

## **2.15 Deputy T.M. Pitman of the Minister for Economic Development regarding the viability of establishing a university in Jersey:**

As the idea was discounted in December 2004, is the proposal to establish a university in Jersey now considered to be more economically viable and, if so, why?

### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean (The Minister for Economic Development):**

The Goldstein Review, that I believe the Deputy may be referring to, concluded that the demand for a full-blown multi-faceted university with a full range of levels and subjects was not a viable option at that time. Given the significant changes, both in the educational and economic environment since the date of that review in 2004, the Skills Board has been asked to look at the future of higher education provision in Jersey. They are considering a range of options, which includes assessing the viability of a University of Jersey style model focusing on undergraduate and postgraduate studies and research linked to industry. The motivation for considering our higher educational offering is primarily around the potential economic benefit, both from realising the value that postgraduate research may have locally and globally, as well as from the new employment opportunities that may be generated. As such, this is a different model to that which was reviewed in 2004. The economic costs and benefits will be assessed as part of the research.

### **2.15.1 Deputy T.M. Pitman:**

I am glad the Minister has read the Goldstein Report. Could the Minister advise whether a potentially better approach might be to work with Guernsey for a Channel Islands university and has that been considered? Are there any plans to examine that at length? It might benefit both islands.

### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

I think what has happened since the Goldstein Report in 2004 is that the provision of different higher education programmes has increased dramatically with new providers; The Institute of Law, for example, Jersey International Business School and others. There has been consideration of the possibility of some joint programmes with Guernsey and that is why the research is being undertaken. Frankly, all options are still on the table for consideration as part of the review and the research that will be undertaken.

### **The Bailiff:**

A final question, Deputy Pitman? You do not have to.

### **2.15.2 Deputy T.M. Pitman:**

Well, you know I can never resist. Could the Minister perhaps outline or could he comment on what has been said that if this was taken forward it would not cost the taxpayer anything because obviously I support university, but such an offer does sound too good to be true. Is the Minister able to comment on that?

### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

I think the Deputy is referring to some speculation in the media about possible provision of a University of Jersey. There are a number of potential models and I think it would depend what model was likely to be progressed as to whether indeed there would be costs associated. Personally, a stepped approach is one that I favour at this stage and I think the Skills Board also favour that approach. We have, by that, a University of Jersey partnership using the existing providers, bringing them together under a unified administrative facility function. I think that is a good step forward that will be cost effective.