

2.18 The Deputy of St. John of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding requests by Harcourt executives to meet with him to resolve the differences between both parties:

Would the Minister confirm whether he has declined requests by Harcourt executives to meet with him and resolve the differences between both parties and if so will he advise why he has not agreed to meet the company representatives?

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

To the best of my recollection I have not declined any requests to meet Harcourt executives to resolve differences. In any case, I should point out to the Deputy that the relationship between the States and Harcourt is via W.E.B. (Waterfront Enterprise Board) or in future S.O.J.D.C. (States of Jersey Development Company) and not through the Minister for Treasury and Resources. Given that W.E.B., I am advised, has terminated the heads of terms to develop the Esplanade Quarter with Harcourt in July 2009, there would be no reason for me to meet with them at this time.

2.18.1 The Deputy of St. John:

If the directors of W.E.B. were to make a direct contact with the Minister would he meet them?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

If the directors of W.E.B. want to meet me then I am more than happy to do so.

The Deputy of St. John:

Can I rephrase that, the directors of Harcourt. My apologies.

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

I do not think that it is appropriate for me to meet with them. I am advised that, as I said in my answer, that W.E.B. has terminated the arrangement with Harcourt. The relationship is between W.E.B. and Harcourt and certainly I am not going to get involved in a relationship that is between 2 companies. I am going to be caught in crossfire which I think is inappropriate for me to do so.

2.18.2 The Deputy of St. John:

A supplementary, Sir. As the Minister with the responsibility for J.P.C. (Jersey Property Company) and W.E.B., would it not be appropriate for the Minister to lead if any negotiations are required given that we could all finish up in the court if we do not get around a table?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

I think that my responsibilities for S.O.J.D.C. are the same as that I would characterise for any of the other owned entities. I do not get involved, in fact I resist getting involved in contractual relationships with people who are unhappy with negotiations with Jersey Telecom or Jersey Post or Jersey Water or Jersey Electricity. I am sometimes asked to do so but I resist that. It has to be for the board to deal with these issues and not the Minister because in some ways I am going to be undermining and usurping the responsibilities of the board themselves.