

#### **4.4 The Deputy of St. John of the Chief Minister regarding contributions towards the British-Irish Council's aim of I.T. excellence:**

Could the Chief Minister advise what contribution, if any, has been made towards the British-Irish Council's aims of I.T. (Information Technology) excellence, on which Jersey was asked to take the lead. What work has been undertaken, who paid for it and what costs were involved; and is the Chief Minister satisfied that the States' website meets or exceeds the B.I.C.'s (British Irish Council) standards?

##### **Senator T.A. Le Sueur (The Chief Minister):**

Jersey has led a British-Irish Council work stream on the knowledge economy. There has not been a work stream for I.T. excellence. The most recent aim has been to promote and develop the sustainability of small businesses in the context of potential serious threats such as from criminal attacks or natural disasters. The focus of this work was in the area of small to medium-sized enterprises that are believed to be the most at risk. Possible preventative measures and business continuity planning were developed to strengthen business sustainability through a common set of best practice guidelines. The work has involved representatives of each of the administrations of the British-Irish Council. Each member administration has covered their own costs, and the costs for Jersey were met within the existing budget for the Economic Development Department. The proportion incurred by the Economic Development Department is estimated to be in the order of £30,000, which would principally be a proportion of the salaries of existing staff who have contributed to the work stream. As to the internet site, I am not aware that the British-Irish Council has defined any standards with regard to internet sites. With regard to the standards met by the States' website, a company called Sitemorse - the independent company that runs monthly audits on U.K. local government websites - to check functionality, performance and accessibility, gave the States 8 out of 10 in September 2009, whereas a year previously the score was only 5 out of 10. Comparing the States' website against other local authority sites, Sitemorse, the company I have quoted, ranked the States 11th out of 429 sites for functionality, performance and accessibility. This was a significant improvement from a rank of 248th place a year earlier and I think it is a good example of how the States website has much improved as is continuing to improve.

##### **The Deputy of St. John:**

A comment if I may, more than a supplementary.

##### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

If it is a question. [Laughter]

##### **4.4.1 The Deputy of St. John:**

Yes, Sir, I will put it as a question. Will the Minister accept congratulations on moving this forward, but will he also confirm that more can be done to get us in the top league or the top 3?

##### **Senator T.A. Le Sueur:**

I am happy to receive the congratulations. I think to get 11th place out of 429 is a pretty good achievement in 12 months. If we can get in the top 10 I will be even happier and I am sure so will the Deputy of St. John.

##### **4.4.2 The Deputy of St. Mary:**

That was a very brief exchange, but I do wish to ask a question about the website. Does the Chief Minister not agree that the website, no matter what these consultants say who say that we are better than local authorities - well, maybe we are; maybe their websites are even worse - but, I am sorry, does the Chief Minister agree that the website is a major impediment to the work of States Members in that, for instance, if you search on a set of terms you get complete gibberish?

**Senator T.A. Le Sueur:**

I do not agree that the website is an impediment to States Members. I do agree that it is capable of further improvement and that is what is currently being undertaken.

**4.4.3 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:**

On the subject of information technology in the States and excellence relating to that, will the Chief Minister be using his influence to make sure that States Members can get Wi-Fi in the States Members' room rather than having to log on to the Wi-Fi of the Cock and Bottle?

**Senator T.A. Le Sueur:**

I think services provided to Members comes within the purview of the Privileges and Procedures Committee (P.P.C.), which I think the Deputy is a member of, but I am happy to work with them in that respect.

**Deputy M. Tadier:**

Any assistance that the Chief Minister could give in speeding this along would be appreciated.

**4.4.4 Deputy J.A. Martin:**

It is interesting to hear that we are of I.T. excellence. I was surprised given the presentation - I will not mention the name of the company - that we, as States Members, attended last Monday, where we are told that our actual ability to use this technology is about one-third of the capacity of our neighbouring island; so how are we excellent in I.T.? I think that poses, maybe, a separate question, but it is very important. I cannot see we are excellent if we take half an hour to log on and Guernsey can get to England - oh I did say Guernsey - in a few seconds with their megabytes.

**Senator T.A. Le Sueur:**

The question I was answering was in relation to the States of Jersey website. It was not in relation to the Island's broadband or other provisions, which are a separate matter entirely on which there may well be different views. But as far as the States' website is concerned, I can confirm that we are in a very good position.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

The final supplementary, the Deputy of St. John.

**4.4.5 The Deputy of St. John:**

I hope you will permit it. **[Laughter]** Will the Chief Minister support the introduction of Wi-Fi so Members can have computers within this Chamber, and all that goes with it, and convince his Council to support it?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

That is a matter for the Chairman of Privileges and Procedures, I think.