsidy payable are:-

2010 - £362,000  
2011 - £369,000  
2012 - £376,000  
2013 - £383,000  
2014 - £ 391,000

The level of subsidy paid by the public to SERCO in 2009 was £348,044.

The amount quoted by Senator Breckon of £455,866 is the sum of the amount paid by the public in 2009 to SERCO (£348,044) plus the annual contribution from the developer (formerly CTP Limited and now AXA Insurance) of £107,822. The latter is an annual index linked payment agreed with the developer of the Waterfront site as part of the original agreement, and runs for the duration of the contract (21 years).

At a more general level, I should point out that public swimming pools invariably require a public subsidy in some form or other, both in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. This is a point which was emphasised to States members at the time of the States debate on the ‘St. Helier Waterfront Leisure Complex: Terms of Lease’ (P.92/99), which was approved by the Assembly on 27th July 1999. In the report accompanying the proposition, it was noted that Fort Regent was then operating at an estimated deficit of £200,000, and it was made clear that a significant subsidy would be required to operate the new leisure pool.

