

### **3.10 Deputy S. Pitman of St. Helier:**

Thank you, Sir. Would the Minister inform Members whether there are any plans to fund, or develop, a floating youth café facility permanently moored at the waterfront; if so, what consideration, if any, has been given to health and safety issues?

#### **Senator M.E. Vibert:**

Thank you, Sir. I congratulate the Deputy on her maiden question in the House. The Youth Service, together with the St. Helier Youth Committee and Waterfront Enterprise Board, is seeking to replace the highly successful “Move On Café” - presently located in the old Harbour Office near the Weighbridge - with an alternative facility when the current lease terminates. The café has proved to be a valued youth facility. In view of the limited provision for youth in St. Helier, its replacement is of great significance. One option which is under consideration is the purchase of an historic vessel to be statically located at the end of the old harbour, near the steam clock, and fitted-out to provide appropriate facilities. A group has been established, under the leadership of the Youth Officer, to develop a detailed business case, which will include consideration of health and safety issues. Of course, the proposal will not proceed unless the necessary health and safety issues can be met. It is intended that young people will be fully involved in the development of the business case, as the provision will be for them and they will play a major role in its development and management.

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

Could the Minister inform us why the decision was not taken to replace the “Move On Café” - which I agree has been a very valuable resource for young people - with alternative youth facilities before it was closed down? Why not find a place within the Island site, or Transportation Centre, particularly now as we hear the proposed art gallery is not going ahead within the Island site?

#### **Senator M.E. Vibert:**

Work has been going on to look for an alternative ever since we knew we would have to move out. A number of premises have been looked at. They are all very expensive, because every building has an alternative use. Many would not be so well located and would probably require extensive investment in them to be made fit for purpose. The idea of an historical vessel, statically located, has been put forward. Initial discussions have indicated that it would be well received. This is the idea that is being pursued at the moment, as something that can be delivered reasonably quickly and replace the “Move On Café” as soon as possible.

#### **3.10.2 Deputy S. Pitman:**

The Youth Service is already severely under-resourced in terms of staffing: would the Minister clarify how such a facility will be supervised?

#### **Senator M.E. Vibert:**

All the areas in my department, I am sure, could do with more investment. The previous Education, Sport and Culture Committee, under my presidency in fact, increased the funding for the Youth Service by somewhere in the region of £250,000 over the 3 years, in ongoing funding. But, yes, I would like more resource for the Youth Service. We currently staff the “Move On Café.” We would look to staff any replacement for that in a similar way. Also, we are looking for people to help us in

establishing such a café. We have the support of the Waterfront Enterprise Board who may, if it goes ahead, purchase the vessel for us, and other bodies have indicated their support. So, we will endeavour to engender as much support as possible outside our own budget, but we will be aware of the necessity to include resources for the staffing of the café - if an alternative is found - as we had for the "Move On Café."

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

I am going to press the Minister for a more satisfactory answer to my earlier question. He mentioned the 2 issues of expense and location in finding an alternative to the "Move On Café": would he not confirm that the Island site area is owned by the States and, therefore, the expense would be limited and the location could not be better for young people?

### **Senator M.E. Vibert:**

Whether the area is owned by the States or not it also has a cost to it. It is a cost, as I said, because it has an alternative commercial use. I am serious about this: what would help is if the Parish of St. Helier made a greater investment in youth than it currently does, as it houses many of the young people on the Island. The St. Helier Youth Committee does great work, but I think that if the Parish looks to itself and was prepared to put more in, then we could work in greater partnerships, as we are in other parishes now who - *pro rata* - are putting a great deal more into their youth provision than St. Helier currently.

### **3.10.4 Senator S. Syvret:**

Will the Minister for Education accept the point that, really, something has gone very, very badly wrong in this process when we have the old Harbour Office - a building owned by the people of Jersey - that was perfectly satisfactory for youth, in an ideal location, that has now been handed over to WEB who want to turn it into another pub or something of that nature, which the Weighbridge area needs like a hole in the head. It is absolutely absurd. That building should have been retained for youth work. Can the Minister not accept that fact?

### **Senator M.E. Vibert:**

Can the other Minister please, Sir, accept that WEB is a wholly-owned body run by this Assembly? We set its targets. We tell it what to do and we gave instructions to WEB to provide a transportation centre, at no cost to the public. That is what they are doing. WEB are working with us to seek to find an alternative because the plans for that transportation centre, unfortunately, do not include a youth provision.

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

Is the Minister aware that the gallery, which has been spoken about, was proposed by the Arts Trust and that the business case that was given showed that there was going to be a return to WEB on a commercial footing? Is he aware that any replacement for the gallery must be on a similar basis, following the promises that were made by the Arts Trust that a gallery would materialise? Unfortunately, would he agree with me, that it has been of great regret and not a good situation for the Arts Trust that, in fact, the gallery was never progressed?

### **Senator M.E. Vibert:**

I regret, Sir, that the gallery proposal, that was brought forward by the Jersey Arts

Trust, did not materialise. In fact, it never seemed to get off the ground to any great extent. That caused its own problems in the fact that, at first, it was thought it might, and I think WEB reacted accordingly. But, yes, Sir, we have to be aware of the commercial value and the instructions we gave WEB of delivering the transportation centre at no cost to the public.

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

Final question.

#### **Deputy J.B. Fox:**

Would the Minister agree that there are a lot of different projects that have been examined to find suitable youth facilities in St. Helier, not only for drop-in cafés, but for skateboard parks and other facilities? Would the Minister also recognise that what has been said already, in relation to commercial values, must also recognise that there is a community involvement that must be fulfilled as well? A guarantee has been given, by the previous P&R Committee, that a decision will be found by the end of this year, otherwise I am sure that the Constable of St. Helier, and the Deputy of St. Helier, will be returning to look at the big warehouse on the New North Quay, if no other alternatives can be realistically found. Thank you, Sir.

#### **Senator M.E. Vibert:**

I would like to thank my Assistant Minister with responsibility for youth for his question, of which he gave me no notice whatsoever. But, yes, as the Deputy knows, we have looked at lots of projects in the area - and in the town area - which we are trying to be involved in. Yes, community involvement is essential. I believe that it is essential that we have a youth facility in that area. We are currently looking at the provision of an historic vessel. If that does not prove possible, we will look at something else in the area. But, I am adamant that we must have a replacement youth facility in that area. We will go back and carry on until we do get one.