

**2.13 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding the introduction of a universal ticketing system for all arts locations which receive public funding:**

What progress, if any, has been made with the introduction of a universal ticketing system for all arts locations which receive public funding?

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

Good progress is being made with the introduction of a single online ticketing system that will serve all the main arts locations which receive public funding, including the Opera House, the Arts Centre and Fort Regent. This project is due to commence deployment shortly and it is planned that the new service will be operational by June this year.

**2.13.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Can the Minister in explaining the system tell the House whether the system was developed in-house, whether he went to tender, whether there will be, for example, the possibility of picking up tickets at Fort Regent, for example, of picking up tickets within the town area, and whether or not extensive redevelopment of software was necessary rather than buying an off-the-shelf facility?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Minister, you have an awful lot of questions there.

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I might suggest that the Deputy might choose to see me afterwards if I miss out any parts to his question. However, the current arrangements with regard to the procurement and delivery of this particular project have the support of corporate procurement and comply with financial directions and procedures. The new service is being provided by the supplier as part of a range of I.T. (information technology) services to the department, not as an independent project, and there are cost savings and efficiencies arising from this approach. The new system will include a range of features to guarantee the security of data, including the encryption of data which means that credit card details will be secure. Access to the tickets will be, as one would expect, both online and at various locations throughout the Island.

**2.13.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Just a follow-up: could the Minister answer was the project developed in-house or was it not? Why did they not look at the possibility of buying a totally complete project which answered all the questions and did not require enormously intensive in-house development?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

As this is a relatively new development and one that I believe is a catalyst for further developments throughout the States service, it was deemed that it would be more prudent at this moment in time to utilise existing facilities available and currently installed at certain of the arts organisations and develop and improve the information provided. That was why it was not decided at this moment in time to outsource this particular project. Over time, when we further understand the benefits that an online ticketing system can provide, we will then review the position and determine whether an outsourcing type system is a better approach.

### **2.13.3 Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

According to the Comptroller and Auditor General, Jersey should not always be looking for bespoke solutions to problems. Will the Minister tell the Assembly why when considering his current course of action he did not require his officers to review up and running systems before deciding on this bespoke solution of upgrading an archaic system?

### **The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I appreciate that the Senator has her specific views on the subject and has indicated a preference for a particular supplier. However, it was deemed more appropriate at this moment in time that for a relatively small sum of money, which is approximately £48,000, we can provide a system that gives us complete control and we are not passing information over to a third party. If we are to understand the benefits that an online ticketing system can provide, both to the arts organisations and the wider audience, we need that information. As I have explained to the Senator before, at an appropriate time, once we better understand the opportunities and benefits to be derived from this system, then we will look properly at the outsourcing route.

[11:00]

I would underline that this project has had the complete support of the Procurement Department and other departments and meets all the financial directions and procedures that are required by the department to follow.

### **2.13.4 Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

The project was originally intended to be up and running by the end of February. The Minister has now said it will be June. The original cost was said to be £48,000 but it is overrunning. Would the Minister tell us if it is definitely going to be running by June and what is the cost to date?

### **The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

It is my knowledge that the project has not overrun and I do not know where the Senator gets her information from. I have already answered the question about when the service will be fully operational and that is aimed to be in June. I will say that because of the need to ensure that we comply fully with financial directions and all other procedures required by the department, it has slowed up the process. Equally, the complexity with the project is that it is a collaboration between a number of organisations and a single delay by one party can have an impact on the delivery date.

### **Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

Is it not true ...

### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

I am sorry, we need to keep moving, Senator. The Deputy of Grouville and then Deputy Le Hérissier's final supplementary.

### **2.13.5 The Deputy of Grouville:**

Is it the intention of the Minister to extend the ticketing services to more remote areas in the Island such as the Parish Halls **[Laughter]** in Grouville and St. Ouen and possibly arrange for the facilities to be in the Parish Halls?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

These I hope are developments that will be ongoing. As already stated, this project forms part of the web strategy deliverables for the Information Services Department and as such approval was sought so that this particular system could provide a standardised tickets events model which could be used throughout the States of Jersey without significant hardware and infrastructure investment. As such, we want to explore the opportunities, quite rightly, that online ticket purchasing can provide both this Island and the individual who is seeking to attend the events that we put on.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

It is very reassuring to know that even the remotest parts of La Rocque may get it. [Laughter]

**2.13.6 Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

Would the Minister like to tell us at what stage he will be looking at extending this particular system to the rest of the Island?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I believe in one step at a time, and the first thing is that I want a fully operational ticket system that we can rely on and the public can benefit from. Once we have arrived at that position, then I think it will open up the door to many, many opportunities that can be provided. The ultimate goal for me is that it will ultimately form part of the website hosting strategy and it is to create a Jersey cultural events website showing all events on the Island and providing a seamless visual and booking experience without the need for potential patrons to look up many websites to review and book tickets as is currently the case.

**Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

Did the Minister not ...

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

I am sorry, Senator, we are not going to have a debate today about this. Final supplementary, Deputy Le Hérissier.

**2.13.7 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

First, could the Minister tell us expenditure to date and, secondly, could he say if one buys a ticket for Fort Regent, can it be collected from the Arts Centre or the Opera House?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

The whole idea of the system is it will be user-friendly.