

Deputy F.J. Hill of St. Martin of the Minister for Economic Development regarding the establishment of a social responsibility fund:

Will the Minister inform Members how many people have benefited from the programme of education, prevention, treatment, counselling and research which Members were assured during a debate on the Gambling Commission (Jersey) Law 2010 (P.139/2009) it would be financed by the establishment of a social responsibility fund and is he content that the programme is providing value for money and if so, why?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean (The Minister for Economic Development):

Could I ask my Assistant Minister, the Connétable of St. Clement to answer that question?

Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement (Assistant Minister for Economic Development - rapporteur):

I welcome this question but some might consider it to be a little premature because the Gambling Commission only came into being in October of last year and its staffing arrangements were only put in place some 2 weeks ago. But nevertheless the Commission has been busy in this area. The Social Responsibility Account has been established at the Commission's bank and requests for donations have been made to all bookmakers, both on course and off course and have received a positive response from the vast majority of them. Also the Public Lotteries Board have recommended that the Economic Development Department make a contribution to this fund from the reserves of the Jersey part of the Channel Islands Lottery, a recommendation which we are almost certainly going to accept. The Commission has undertaken 2 practical steps. The first is to engage Responsible Play, which is a U.K. (United Kingdom) based charity who are producing a website specifically for Jersey, which will offer a confidential service for clients both online and through the telephone and, after appropriate training, also we hope to have face-to-face availability. They have also established or will be establishing very shortly an independent social responsibility panel to advise the Commission on developing appropriate levels of education, prevention, counselling and research.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Nothing to add, I am delighted that the question has raised the issue and I shall be monitoring the effect of the Commission's work.

5.1.1 Deputy M.R. Higgins of St. Helier:

Could the Assistant Minister tell us first of all whether the industry is going to be levied or whether it is just donations, as he seemed to indicate, and secondly, the size of the fund he expects to be established?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

The law does provide for a levy and that particular article in the law relating to a levy is very intrusive, as it enables the Commission to investigate the various companies' accounts. It is hoped that the donation route will be the most appropriate but the Commission will, I have no doubt, go down the levy route if that proves to be necessary. Originally with the Shadow Commission, we were talking about an initial fund of £30,000, but after consideration and taking advice they think that something like £15,000 for the first year would be sufficient, which would equate to

approximately £500 per betting shop plus £1,000, as I mentioned, from the Channel Islands Lottery, will be sufficient for the first year. Then we would have to see how it goes.