

2.4 Deputy G.P. Southern of the Minister for Economic Development regarding negotiations to increase the headcount of the Economic Development Department:

Will the Minister inform Members of the outcome of his negotiations to increase his department's headcount by 4.5 full-time equivalent in order to deliver his new business development strategy as outlined in his answer to questions on 7th November 2006?

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

Officials from Economic Development have now had the opportunity to discuss the department's increase in head count with the Treasurer of the States. This discussion has resulted in the department increasing the head count by 3 in 2007 with an option for a further 2 in 2008. I am delighted with this agreement because it allows us to deliver the Enterprise and Business Strategy. I will also take this opportunity of informing Members of just how well the new Enterprise and Business Strategy is going. The new Export Loan Guarantee Scheme - the Export Initiative, the Internship Scheme - the take-up of the Awards for Enterprise has been fantastic. I am told this morning that we are in discussions with 140 firms outside financial services, assisting them in growing their businesses and delivering economic growth.

2.4.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

In his answer in November he described the help for exports as a new initiative. Is it not more the case that it was a replacement for what was the Trade Promotion Scheme which was already in place and does he need additional staff to deliver what is simply a replacement scheme?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

It is not a replacement scheme at all. I would remind the Deputy that the Export Initiative Scheme is part of a £2.4 million strategy out of the total Economic Development budget of £16 million designed to help grow the economy outside financial services. The export scheme which he is pointing to is a service that was provided by the Jersey Business Venture. Jersey Business Venture is also part of our plans and we are working with Jersey Business Venture to help put support in place for very small businesses and providing expert advice for the development of small businesses. The Export Initiative is a new scheme with a much higher level of resource at £250,000.

2.4.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Can the Minister explain why, given this excellent initiative for exports and despite the presence of Protocol 3, we have heard a recent report that farmers are struggling with so-called edible exports, for example bulbs? Why is this proving to be such a problem in terms of dealing with U.K. (United Kingdom) Customs and getting entry into the U.K.?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

What can be said is, of course, the States has enthusiastically supported in the past many agricultural subsidies which were actually export subsidies. What we are now doing is allowing the export initiatives that I have just been explaining to Deputy Southern to be available to all of our exporters. I cannot answer the specific issue of bulbs but I will report back to the Deputy. I am not briefed on that particular issue. If there are Customs issues we need to get round them; I am not aware of them. What I can say is that the take-up for exports outside of agriculture are growing. I have written yesterday to all the fishing industry to tell them about the export initiatives to give them all the help that we possibly can to help them grow their businesses.

2.4.3 Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier:

Could the Minister inform the House whether the 3 jobs have yet been filled and, if they have been filled, are they filled by local people, given the one per cent growth is for supposedly local people

first? If they have not been filled, are they being advertised to local people or to outsiders of the Island? Thank you, Sir.

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

I doubt whether the Deputy needs reminding of the standard procedures of the States that we always recruit from within the States of Jersey and then within the Island as the first call. If we do not find the expertise that we are looking for at the necessary salary levels then we look further afield. There has been some advertising for some of the more senior positions in the Enterprise and Business Centre that have been advertised outside but, of course, it will be the best candidate that will secure that position.

2.4.4 Deputy J.A. Martin:

He did not answer me about the 3, have they been employed and are they local? He did not answer the question. Thank you, Sir.

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

There has been some reorganisation within the former Training and Employment Partnership. The 3 jobs are in the process of being filled. Announcements have not yet been made.

2.4.5 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire of St. Helier:

The Minister mentions quite rightly that Jersey hires first of all from within the States of Jersey and then within the Island in employing people for States' positions. I just wondered, congratulating the States on that approach, whether or not there is any method to facilitate the States of Jersey website to make use of that site in order to make sure these positions are advertised on that site and whether the Minister will indicate whether or not that is available now or would possibly be looked into?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

I am not responsible for the Human Resources Department because, of course, Economic Development, like other departments of the States, uses the corporate resource in H.R. (human resources) which is under the Chief Minister's Department. What I would say to the Deputy is I am aware that now there is a streamlined process of advertising all job opportunities within the States and now there is a streamlined way of reporting and advertising those positions in the *Jersey Evening Post* weekly where all the jobs are in one place. So I think there is now a much better, streamlined way of getting everybody aware of what exciting positions, in the case of these jobs, there are outside in the States and I certainly encourage local people to apply for those jobs.

2.4.6 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Notwithstanding some of the excellent work now being carried out and planned for this department, could the Minister tell us what has been the net increase in staff since he took over as Minister of that department?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

The department has a total head count, which was explained in my answer to Deputy Southern on 7th November, of 5.5 staff. That was 5.5 F.T.E. (full time equivalent) and we have been asking for an increase in that to deliver this Enterprise and Business Strategy which is designed to help businesses outside the financial services industry raise their productivity, raise their profitability, raise their game, give them more opportunities to develop. We are going to see a showcase of just how much work is done outside of the financial services industry in the Awards for Enterprise on 1st March. That is the showcase of what we are doing and we need staff to deliver those projects.

2.4.7 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Just on a point of clarification. Does this 5.5 include all the former staff of Tourism and Agriculture and so forth?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

No, this is the department formerly known as T.E.P. (Training and Employment Partnership) which is going to be delivering the Enterprise and Business Strategy. Members will see a great change in the way that Economic Development is going to be organised in the forthcoming months as we move and centralise our activities in Jubilee Wharf, which will be primarily Jersey Tourism and the regulatory side and everybody else - outside Harbours and Airports - will be in the Jubilee Wharf building. That means we will be centralised, as at the moment we are dispersed among a number of different areas around the States, and it will be the centre for business. Just as the individual in Jersey has the one-stop shop in Cyril Le Marquand House, so Jubilee Wharf is going to be the one-stop shop for business and that is a great move forward in joining-up the administrative arrangements of the States.

2.4.8 Deputy G.P. Southern:

A simple yes or no answer will suffice: am I correct in interpreting his previous answer to Deputy Martin as the 3 jobs have not yet been appointed but when they are he will inform her whether they are local or non-local appointees?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

With pleasure, Sir, yes.