

### **3.9 Deputy S. Pitman of St. Helier of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding vandalism at Springfield Stadium:**

How much has been spent over the last 10 years on repairing vandalism at Springfield Stadium?

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

It is difficult to provide exact figures for damage caused by vandalism at Springfield because these are included in the overall sum for maintenance. However, my officers have reviewed maintenance expenditure for the past 10 years and they have estimated the total cost which could be attributed to vandalism over that period is £16,000. This equates to approximately £1,600 per annum.

#### **3.9.1 Deputy S. Pitman:**

The Minister will know that there was a recent incident at Springfield, which took place, I believe, around 10.00 p.m. on a Saturday night. This would have been a time when young people were going in and out of there, because they often do during the week, and at the weekend know that the stadium is just closing and that there still are employees around. What measures will the Minister take in trying to prevent young people hanging around the stadium, causing trouble and antisocial behaviour, which I believe he knows has been a problem for quite a while as he knows there are complaints from residents in the area?

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

I am aware that young people, at times, congregate in and around the Springfield area. However, it has got to be recognised that Springfield is a park, which has a football pitch used for major matches and other facilities within the confines of the site. As the Deputy rightly points out, the site is open from around 6.30 a.m. until 10.00 p.m. or 11.00 p.m., with personnel visible at most times. Equally, we do have C.C.T.V. (closed circuit television) cameras strategically placed to again oversee the site. Although I recognise and do not condone any form of vandalism, in this particular area I do believe that the vandalism that we have experienced is relatively minor in nature and we should recognise that many people, especially young people, do enjoy the facilities available on that area.

#### **3.9.2 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:**

I would like to commend the Minister on the excellent facilities, but also, yesterday I was there playing football with my son as part of a group event and, in the small nursery playground, the largest school children's playground, the football area and then the caged football area, there must have been somewhere in the region of 150 to 200 people. I have been there on many occasions. I have never seen a member of staff walking around and trying to monitor or control those situations or even have a presence, and I wonder if he might review that.

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

There are people in and around the facility. There are groundsmen that take care of the premises and obviously staff that travel on and off the site, but ultimately the parents have to take some responsibility for their children and although we can make every effort to support parents in their endeavours, we do require, as I said before, parents to take that responsibility.

#### **3.9.3 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:**

So would the Minister not appreciate that while I am there taking care of the responsibility of my children, and while there are other parents sitting on the grass - because we cannot access the chairs now because they are all fenced-off - while we are taking responsibility for our children, it is not our responsibility to take care of the other children whose parents are not taking responsibility for them?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

Absolutely, but I do think that the community has equally a responsibility, and the good thing is... and we know for a fact that where there are parents and young people enjoying themselves, that generally the activities that the young people engage in are good and positive.

**3.9.4 Senator T.J. Le Main:**

The Minister has reported that approximately £16,000 has been spent on vandalism over 10 years. That is £16,000 spent by the department but the recent damage shows me that it was probably a big insurance claim. Could the Minister confirm that, apart from the £16,000, there were claims against our States insurers for considerable sums of money for vandalism over 10 years?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

The information I have been provided with does not mention any insurance claims, but I can tell the Senator that the recent damage that was caused to 68 seats, the cost of replacing the broken seats amounted to approximately £500.

**Senator T.J. Le Main:**

Could the Minister ...

**The Bailiff:**

I am sorry, we have gone inquorate. We have 2 Members back so we are quorate again. Now, Senator Le Main, were you asking a supplementary?

**3.9.5 Senator T.J. Le Main:**

I just wanted to know if the Minister would contact the media with a press release, which says the £500 because the inferences in the media, it was many, many thousands of pounds worth of damage.

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I will make sure that the full cost of the damage is first of all verified to ensure that the figure that I have quoted today is absolutely correct and that that information will be shared with States Members.

**3.9.6 Deputy S. Pitman:**

I am afraid the answer given by the Minister to my question was a bit wishy-washy. The employees... the fact that there are more around recently is because residents have made complaints and they have done it quite strongly after years of antisocial behaviour, but still we see the recent vandalism where employees would have been around and young people would have known that they had been around but they still do it. As far as the cameras around the stadium, I am afraid they are not working. So can I have a clear answer because it is not just the responsibility of the community? I would like to hear what measures the Minister is undertaking or he has given an

Assistant Minister to undertake to try and prevent more antisocial behaviour in the stadium.

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

The Deputy is fully aware that every effort has been made by my department after the Deputy herself raised concerns about antisocial behaviour. Meetings have taken place. My Assistant Ministers have attended meetings. My department officers have engaged with local residents and in fact it was due to the actions of one local resident that we managed to identify the culprits of the recent vandalism. That is part of the community responsibility, which I applaud. We are unable, I am afraid, to stop all vandalism, to stop all antisocial behaviour. What we can do is make every effort, as I believe we are doing, to manage the situation and engage these young people in positive activities. As a department, we are continuing to provide the community sports ...

**The Bailiff:**

A concise answer, please, Minister.

**3.9.7 Deputy S. Pitman:**

Again, the Minister has not defined what he means by "every effort" and I understand that there is not currently an Assistant Minister dealing with the stadium on this issue because the former Assistant Minister, Deputy Green, was attending meetings with residents. Is there an Assistant Minister now that would be assigned to that? And please define "every effort".

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

The Deputy is making statements which I am unable to verify. First of all, with regards the Assistant Ministers, yes, it is true that Deputy Green has now become the Minister for Housing. I still have 2 Assistant Ministers and collectively we oversee all areas of the department. If there are further issues relating to Springfield, then one of my Assistant Ministers will continue and attend meetings. Equally, my department is always open to address issues of individuals that use any of our facilities, and this will continue.

**Deputy S. Pitman:**

Can the Minister just ...

**The Bailiff:**

I am sorry, Deputy, we have had enough on that question now because we have many other questions that we have to deal with and we are running quite slowly this morning. So we come next to the question the Deputy of St. Martin will ask the Minister for Home Affairs.