

## **2.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of St. Saviour of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding the funding crisis surrounding the Jersey Heritage Trust:**

What action, if any, is the Minister taking to deal with the funding crisis surrounding the Jersey Heritage Trust?

### **Deputy J.G. Reed of St. Ouen (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):**

Since being elected as Minister for Education, Sport and Culture, my officers and I have had regular meetings with representatives of the Jersey Heritage Trust in order to ascertain the extent of the problem and to consider a number of actions which might be taken to ameliorate the situation. As a result of these discussions, I have taken the following actions: at all times I have made it clear to the Trust that while I might wish to provide additional funding, my department faces other pressures, which equally need to be considered before any commitments are made. As part of the carry forward process, I gained agreement from the Council of Ministers that an additional £200,000 would be provided to the Trust so that they were able to meet immediate funding requirements for 2009, allowing for a longer-term solution to be found for 2010 and beyond. During the Strategic and Business Planning process, I have highlighted the issues faced by the Trust to the Council of Ministers and the likely need for additional funds in order that services can continue to be provided by Jersey Heritage, both now and in the future. I have met with representatives of Jersey Archive Centre and, more recently, the National Trust and Société Jersiaise in order to better appreciate their concerns they have in relation to the overall funding issues identified by Jersey Heritage. With the help from the Minister for Economic Development, a review on the day-to-day management of Jersey Heritage Trust has been instigated, although the terms of reference have yet to be finalised. Also, I have agreed with the Comptroller and Auditor General that it would be helpful if a review was carried out on the financial management of the Trust and other governance issues, including the suitability or otherwise of the present partnership arrangements between Jersey Heritage and my department. In addition, I have approached both the Minister for Treasury and Resources and the Minister for Economic Development asking that they review the current rental agreement in place between the Jersey Heritage Trust and the Jersey Harbours for their Maritime Museum and Occupation Tapestry museums. On a more practical level, I have encouraged the Trust representatives to consider ways in which income generated from our heritage sites could be improved and suggested that discussions should take place with the Tourism Department and, indeed, even our local bus company, Connex. Finally, I have encouraged the Trust to explore, with the Treasury Department, the possibility of accessing funds from the fiscal stimulus package if it could be shown that timely improvements on certain facilities would both increase visitor numbers and generate additional income both now and in the years to come. I hope this answers the Deputy's question.

### **The Bailiff:**

Minister, just before the Deputy asks the question, I appreciate this is a complex subject, but answers are meant to be concise and I think that was quite a lengthy answer. I would not necessarily allow such a long one again.

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

Could the Minister confirm that the emergency grant will indeed allow the Trust to keep its facilities open until the end of the year? Secondly, has he put in place

mechanisms so that no irrevocable step is taken and no facility is closed down and therefore not able to be reopened?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

It is my belief that the emergency funding was sufficient to maintain the services provided by Jersey Heritage Trust for the remainder of this year. With regards to what actions Jersey Heritage Trust may choose to take regarding the closure or otherwise of some of the facilities, I have indicated my view. However, I cannot control the actions that Jersey Heritage Trust take as they manage their budget.

**2.2.2 Deputy S. Power of St. Brelade:**

The Minister will be aware that I questioned the acquisition of 2 ferries by the Jersey Heritage Trust last year; indeed, myself and Deputy Lewis expressed some concerns; 2 of them for £500,000 and then last year, £50,000 spent on them. Is the Minister aware that neither of these 2 ferries is operating at the moment and have not done so for a week?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

No, I am not.

**2.2.3 Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier:**

The Minister began his answer with the words: "Since becoming Minister." Would he confirm that the funding problems for the Heritage Trust have been ongoing for several years now and that his predecessor was in regular communication with the Trust, therefore these are not new matters on his desk or his officers?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I am aware that discussions of a financial nature have been going on with my department for a number of years.

**2.2.4 The Deputy of St. John:**

I sincerely hope, on the question before last, that the Minister was not misleading the House because earlier this morning I was present when Deputy Power, in fact, informed the Minister that the craft that tend Elizabeth Castle had not been operating for the last week. Will he confirm that that is correct?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I can confirm that Deputy Power spoke to me this morning and suggested that the DUKWS had not been in operation for a week. I have had no discussion or notice from Jersey Heritage that that is indeed the case.

**2.2.5 Deputy M. Tadier:**

I am glad to see the Minister has taken to his new role like a duck to water. **[Members: Oh!]** The Minister, I believe, is being characteristically vague in his responses, speaking of words that explore the possibility of gaining money from the fiscal stimulus package and that we will review the rent that is charged for the Maritime Museum, all of which is non-committal. Will the Minister give a guarantee that by the end of the summer none of the museums in Jersey, and in particular the Hamptonne and the Maritime Museum, will not be forced to close? Will the Minister give that guarantee?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

No, I cannot give that guarantee.

**2.2.6 Deputy M. Tadier:**

A supplementary. Would the Minister also then acknowledge that he is of the opinion that the Heritage have been very prodigal with their money and wasteful and the Minister does not wish to give them any more money because he believes that they have wasted it already?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

The Deputy clearly has not listened to my first comment. I have a genuine desire to support Jersey Heritage; however, I need - and others need - confidence that they are managing their finances in a prudent manner, hence the reason for the reviews that I have instigated.

**2.2.7 The Deputy of St. John:**

The previous speaker spoke of Hamptonne. Will the Minister confirm that Hamptonne, although run by the Heritage Trust, in fact is owned by another charitable trust, and I think it is the National Trust, and if this is the case, what are the National Trust doing to help the Heritage Trust out of this particular scenario?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I can confirm that the National Trust and the Société Jersiaise collectively have a management agreement with Jersey Heritage with regards to Hamptonne. Following a meeting with the National Trust and Société Jersiaise, it is clear that further discussion needs to happen between themselves and the Jersey Heritage Trust to ensure that Hamptonne remains open to the public.

**2.2.8 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Would the Minister acknowledge that a situation where he holds the purse strings and therefore the, in a sense, future of the Trust in his hands and yet has no power over how the Trust will use any money he comes up with, is not a terribly good situation?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

As I said, we have a partnership agreement in place that is supposed to inform the department of how funds are being spent, but equally put a requirement on the Trust to manage those funds in an appropriate manner. This is one of the areas that, as I say, I have asked the Comptroller and Auditor General to look at.

**2.2.9 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Just a supplementary. Could the Minister outline what powers of intervention there are under the partnership agreement?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

We require the Jersey Heritage Trust to identify resources that are needed, both now and in the future, and in exchange we expect good dialogue happens between both my department and themselves.

**The Bailiff:**

Very well. Question 3 falls away in the absence of Deputy De Sousa.

**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

On a matter of process, in the normal course of events where someone is not present to ask their question, would an answer be circulated anyway through the email system, or not?

**The Bailiff:**

That is a matter for the Minister.

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

I am desperately keen to answer this question. I am disappointed that Deputy De Sousa obviously cannot be here this morning. I will circulate the answer.