

2.4 Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier of the Chief Minister regarding progress made towards the development of youth facilities, including a skateboard park, on the Waterfront:

Would the Minister provide an update on what progress has been made towards the development of youth facilities, including a skateboard park on the Waterfront and when these facilities are likely to be completed?

The Deputy Bailiff:

You have been asked a question, Chief Minister.

Senator F.H. Walker (The Chief Minister):

I do apologise for that. That was a necessary natural break [Laughter] and when Members get to my age, they will understand. [Laughter] Sir, the Education, Sport and Culture Department is currently carrying out a study in consultation with the Waterfront Enterprise Board into how to establish a youth facility on the Waterfront. An area of land on the southern end of the Waterfront car park has been identified as a location for a multi-purpose indoor youth facility, including a skateboard facility, and it is envisaged that this facility would be funded by a private developer as a planning gain arising from one or more Waterfront development projects. The E.S.C. (Education, Sport and Culture) study is due to be completed by December 2007 and will make recommendations to me and the Council of Ministers on how to take the project forward. I wish to... [Laughter] Sir, Members may laugh but this is not very funny at all. [Laughter] I wish to stress that I am committed to ensuring that youth facilities are developed on the Waterfront and that these facilities are available as soon as possible.

2.4.1 The Connétable of St. Helier:

I apologise to the Chief Minister for making him rush his call of nature. Would he agree with me that it is vital that young people are involved in this process and are given certainty about the future of their facilities before the master plan for the rest of the Waterfront is unveiled?

Senator F.H. Walker:

Yes, Sir, I absolutely do.

2.4.2 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:

Will the Minister be able to tell us whether or not the children will be able to access the facility free of charge as they can in other areas of the world where skateboarding facilities are provided?

Senator F.H. Walker:

I do not know the answer to that at this juncture. There clearly has to be much further consultation with the users and we will have to agree on how the facility is used into the future but clearly, pricing should not be a deterrent to the young people who will wish to use it.

2.4.3 Senator J.L. Perchard:

Would the Chief Minister agree that it is important that we are not too prescriptive at this stage about whether it is a skateboard park or a youth facility and that we are endeavouring to provide a place where young people, *inter alia* and on the new Waterfront development, will be able to go and feel comfortable? Would it be a mistake for States Members or the press to assume that it is going to be a particular type of youth facility?

Senator F.H. Walker:

I would agree with that but commitments have been made, not least by myself and others, in the past that the facility would at least include a skateboard facility and I do not think there is any justification for moving away from that commitment, but it will not necessarily certainly be merely a skateboard facility. It is a youth facility that we are looking create.

