

STATES OF JERSEY

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel Cultural Strategy Review

MONDAY, 11th OCTOBER 2010

Panel:

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier of St. Saviour (Chairman)

Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour

Witnesses:

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre

Director, Jersey Arts Centre

Also present:

Ms. S. Power (Scrutiny Officer)

[13:03]

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier of St. Saviour (Chairman):

I would very much like to welcome you here, and members of the public in the singular, but perhaps becoming the plural. What we will do is we will introduce ourselves and yourselves for the tape, and then we will launch into the formal session.

So I am Roy Le Hérisssier, the Chairman, and Deputy of St. Saviour.

Deputy J.M. Macon of St. Saviour:

Deputy Jeremy Macon of St. Saviour. Afternoon.

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

Daniel Austin, Director of the Jersey Arts Centre.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

John Young, I am currently Chairman of the Arts Centre and have been previously Treasurer.

Ms. S. Power (Scrutiny Officer)

Sam Power, Scrutiny Officer.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Thank you very much indeed. I must give apologies on behalf of Deputy Pitman, who will be late, and Deputy Tadier is elsewhere, as I speak. But hope springs eternal. We will go into the questions. You have got the questions, they are fairly general and we may well end up obviously developing supplementaries. So I will kick off and then Jeremy. Please can you outline the Arts Centre's relationship with the Department of Education, Sport and Culture?

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

It occurs at 2 levels. We have periodic meetings with the Minister, and so I would certainly describe our relationship as good. In fact, excellent. We have had excellent relationships with the previous Ministers and when issues have arisen we have been able to bring it to their attention indirectly, because it is not a chatty type of relationship. Our immediate dialogue is with Rod McLoughlin who the dialogue probably takes place on a much more frequent basis between Daniel, as director, and Rod, and then periodic meetings, political meetings, were arranged and we take matters forward.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Thank you for that, John. Can you describe what one might call the formal constitutional relationship?

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

First of all the Arts Centre itself is a property constituted body by the act of the Royal Court, so I have got a copy of that if you want to talk about that. We have in recent years entered into an agreement with the Minister in terms of our funding. That sets down basically what we are required to do and what the Minister is to do, which will basically provide us funding for our ongoing needs. That agreement, I think, Daniel will have to come in here, is an annual agreement. We would like it to be long term because it does put the Arts Centre in a difficult position having to make forward commitments when our funding agreement is an annual one. We have always consistently, certainly in my 7 years, requested a 3-year funding agreement and 5 year would be even better.

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

I think that the critical point in terms of funding, of the revenue grant, for Jersey Arts Centre at this period, is when we are making commitments for January, February, March, April for next year - so we are currently putting together that whole season. So, we are, based on the comfort that we have had in previous years, of getting that revenue grant, making commitments for our spring season. So there is that critical point at the end of each year that we face to secure those contracts with the artists coming to the Island, knowing that hopefully at some point in December that revenue grant will be declared and it will be fixed, and then we can kind of redraft our draft budget for that particular year.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

When do you start negotiating the revenue grants?

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

In terms of our programming sheets ... the revenue grant?

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Yes.

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

We have got our presentation in 2 weeks' time.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Who to?

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

That is with the Minister and Rod McLoughlin, and there will be another representative from Education, Sport and Culture there as well, probably David Greenwood.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

Just to come in, we do not have a Treasurer at the moment so I am trying to cover that role. We are obviously going on the basis of our August 2010 figures, so we are having to do a draft budget for next year, based on empirical experience over the last

few years, plus Daniel's programme plans, and we try and bring them together. What we have found in recent years, and we are sure it is not the Minister's fault, that it is until quite late in the year, when we get confirmation of the grant. Often within weeks of Christmas. That is not an ideal position, but it is not the Minister's fault, I am sure. He fully recognises our need to plan ahead. He is caught within the States system.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

How has the issue of the one year grant versus 3 or, indeed, 5 as you are seeking, how has that been justified to you?

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

Well, I do not think it has been justified. All Ministers, and certainly all persons, obviously since I spoke to them about it - indeed I feel sure that the officers support it - they recognise that ongoing organisations that provide an ongoing service do need to have greater (funding) certainty, and so it has certainly not been a conscious decision (not to provide it). It was that the system could not accommodate budgets greater than one year in frequency. He had indicated that at a point in time, with the budget process being replaced by a business planning process, that the business planning process would move out to several years, and of course ahead of that, we would then ... our stones would be set in the stand. We would know exactly where we were. Our auditors have always sought from us assurances, we have had to give written assurances, that there is nothing known to us which would prevent the Arts Centre continuing to be a going concern. The Minister has always assured us that if grants were to be lost we would always be given a year's notice. I feel some comfort from

that, that we could, if necessary, shut the organisation down, God forbid, with 12 months' notice. But be clear, Roy, we are absolutely dependent upon the level of grant funding which pays for our overheads and then with that our challenge is to generate as much activity as we can, and I think Daniel's programmes and figures cover that at length and what we can achieve from it.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

We have got further budgetary questions, and I will move to Deputy Maçon.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Hello. If you could, how does the Arts Centre allocate its annual grant received from the department? Maybe if you could start off with how much you receive and go from there?

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

When we make our presentation to the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture, we put together a draft budget, which is kind of like our wish bucket based on activity over the last year, and usually over the last 5 years as well. We tend to average out the income and expenditure on the different cost areas of our operation. The Arts Centre is a very sophisticated organisation in terms of our activities. There are the main performances, our main programme: box office revenue on that. There is the courses and workshops area of our work. There used to be, historically, an al fresco arts kind of season. Those grants from Jersey Tourism, because of the reducing grants there - the last grants we got were in 2008 and a very small grant for *My Family and Other Stories* up at Durrell last year in 2009. We are involved in the Channel Islands

Music Council, across all 4 islands, which has been going since 1974. We programme for the Arts in Health Care Trust - one of our Deputy Directors is the chair of that and promote in excess of 180 45 minute music concerts in the Island's care settings. We have a youth theatre. We have an adult equivalent to that: A.C.T. (Arts Centre Theatre). We have a junior drama programme. The programme is very sophisticated but we ring fence everything so that, for example, the Youth Theatre, the income from subscriptions and the box office from those shows are ring fenced, and that money is used to put on those performances in terms of the designs and settings and things. So we ring fence all the areas that we have in our budget, and usually go to about draft 6, 7 budget once we know in December what that revenue grant is going to be. So that we can really think about how best to allocate the money and what the projected income in each of those cost areas is.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

If I am allowed to, I can provide you with a copy of our draft 6 budget. I cannot promise that it is the very final one but it is quite detailed, and it sets out all the various figures on the budget headings which Daniel has explained. It is also the basis of our monthly reporting as we get figures against those once a month.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Carrying on with budget, although ... sorry, I should have made this clear at the start, we are obviously not the Public Accounts Committee, and neither is this, hopefully we transmitted this message to you, sort of a deconstruction exercise of the Cultural Strategy. It is a health check basically. Where is it at? Of course, we were particularly concerned whether all the troubles of the Heritage Trust were impacting

on other bodies, and how they were impacting on the ministry. We know the Minister got other funds available, as you well know, but there obviously have been reverberations, so we were quite keen to hear people's views.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

We have not had to call on disaster funds in the way that other organisations have. What we tried to do is live within the means that we got and try and achieve as much activity as we can. Overall our grant settles round about 45 to 50 per cent of our total spend. With the rest of it, (our income) it is all generated by sponsorship and ticket sales and any means we can to get money.

[13:15]

I have to tell you that it is much more difficult now to generate commercial sponsorships. That is really a struggle. We have a concessionaire who is very fair to us and we have a great working relationship, which I hope gives us income from the bar side of it, but we would like to generate more income ourselves by more commercial type of activity. We are seriously constrained within the building that we have got, hence our wish to see in the future, looking forward for the next 25 years, greater facilities from which we can generate more money ourselves.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Coming down to more sort of banal or mundane things, have you been drawn into the comprehensive spending review exercise?

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

No, I have read about it in the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)*. I have not had any invitation to any meetings.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

You have not been, for example, forewarned that there might be cuts?

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

I think there is hope that within the next couple of years that, at worst, we will have a standstill grant with maybe some inflationary increase. But certainly there has been an indication that from 2013 onwards that we may have to take up to a 5 per cent cut. But that is almost this morning that has come in. We have a very good relationship with Rod all the time in terms of the machinations of what happens with the arts and the funding, our revenue grant, the arts events: we are talking all the time with Rod. So I imagine in 2013 we will probably be looking at a cut from the department.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

But I mean we will have to do what is necessary. It is certainly not the case that all we have just done is provide less volume of activities. We have had to shift some of the emphasis and the Management Committee, which I chair, have had to put tighter discipline and constraints on Daniel when programming because Daniel's programmes - obviously he needs to do that, he as an arts professional, I am not - to programme more popular events and to trim the budget on some of the very, very high quality events where we get lower audiences. We just cannot sustain that number. So they have to be trimmed back. Also we have had to put pressure on Daniel to shift

towards more hiring agreements rather than where the Arts Centre pay their artist then receive the income; hiring agreements with either external groups coming into the Island or local societies where we know where we are (financially). Sometimes one sees really quite handsome sums of profit, I suppose, going into groups, but that is good. I mean I feel the more we can do, the more we generate money, and what we have not done is increased our call on government, but we would really like to generate more.

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

I think going back probably 2 years, when the recession hit, is that we were very, very aware at that time that we were going to have to kind of plan in a way that we might not have foreseen. And so there was an opportunity when we lost our grants from Jersey Tourism with the al fresco street theatre, which in its best year was probably around 50, and one year it was about £80,000 and we animated in 2006, or assisted to animate, the Battle of Flowers. That more or less finished in 2008 and so we were not able to, when the person who was in post as our Outreach Co-ordinator left to take up another post somewhere else, we had to freeze that post. And when our Caretaker retired in 2008, we froze that post as well, and adjusted our budget accordingly. I think that is where probably, historically, with reference to your earlier comment about the wider cultural arts scene in terms of funding (certainly from my 9 years at the Arts Centre in its 27 years - which is about a third of the time) is that what is quite unique. I think, for me, as the Director, is that there is great collective responsibility at the Arts Centre from its membership: the Management Committee, our Exhibitions Sub-committee and, indeed, all our staff and the wider community. The Arts Centre, or the idea for it, dates back to 1948 and post-Second World War and the Occupation.

And the current status that we have from 1970 onwards, where it was originally the Jersey Arts Council, which then got reconstituted as the Jersey Arts Centre Association in 1993, when the Jersey Arts Trust came into being. So the committee to whom I am responsible is incredibly supportive and if we need to respond efficiently to what is happening in terms of our revenue, in terms of box office, we do do that. We are reviewing our ticket prices all the time.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

We have had to put them up, I think, a couple of times. Certainly by £1, certainly since the time I have been involved with the Arts Centre. We are conscious of the fact we do not want to take it (the ticket price) out of the local market. There are quite strong indications, I think when we last looked ticket sales are roundabout 9 per cent lower. We have seen an adjustment, and I think that kind of reflects the current economy. What we do not want to do is to put ourselves in a position where we are pricing ourselves out and we cannot sustain our audiences. But I think last year's figures did reasonably well.

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

We have sustained the numbers of bodies coming across the Arts Centre threshold in terms of our courses and workshops and the performances as well. We are most successful when we have like a Theatre-in-Education project in a year when we tour to all of Jersey's primary schools, which we did in 2004, 2005 and in 2007, and when we were doing *My Family and Other Stories* up at Durrell last year, in 2009. We can have anywhere between 2,500 and 5,700 people attending those T.i.E. (Theatre-in-Education) projects, both in schools and at public performances. We are also, our

most successful one, securing grants. For example, in 2004 we had the Jersey and the Crown Celebrations, and Liberation 60 in 2005 - the output is quite phenomenal. It is this year as well. But when we are invited to animate Island events, in terms of celebrating its identity and things, that is where the Arts Centre really does take off as well. For us, that is very exciting in terms of creating projects that are original and unique for us and the community and the Island.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

Can I just make an explanation there? I think what Daniel is explaining there, that we have got great skills within our team at the Arts Centre that we can use more effectively. So we have got the capability that our grant for overheads effectively is broadly equivalent to, but where we have seen a decline is in these one-off grants to fund events. I think this is, myself, a retrograde move because those one-off events generate a lot of well known activity, a lot of interest in the Island, people coming into the Island for them, and for us it means that we can ... Daniel talks about animating them (events). That means we organise them, we put it together. We can do that from our resource and dilute our overhead costs, and become even more efficient. So there is a gain there, it is a real win-win. We have seen, for example, the figures Daniel showed me today, 2004 we had an additional £209,000 in grants for event driven programmes. In 2009 they were down to £29,000. So that has been clearly ... one understands that because that is what Government has to do, but it is a shame that those are the things that are generating activity and economic benefit and money.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Just moving on now, what are the key issues facing the Arts Centre, other than some of the ones you have mooted?

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

I think, as we just articulated, there is one of sustainability in terms of our artistic output. There is one sustaining that revenue grant and they come hand in hand. There is one kind of like maintaining and sustaining the physical building infrastructures that we currently have at Phillip Street, which is a 27 year-old building now; the incredible space that is St. James in terms of its versatility and adaptability and its community use. But when the Arts Centre was celebrating 25 years in 2008 we went through a consultancy process with our key stakeholders, and we put together a document based on the contribution of those 35 participants for Our Future: Beyond 25 Years. It is certainly our belief, and it's the belief of those participants, that the way that technologies are informing the way we want to experience the arts and the performing arts and music arts and technological arts, and things, is that the footprint at Phillip Street will not be a sufficient space in 25 years' time for the Island to benefit from the full impact of what would be happening in the arts at that time. So it is certainly our will and our way, and we understand that in the current climate things are not going to happen in the next 5, 10 years, but in terms of a serious long-term future, and as I have been the Director at the Arts Centre for 9 years, is that it is important that we do not allow what has happened these 27 years to drift. And that our focus is as clear for the next quarter of a century, as it has been. So that is an issue for us in terms of finding the mechanism, and the way forward, in order to identify a site and be able to start thinking about bringing some areas of operation under kind of like one roof. Although having said that, one of the exciting things

about the Arts Centre is that the Island is our theatre and is our performance base because we have animated shows out at Mont Orgueil, at Hamptonne Country Life Museum, you know, at Liberation Square and at Weighbridge Place. So we have used the Island quite well ... and last year, Liberation Bus Station with Craig Taylor's *One Million Tiny Plays About Britain*, which was very exciting. So we do not want to necessarily be kind of complying to one or 2 buildings. We want to be able to throw our net wide and be wherever we need to be, because of what the demand is really.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Bringing it down to perhaps again a more banal level, we have had various comments obviously about St. James, and you spoke very glowingly of it, Daniel. What is your view about St. James as part of your estate?

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

It has been... because my office is based at the Vicarage there as well, but it has been for the last 9 years the home to the Youth Theatre, and A.C.T. We have had incredible classical concerts there; our three T.i.E. shows in 4, 5 and 7 have been based there for their rehearsal period; the Fête de Noué lantern workshops have been there over a number of years in December. Because of its versatility and adaptability, it enables an incredible multiuse and, whatever our views are in terms of the pinnacles and the scaffolding, and the cost of that, in terms of a space it is almost a perfect community space because of its adaptability and versatility. So to lose the equivalent of it would mean that the Arts Centre and its operation would not be as flexible as it has been in creating the things that we have created there. They have gone out of St. James into other areas as well, and we are very aware of the historic issues of that

space, and the building issues of it, but they are really to do with the fact that the money for phase 2 and phase 3 were not able to be secured because of the current climate. And this predates me, et cetera. In a new venue we would want a space that was very open and adaptable and that could be configured in lots of different ways, so that you could have installation art there, you could have performance art there, you could bring in bleacher seats and have a more conventional kind of proscenium arch or thrust audience experience. You could even, theoretically, in an open space, bring in gallery screens and have a temporary exhibition space. So it is finding ways of kind of being versatile and adaptable really.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

If I can add to this. I think it is clear to me that St. James has compensated for the over-restrictive space and gaps in what we can provide at Phillip Street. There is no doubt, there is the drive for the young people, people want to do arts. They do not want to just go and watch it, they want to do things. All the things that Daniel described is activity and we try and support that. If we were to lose St. James I am clear it would be ... if we were to lose St. James without some kind of replacement facility in some way, whatever that was, it would be badly damaging because we would have to displace those rehearsal spaces, rehearsal time, displaced performance time. Like it houses our staff at the moment and without cost. Now how can I get our staff housed? We would have to rent premises and what have you. But having said that, I think we share the general public view that with real sadness about St. James, that it kind of falls between all these stalls, that it is lowly and saddled with restrictions and coming from the planning system that stops it being adapted and allowed to change in a way to meet the requirements. It is not efficient. For us

operating on 2 sites, one where we have a proper basis, through a decent lease, that is Phillip Street, and the other way where we have the security only of an annual licence that we know could be taken away, and with it nowhere to put our staff. The irony of it is we know, as Daniel has described, that there are all these potential uses that we try to fulfil.

[13:30]

What I promise you is that we have done our best while we have St. James, and while we continue to have it, we get the best use and value for money out of it.

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

I think it proves that space developed our work and without the Arts Centre having the uses of St. James, since June 2000, is that the Arts Centre's work would not have developed in the way that it has done in terms of creating new theatre and the T.i.E. projects and having the space to rehearse them, and those performances. That is a reason for being able to identify a new site and other spaces.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

Will we not even have the Jersey Youth Theatre, as it is, the success it has become?

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

I do not know where they would rehearse.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

There is no space. They are kind of resident there and they ... it is not a sustainable long term. Something I hope has to give, which kind of ... you ask about the major challenge. I certainly feel, I have been involved in the arts for 7 years now, a measure of frustration that we have got part of the cake, but the picture is bigger than that. The kind of frustration that has to be addressed in the longer term is releasing all that huge energy and excitement in the arts, which I think can generate economic activity and money. I am passionate about events ...

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

In the event-led tourism?

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

Yes. It brings people into the Island. The frustration is that we need, I think, to plan for the future, to have that, and yet what we are having to concentrate on very much is managing the short term.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Deputy Pitman has entered the room. Do you want to sit through?

Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier:

Apologies, it took longer than I had hoped.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

We are looking, Trevor, at the key issues. I mean obviously this started off by doing a health check on the Cultural Strategy, and we all know that there have been comments

about the Cultural Strategy, that it is a very broad document. It is very aspirational, although of course the review, which Rod McLoughlin has carried out, has zeroed in on issues. He has listed, as you know, I think on page 7 of his review, various issues. Can you tell us how you relate to the other players in the cultural firmament, so to speak? Like the Arts Trust, like Rod McLoughlin, like the Opera House. How do you relate to them within the context of the Cultural Strategy?

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

The Arts Centre, even before the Cultural Strategy was adopted, has always created projects with other members of the cultural sector: the Heritage Trust, with the Arts Trust, and with the Opera House in terms of sharing our resources when it happens or when it is needed. I think that the Council for Culture on which we all sit has been useful in terms of us communicating what we need to communicate in terms of the priorities in our own kind of venues. Obviously, on the arts side, we have been very aware of what has been happening in terms of heritage and on that side, so I think that it has been felt ... which is a good thing, that for a little while that we will have 2 working groups, one for heritage and one for arts, so that we can really focus and hone in on what our skills are and how we can best kind of like fulfil our aspirations at the Arts Centre, and how they will fit into the Cultural Strategy. When we were developing it back in 2000, I think, 3, 4, before it came to the States and was adopted in 2005, it was incredible how many things we were already doing in terms of those objectives that, I think, Rod put again on page 3, and as he has put on the boxes in the second part of the document, is that so much of what we do has already happened before even that document was adopted. Again, I always go back to 2004 and 2005 when the Island was celebrating Jersey and the Crown in 2004 and Liberation 60, is

that those medieval music concerts that we put out into the Parish churches, the start of the theatre-in-education project through all Jersey primary schools, there is *Once Upon An Island...*, and then with *Secret Weapons*, and then with Gerald Durrell's *My Family and Other Animals*. They have been key projects for us in terms of really outreaching beyond Phillip Street and beyond St. Helier, and across into every kind of corner of the Island. Again, depending on where the meeting is held, because we rotate the venues for the Council for Culture, each one of us chairs that meeting, so there is again a sense of collective responsibility from that, but Rod always takes the minutes for us.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

You have not noticed then ... you circulate your responsibility and you imply there is obviously a lot of goodwill, which is excellent, but do you think the structure is fit for purpose at the Council for Culture?

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

I think there is always ... it is quite delicate because if you had, say, for example, one organisation, one umbrella organisation, you could easily lose the unique identity of what individuals can bring to a community like Jersey, so that diversity and a range of experience is always really exciting. I have always thought that the programme at the Opera House complements the programme at the Arts Centre and vice versa. If they were one organisation then you would have one vision, whereas you have 2 very distinct programmes, which fulfil very, very distinct needs and desires in the Island. We have always talked to all the other organisations, and I think the terms of the structure of it are certainly coming out of the Cultural Strategy. It was good for that

Council for Culture to stand for us, to talk more formally on a much more regular basis. That has resulted in things like the Literature Week that we are going into the third year of, working with the Jersey Arts Trust and the Opera House, and with Jersey Library Service as well. That is one example. I think that it is probably very sad that when the Island had its first international arts festival in 1995 and in 1996 and then in 2001, 2003, that that has not been something that has been sustained in the Island. Because after 15 years of an International Arts Festival there could be hundreds of thousands of people coming to the Island for that international arts festival. But again, it is an issue of sustainability. It is an issue of knowing that if you are going to create a festival there must be a 5-year commitment in order to develop the programme, and to develop the order, especially event-led tourism come to that festival. I mean the Norwich Festival is a prime example of how the numbers have doubled and doubled again in terms of their attendance over a number of years. So that is something. When the Island has an amazing day like Liberation Day and the Battle of Britain day, these 2 events, and with the Battle of Flowers in the middle of it, there are these 3 events that mark a quite significant number of weeks and months where something quite unique can happen. And it does at those events because people do come to the Island for Liberation Day and they do come to the Island for Battle of Britain day.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

The key point I would like to make on that, Roy, is that the planning cycle for those events is much, much longer than the planning cycle for our Arts Centre operations. We are now planning for spring, early summer. We have got some events in for the year's time but that would not be long enough to sustain a major festival. One has got

to have bookings, one has got to have all the financial arrangements in place well before that. I think we are looking at a minimum of 2 years cycle.

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

One of the recommendations we made, because the Arts Centre co-ordinated the international festivals in 1995, 1996 (and it was not us directly in 2001, 2003) one of our recommendations - I only arrived in the Island in 2001 - one of our 14 recommendations was that for a festival to be successful there has to be a minimum of an 18 month lead-in process in order to secure funding, and then to secure a programme, and then to be able to deliver the programme. It probably is a 2-year cycle to create a really, truly international attractive festival. It could happen in a year but something disastrous could happen.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

You ask about fit for purpose. That is the clue I think. The Arts Centre itself could not launch a major festival of that description. We would have to be part of a broader organisation that puts all the other elements of it together, so I think that is the element that is missing. Personally I think the objectives of having this umbrella organisation where there is co-ordination, better use of resources and efficiency is absolutely right, and also for long-term planning. But I think we have still got the organisation in terms of ... has got a way to go to do that. Daniel has described the day-to-day operational level that works. From my point of view, I think there is an issue about the longer term, that there needs to be more organisational development across the (arts)...

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

On that point, and in a way we are arguing against ourselves, we obviously had the argument run in front of us that arts organisations - jump in when you want, Trevor - are either too elitist or they are too populist, and I just cannot take another Buddy Holly revival band, and so forth. Do you think because economically you are being driven to support these big events, or these big anniversaries, and you have obviously done an excellent job, but do you think there is a danger that your programme could become too tame and that you could lose that raw edge, which people sometimes seek from bodies like yourselves?

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

I do not come from an arts background. I only got into arts because my children were interested in music at a younger age, and I was a treasurer for a bit. When you work with arts people, I have found, they really will keep you on the right track. If they do not like something they will say so. I see the danger (in organisational change) but I think we could carry on operating within our separate groups. My fear is that over the longer term we would still be talking about the next 25 years, these issues and event tourism, and so on, and we would not be freeing out the efficiencies that ought to be there, and the ability to unlock the skills and the talents of the people we have got. That is my vision.

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

I think it is quite interesting you mention that because in the Island Plan, the Strategic Plan 9 to 14, it says that: “The arts can be enlightening, thought provoking, entertaining, disturbing, challenging, sometimes controversial.” In our purpose it

does say that we want to educate, inspire and encourage debate, and it is important that the Arts Centre continues to do that because ...

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Which activities are doing that?

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

I think the performances are as well. I think the main programme ... the Youth Theatre is doing that as well in terms of its choice of material and what those young people want to tell stories about. I think that it is really vital that things are challenged, sometimes gently, sometimes more vociferously, in order to challenge the way we perceive things and the way we perceive how we kind of structure our government, how we structure our arts, how we tell what stories we want to tell. So that can never happen, otherwise the Arts Centre would lose its *raison d'être* and its soul, despite having to argue and counter argue its point of view sometimes.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

Since I have been involved with the Arts Centre, it is 7 years, there is no way it has been fossilised. It has evolved and evolved, and the exciting things that Daniel brings to us never fail to amaze me, particularly the young people. Because when I ... because this is my last year as a chairman, but I will go away thinking that the Education's role has done a fantastic thing making young people aware of the arts and what it can do to their lives. We see that. I just hope in the future that we can, as an Island, embrace that in a way and get the best for them. But, having said that, we have got to look after the traditional audience groups and we try and do that as well.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

I am sorry if this point has been raised, but I am just struck by an email that I think everyone had just a few days ago with parents now concerned obviously with the fee paying schools issue, and the thrust of this was surely this is much more an important issue than giving money to the Arts Centre and Arts Trust. Are you concerned that that pressure is going to make life even more difficult as things are squeezed and people, sadly, will think arts are nice to have but not essential, which obviously I do not agree with, the panel does not agree with.

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

It is interesting, because there is always the argument that our health is important, and hospitals are important, our education and schools are important. But going back to health, is that we do not just want a healthy body to be walking around in, we need a healthy mind and that mind needs to be challenged. So I think that it is incumbent on us all to make sure that all of us, especially our young people, and especially when now young children they understand that no matter what the cuts are that you have to kind of be very considered and precise and visionary about what you do not cut, because if you cut the soul of something, or the core of it, then you are wiping out probably a generation of awareness and knowledge of things. We have always said, using the Youth Theatre as an example again, and it has only happened, in kind of like, in the 9 years it got resurrected in 2001 from the Jersey Youth Theatre to Jersey Arts Centre Youth Theatre, we have always said to our young people in their first session that while your subscriptions are £80 to do this, but they get ring-fenced.

[13:45]

If there is one young person sat here who genuinely cannot afford, and knows their parents cannot afford, that £80: I will pay for it - we will pay for it. It has happened, I think, 3 times in those 8 years, so I do not think those young people get excluded from something like the Youth Theatre. It may have a small issue on how we kind of structure that financially possibly, and we tend to think about that. In terms of them being taken out of their fee paying schools into their ... going to other schools, that is something that would have probably a ripple effect for us all, but we do not know the outcome yet. It has not even been debated in the States yet. It is something that is going to be a proposal, am I right in saying that?

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Yes, you are right.

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

So what appears to be a proper and vigorous debate about it.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

I mean at least there will be a debate. But I would hope obviously on that side of the table you are going to be the ones that decide. As we said earlier, we have not had the involvement in the spending review, but obviously one is aware of the context, there needs to be one. I would personally hope that you would recognise that quality of life issues are as important as other things. I mean, we could be ... does one want to see people walking down the street miserable? No. I mean, Jersey has prided itself being

a great community and a great place to be, and I think the Arts Centre, everything that Daniel has described reflects that. So I think it is about balance and trying to weigh these things. I mean, just to mention, we do not get any grant for the Youth Theatre, which was developed without any additional funding. When we have had States Members come along and see these fantastic offerings they said to us things like: “Why is this not available to my youngster going to this and that school and this and that school?” We could not cope with the whole Island. But I think it reflects the interest that there is there.

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

The Youth Theatre have had 4 of its productions tour to St. Helier’s twin town of Bad Wurzach in 2003, 2005, 2008 and this year, and one of our T.I.E. shows, *Secret Weapons*, to Bad Wurzach. I mean the value for the pound at the Arts Centre is quite incredible and we get a lot of mileage out of all of our projects and the *My Family and Other Stories* is a prime example of that last year in terms of when the debate of what may or may not be cut and where things sit, is that ordinarily a project like that would cost about £35,000. But none of the creative team took a fee on it because we are employed by the Arts Centre and we would not anyway. We spent all our money on employing one local actor and 2 from the U.K., and because we designed it, and we costumed it, and we adapted it ourselves at the weekend, and people did not take option fees and whatever, that project was so cost effective it is quite unheard of. When we have to we can. The counterargument to that is how long do individuals and organisations continue to subsidise the arts and artists. Because it is not a myth that people are not necessarily always paid a proper rate for their workshops and for their performances, and individual artists. Especially perhaps local artists here,

whatever their discipline is in the Island, are subsidising that area of our work. We want to be able to pay people the proper kind of rate for the work and we do.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

That is an excellent explanation, thank you. I think we are going to have to start putting a line under it. But I know Jeremy wishes to ask a question.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Just very quickly, if you were to pick out perhaps your key criticism or key point to concentrate on the cultural strategy, what would that be?

Director, Jersey Arts Centre:

It is not underpinned with the right funding in order to go beyond what we are currently trying to sustain.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

To deliver what I described, I think it would need a clearer organisational framework that is much more prescriptive. So, for example, that I, as chairman, might go to its meetings or be invited.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Is there any final point either of you wish to make?

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

No, but thank you very much for hearing us. I have enjoyed it. I hope we have been able to give you some information and answer some of your points. We have a lot of paperwork. If you find having gone through there is some detail you want to pick up on, please let us know, and we are happy to release documents. Because we open ourselves up to public scrutiny, we did not cover that, but all our accounts, all of those budgets that you spoke about, they are all scrutinised and they are all open, and everything has to be approved at our members' meetings anyway. I think that is the type of organisation we are. Let us know and we will let you have that.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Very kind of you. I would like to thank you both. We are very impressed by your passion and commitment. As I said, this is a bigger scrutiny of the Cultural Strategy and how its various parts fit together or do not, as my colleague referred. You will get a copy of the transcript so you can check only your ums and ahs, you cannot rewrite it. Thank you very much indeed.

Chairman, Jersey Arts Centre:

Thank you very much.

[13:51]