

2.11 The Connétable of Grouville of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding allocations from the Drug Confiscation Fund for charities associated with assisting recovery from alcohol and drug abuse:

Given that in the years 2008-2009 allocations from the Drug Confiscation Fund totalling £1,767,800 were made to Health and Social Services and Home Affairs of £1,061,000; Customs, Police and Prisons £589,800; and Health and Social Services £117,000, while charities associated with assisting recovery from alcohol and drug abuse received only £105,000, would the Minister undertake to redress the balance and assist such charities struggling to cope with the demands put upon them?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf (The Minister for Treasury and Resources):

Could I call on Deputy Noel to be rapporteur for this question?

Deputy E.J. Noel (Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources - rapporteur):

All bids submitted to the Drug Confiscation Fund, whether from the States departments or external organisations, are considered by its committee using a criteria laid out in Article 14 of the Drug Trafficking (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Jersey) Law 1996, namely: “For the purposes of (a) promoting or supporting measures which, in the opinion of the committee, may assist in (i) preventing, suppressing or otherwise dealing with drug trafficking or the misuse of controlled drugs, (ii) dealing with the consequences of the misuse of controlled drugs or (iii) without prejudice to the generality of clauses (i) and (ii), facilitating the enforcement of any enactment dealing with a drug trafficker or the misuse of controlled drugs.” If the bids meet the above criteria and there are sufficient funds in the Drug Confiscation Fund, then a grant will be awarded.

2.11.1 The Connétable of Grouville:

Does he believe then that allocating 5 per cent, roughly, of this fund is sufficient to help the charities associated with alcohol and drug abuse?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

Probably not, but we are dealing with a finite amount of money and the committee judge their criteria from those applying with the guidance that they have got.

2.11.2 The Deputy of St. John:

Could we be told the actual balance of the fund and which departments benefit mostly from this fund because in my previous time in the House I am aware that the Crown Officers’ Department, in fact, appeared to be benefiting more than most from these monies instead of going to put a case to the Treasury to get their funding, as all departments had to do?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

The current balance of the funds available in the Drug Confiscation Fund is only £30,000. The committee is unable at present to consider any new bids because of this. Maybe the Deputy is getting confused with another fund, that is, the Proceeds of Crime not necessarily Drug Trafficking.

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, that is correct.

2.11.3 Deputy J.A. Martin:

Could the Deputy inform the House who this committee consists of please, who makes the decision as to where the money goes?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

I believe it is the A.G. and the Treasurer of the States.

2.11.4 The Deputy of Grouville:

You never look in this corner, I say it often enough to my Member. Will the Deputy confirm that in order to aid transparency and understanding, that the details of these funds, both in income and expenditure, will be listed in a note or presented as a separate set of accounts to this House, either as a note to the States accounts or presented in the report to this House?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

I am quite willing to do so, but much of that information has already been given in a previous written question but I am quite happy to circularise that again.

2.11.5 Deputy D.J. De Sousa:

I wonder if the Assistant Minister has the figures because Health and Social Services and Home Affairs are locked together. Which proportion was for Home Affairs and which proportion was for Health and Social Services?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

The only figure I have available today is that it was a combined project and so the sum of £1,000,061 was a combined project. So I do not have the detail. I am quite willing for you to have that in due course.

2.11.6 The Connétable of Grouville:

The Assistant Minister has very carefully not answered my question. I did say: would the Minister undertake to redress the balance and assist the charities struggling to cope with the demands put upon them?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

I am quite happy to take that forward on behalf of the Connétable. Unfortunately, some of the charities putting in bids do not qualify because they are putting in bids for alcohol abuse as opposed to drug abuse and under the rules of the fund, alcohol abuse funding cannot be forthcoming.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I am sorry but I have to reply to that because I am obviously referring to those charities that are acceptable charities, in other words, they would not be known as charities unless they were acceptable charities. I am not talking about any other charities. If I have to amend the question, then would he accept that: would he assist acceptable charities?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

I have already said that we will give further thought to including more charitable contributions from the fund in the future.