

## **2.9 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of the Minister for Economic Development regarding funding for 2006 summer international football event:**

Has funding been withdrawn from this year's this summer's international football event and if so would the Minister explain the reasons why?

### **Senator P.F.C. Ozouf (The Minister for Economic Development):**

The former Economic Development Committee in March 2005 decided to reduce the funding for events from £356,000 to £238,000. A decision was made to only fund those events that delivered identifiable business tourism to the Island. A number of events were identified which, although popular, were not perceived as adding to the visitor economy and did not particularly deliver new business to the Island. The international football festival was one such event. A number of events that were affected by this policy have, I am pleased to say, found alternative funding. I believe that this whole issue of events funding must be reviewed. I have already reviewed it in the context of the Battle of Flowers and I will do so in close co-operation with the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture and particularly the Assistant Minister for Culture, but I would also say that I do not believe that the cancellation of the event was entirely due to the funding being withdrawn.

### **2.9.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Would the Minister, Sir, identify how business tourism is a factor in the funding of the Battle of Flowers and why it is not a factor in the funding of this particular event?

### **Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:**

I scarcely can believe the question. Is it not evident to the Deputy that the Battle of Flowers is Jersey's premier event at the height of our tourism calendar and over the years has brought tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, if not indeed more than that, visitors to the Island? My initiative to re-engage with the Battle of Flowers Association, to modernise and change and to assist the Battle of Flowers in putting it back on the map as Jersey's premier summer event is part of that, to secure not only a great cultural event for the Island, but a great opportunity for visitors to play with it.

### **2.9.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

I use the phrase "business tourism" and I think that is where the Minister went off on a tangent, Sir, and he may wish to return it to later - not the tangent, hopefully the question. I wonder, Sir, if I can continue with the international football event. It has been an enormous community event. It has shown enormous entrepreneurial spirit on the part of a few individuals. It has been well supported. I have gazed upon the Constable of St. Peter in the V.I.P. box on occasion. Would he not accept, Sir, he has taken the skids from under an event that was growing, that was putting Jersey on the map, and as well as contributing to tourism, was having a marvellous effect upon community relations which he espouses at such great length?

### **Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:**

I have already said that I am prepared and am reviewing the whole issue of events funding. I would tell the Deputy that in 2003 this event got £10,000 worth of tourism

money, in 2004 £7,000, in 2005 £5,000. I am prepared to accept the perpetual responsibility of decision-making, but it was the former Committee that made this decision and that was clearly communicated to this event and a number of others. Others events have found alternative sponsorship. The fantastic - I know he is in this Assembly - but, for example, the Howard Davis Farm Film Festival has gone out and found private sector funding. This is not only just simply about tourism finding money for events. It is a partnership and I wish to re-engage with these individuals, but I do not think it is fair to say that it is simply a factor that this event was cancelled due to funding, and just how many young people in 2003, 2004 and 2005 were part of the football tournament.

### **2.9.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Does not the current situation make a complete mockery of the flags flying on the Esplanade at the moment saying. "Jersey Island of Festivals"?

### **Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:**

The Island of Festivals is something I am very proud of and certainly the flags along Victoria Avenue are an example of using existing resources and just getting them out there a bit earlier, and is it not fantastic that visitors to the Island can see that we celebrate festivals? There was 'Jazz in the Park' 2 weeks ago. We are looking forward to 'Jersey Live' going forward. There was a fantastic event at Havre des Pas. Is that not an Island of fantastic events supported by my Department? I do not know where the Deputy has been living. **[Laughter]**

### **2.9.4 The Connétable of St. Helier:**

I would like to start my question by applauding the efforts of the Minister to put out more flags and to say that I welcome his work on festivals. I would like him to commit to when this review of events funding will take place because with the Chief Minister and the Assistant Chief Minister last night I was privileged to attend the Beating of the Retreat by the Band of the Island of Jersey which has had their budget cut, but what a superb job they do for Jersey and how many tourists were in Howard Davis Park last night to see that and to take back the message home that Jersey is a good place to visit. So, I would like him to say when this review of funding for events will take place?

### **Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:**

The review of event funding is under way at the moment and I have made some early decisions in respect of the Battle of Flowers and I am hopeful that there is going to be some good announcements about the securing of the long-term future of the Battle of Britain. I am willing to engage with everybody, particularly the Parish - they have got some money, I hope, to invest in matters too. Education, Sport and Culture. These are not only just tourism events, they are cultural events and it is difficult to say whether they are one or the other. I think events matter. I think they matter for the community and I think they also matter for the tourist economy and I am happy to engage with anybody - but particularly the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture - in putting this Island on an event-led tourism map with great things to do at every opportunity and I am certainly willing to use some tourism money to achieve that.

**Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour:**

If I may just correct a slight slip by the Minister. The Jersey Film Festival will take place in Howard Davis Park, not Howard Davis Farm, thank you. **[Laughter]**

**2.9.5 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Perhaps he was thinking of Animal Farm. I am glad to reassure the Minister that I do live in Jersey and not as he appears to do on cloud cuckoo land. However, I must put to him that surely it is his job to co-ordinate funding with the publicity surrounding such festivals and does he accept that he has failed to do so on this occasion?

**Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:**

I absolutely do not accept that. A previous Committee cut event funding. I have reversed some of that. I was only made aware of the international football tournament difficulties I think a couple of days before the issue was put into the public domain. I immediately engaged with my friends in sport to explain to me some of the background of it. If I would have been told about this issue and of cancellation, I may have been able to do something in earlier course. I was not told of the issue that there were other events that we are assisting. I am meeting on a regular basis event organisers to do exciting things in Jersey and I am determined to ensure a partnership between Education, Sport and Culture and Tourism to put events on the Jersey map for Islanders and for our tourists.