

2018.11.20

**3 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence will ask of the Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture regarding the funding for the Jersey Arts Centre: [OQ.193.2018]**

Would the Minister explain what steps he is taking to address the issue of funding for the Arts Centre?

**Senator L.J. Farnham (The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture):**

Deputy Tadier will be taking this on behalf of the department.

**Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade (Assistant Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture):**

I thank the Deputy for his question and his interest in this area. The first thing I will say is that we are in a very unsatisfactory position as a States generally in the sense that we have had a Budget which has been lodged; the deadline for amendments has now passed. Many organisations, not just the Arts Centre, find themselves in a position of uncertainty as to whether and what funding they will be getting for the next year. Officers at my department have submitted to the investment appraisal board a case for additional stabilisation funding for the Arts Centre in 2019 in advance of the development of a full cultural arts and heritage strategy to be produced in 2019. That bid will be determined by the Minister for Treasury and Resources. I had hoped to be in a position to have the information today but that is not the case.

**3.3.1 Deputy K.F. Morel:**

Would the Assistant Minister be able to give us any information about the timeline for finding out about this?

**Deputy M. Tadier:**

As I said, I think the phrase is "suboptimal". One would have hoped, whether on the Government side or on the Scrutiny side, that we would know where we are last Friday, so that we can consider the Budget with its full amendments. But that is not the case. What I am hoping is that within the next week or so we will know what growth bids or just general bids for funding have been accepted for the arts departments, including sports; I am looking across the Chamber to Senator Pallett. But I would go on to say that we know the Arts Centre is just one of several cultural arts and heritage organisations facing pressures at the moment. My predecessor in the role of Assistant Minister with responsibility for culture did commission a report by BOP Consultants, who are specialists in culture and creative economy. That report is now available and I have instructed my officers to make sure it is published this Thursday, so that we can all read that, and it confirms that there has been a sustained lack of funding in the area of culture for many years. That is something which needs to be urgently addressed.

**3.3.2 Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier:**

I realise that the Assistant Minister may not be able to answer this question, which I had assumed would be answered by the Minister. Can the Assistant Minister tell us what is the proportion of funding that is being given to the Arts Centre, and indeed to the arts organisations, when compared to the funding being given to other sporting events? I am thinking particularly of the recent

commitment, which I support, by the Minister to support the super-triathlon for the next several years?

[10:00]

Could he tell us what the funding for that is and how that compares with the funding that has been given to the Arts Centre, for example?

**Deputy M. Tadier:**

The Constable raises a very interesting question. I do not have that information to hand but I would ask that the officers, if they are listening, will pick that information up because it would be useful to have a comparison. If I can answer the underlying question perhaps, is to say that I am very supportive of money being given, whether it is the triathlon or other cultural events, because there really is a synergy between the sports sector, the well-being sector, and the arts. I think they all pull in the right direction. There is an economic driver as well as one of general well-being for our community in all of these issues. I am happy for more work to be done on that, hopefully not a disproportionate amount, but I think whether we are funding sports or culture, they all pull in the same direction in making our community more vibrant and more resilient.

**3.3.3 The Connétable of St. Helier:**

I accept the Deputy's argument, but is it not the case that when a project, like the super-triathlon, has guaranteed funding for the next 4 years, they are in a much stronger position than the Arts Centre, which does not have such funding guaranteed at all.

**Deputy M. Tadier:**

I think what the funding for the super-triathlon shows is that by having champions for the tourism and sport sector in Jersey, we can secure a really good deal for them. I am hoping that by having a champion for the arts and cultural sector as well, that we can make sure that we have the equivalent arrangements for the next 4 years and beyond, so that these organisations can no longer have the precarity that they have been living under for many years and concentrate on what they do best, which is producing an artistic programme for their punters.

**3.3.4 Deputy K.F. Morel:**

Given the uncertainty that surrounds funding for the Arts Centre, and many other cultured events, would the Assistant Minister agree that it would be a fair description of the Council of Ministers' attitude towards culture is that it is very much at the bottom of the pile?

**Deputy M. Tadier:**

I am hoping that I will be proven wrong when we hear back about which bids have been accepted. I like to think that there has been a sea change, if indeed there was one necessary. I think they have always been champions and promoters in the Assembly and in Government for culture and arts. But I think there has been a renewed understanding of the interplay between all of these factors. I hope that when the BOP report is published in the next few days it will add more knowledge and more discussion to this very important and underplayed area of our economy and our Island.