

2019.07.02

9 Deputy M.R. Higgins of the Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture regarding the work of Events Jersey: (OQ.179/2019)

Will the Minister state how many events Events Jersey has organised since it was formed; and will he provide the size of its budget and the number of staff supporting it?

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

The remit of Events Jersey does not cover the logistical, or operational, aspects of event organisation. In other words, they are not event organisers. Events Jersey was established to raise the productivity of the sector and increase the export event earnings by attracting consumer, business and sporting-led events and festivals to Jersey principally out of the main season, aligning with the Jersey Destination Plan. Working with event organisers to deliver really positive experiences for event visitors and that is in line with the Visit Jersey Product Strategy, published in January 2018. But, in direct answer to the Deputy's question, to date over 60 event organisers have been engaged with, or assisted by, Events Jersey. Events Jersey budget is currently £200,000 *per annum* and Events Jersey is staffed by one full-time events executive and that role is currently vacant and being advertised; the recruitment of that role is ongoing. The individual reports to the head of product at Visit Jersey and is part of the wider Visit Jersey team. We structured it like that, because it was more economic to do so, so it works very closely with Visit Jersey. Some Members may recall, a week or so back, I forwarded a circular from Events Jersey just outlining one of its latest sporting promotions with links to their website.

3.9.1 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Can the Minister detail some of the 60 events organisers that they have been in touch with and give us an idea of the support they have been giving?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Rather than read through the list, I am happy to share that information with Deputy Higgins, but they help with event launches, they have also created impact to help event organisers put their credentials together, really they are out there liaising in other countries, persuading event organisers to bring their events to Jersey in the winter months. They work very closely with the Breca Swimrun. Of course, the main event there they have helped establish and work with is the Super League Triathlon at the end of September. But I am happy to share the details with the Deputy.

3.9.2 Deputy K.F. Morel:

In his answer, the Minister said that over 60 events had been attracted to Jersey, he failed to give a timeframe for that, so I was wondering if the Minister could let us know, over 60 events, over which timeframe?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

The Deputy is putting words into my mouth. I said over 60 events have been engaged with, or assisted and to the best of my knowledge that is since the beginning of 2018, but I will clarify that and try to provide some more detail to the Deputy.

3.9.3 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

I was interested to hear that it is involved with Visit Jersey and would the Minister not agree we have almost come full circle in the sense, if they are doing events, or supporting events, or trying to encourage events and they are also advertising the Island, that really it is the old Tourism Department and perhaps it was a mistake to have got rid of the old Tourism Department?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

No, I completely disagree with that; just about every level of that short statement by the Deputy. Events Jersey is an intrinsic part of the work that Visit Jersey do and we have to improve our productivity in the hospitality sector and the way we are going to do that is by bringing more visitors to the Island in the shoulder and winter months and that is at the heart of the work Events Jersey is doing and doing very successfully and is gaining momentum. I am very pleased to support it and to continue to support it.

The Bailiff:

We now come to question 11 and, before I invite Deputy Morel to put it, can I also give an invitation to Members who are paying school fees, either for their own children, or for their grandchildren, or I suppose anybody else's children, that if that is the case they should, if they are going to ask a question, declare the financial interest before they ask it. Deputy Morel, you have a question to put to the chairman of the S.E.B. (States Employment Board).