

#### **4. Questions to Ministers without notice - The Minister for Economic Development**

##### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

If there are no further questions, we now come to questions to Ministers without notice, and the first question period is questions for the Minister for Economic Development. Deputy Baudains?

##### **4.1 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:**

Would the Minister confirm that the film Knights of Impossingworth has now been abandoned and the company behind it is no longer active? Would he also advise whether his department is funding or providing services in any way to the new company and new film which is apparently replacing it?

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

There has been a change of name, I would grant that to the Deputy, of this particular organisation, but nevertheless the film is progressing. The original grant was given for pre-production work, principally for on-Island spend.

[11:45]

That was carried out, the pre-production work was undertaken. The money was spent in the Island therefore the downside risk was very minimal; that was the way it was assessed. We are delighted that that has happened. We certainly hope that the film will be produced. It is progressing, as far as we understand, and the main filming is due to be undertaken in the summertime.

##### **4.1.1 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:**

Could I have a supplementary on that? Could the Minister clarify whether the film that is due to be made - and perhaps he would advise us when it is likely to be made as well - is Knights of Impossingworth or Crystal Island or crystal something or other?

##### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

Yes, the film is called Crystal Island. In fact, that represents a further opportunity for Jersey because originally under the Knights of Impossingworth some of the filming was going to be undertaken outside of Jersey. Now, with Crystal Island, the intention is that all of the film will be filmed here in Jersey. Members will be aware - it has been advertised - casting has been undertaken. A number of local opportunities have been created. The main filming, as I have said, is due in the summertime and various scene shots and other shots have been undertaken, which commenced in January.

##### **4.2 Deputy J.H. Young:**

Could the Minister confirm that he has read and is aware of the position of the Ports of Jersey in the matter of the zoning of the field in front of the airport fuel farm and that he has read the inspector's report? Does he support the contention of Jersey Ports to extend the airport perimeter to the area of land in front of that and to incorporate it into the airport? Does he support that proposal, which would prevent existing community uses and blight existing uses?

##### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

That is part of an overall consideration by the Ports of Jersey and the airport specifically for better utilisation of land and suchlike around the airport. With regard to my specific support for that, I am prepared to look at the business case and balance that with the views of the

community and, in particular, the Connétables involved in the Parishes adjacent to the airport and, indeed, that are relevant to this particular piece of land.

#### **4.3 Deputy R.G. Bryans of St. Helier:**

In light of the public lotteries report that has just been lodged and, equally, the previous “Channel Islands Lottery: allocation of profits”, I wonder if the Minister could just answer 2 questions: whether there is going to be a summer lottery and, if so, in the allocation of profits it mentions that there is continuing modernisation and improvement of the Channel Islands lottery, the results of which are expected to significantly grow profit in 2014. How will that be done?

#### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

The report, I am delighted to say, has been published on the Channel Islands lottery. This year, as Members who have had an opportunity to read the report will see, we have had the largest single amount of money raised from the Channel Islands lottery last year. It was in excess of £600,000 - about £680,000 off the top of my head - and this represented an increase of around quarter of a million above and beyond what the lottery has raised in the past. The intention is to bring a proposition before Members for the allocation of that sum to go to the Association of Jersey Charities and Good Causes in the Island, which I think is to be welcomed. So this significant increase in the success of the lottery is to be welcomed, and that is something that we will continue to develop through 2014. With regard to the summer lottery, the decision has not yet been taken whether there will be a summer lottery this year. Clearly, Members will be aware we have had 2 attempts at encouraging the success and development of a summer lottery. Neither has been very successful to date. We will make the decision shortly as to whether there will be a summer lottery this year. It may well be that our focus needs to be on the core lottery products, which we had been developing very successfully, hence the dramatically increased revenues from last year.

#### **4.4 Deputy J.G. Reed of St. Ouen:**

Would the Minister confirm whether the contract entered into with Canbedone allows a totally different film to be provided or produced than that first described?

#### **Senator A.J. H. Maclean:**

Canbedone and the original Knights of Impossingworth grant was awarded on the basis that the principal amount of pre-production works would be carried out in Jersey. That has happened. The pre-production work has been undertaken. Subsequently, there has been a change with regard to the title of the particular publication or film to Crystal Island. That is bringing more potential business to Jersey if, indeed, it proceeds, as we believe it will, and I think that is a positive thing. I do not believe there is anything inappropriate with the allocation of the funds, the use they were intended for and the way in which we believe they have been spent.

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

A supplementary if I can. Is it the right approach or is it normal, shall I say, for this Government and his department to provide money on an open-ended basis and not be clear about exactly what the grant is going to deliver?

#### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

It was not an open-ended grant. It was a grant for £200,000 for pre-production works. That is for the assessment of the possibility of creating a film or filming to occur within Jersey, or the majority initially of that amount. We have to bear in mind the film industry is something

that Jersey has wanted to develop for some time, ever since the heydays and successes of *Bergerac*. We have not been particularly successful. One of the reasons is that the Island does not offer incentives in any shape or form to film production companies. What we sought to do with funding the pre-production works was to bridge that gap in order to make something or give something the opportunity to happen that otherwise would not have done so.

**4.5 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Does the Minister accept that the decision of Discovery Channel to register its administrative centre here in Jersey by holding a few board meetings here is merely a mechanism for tax avoidance by that company and it does nothing to enhance the reputation of the Island?

**Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

No, I do not.

**4.6 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:**

I did ask previously - forgive me if I did not catch the answer in the Minister's reply - about Canbedone. Is the Minister supplying any funding or material support to the new company, the company which replaces Canbedone, over and above what was previously granted?

**Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

In financial terms, the answer to that question is no. The grant was £200,000, as I have said, for the pre-production work, which was dealt with previously.

**4.7 Deputy T.A. Vallois:**

Can the Minister confirm that the actual contractual relationship between his department, or should I say the public of Jersey, and the company Canbedone Productions was for the filming of *Knights of Impossingworth* in Jersey?

**Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

I think the Deputy said "for" as opposed to "before". Could you just confirm that was the ...?

**4.7.1 Deputy T.A. Vallois:**

The title of the contract, conditions of grant from Economic Development to Canbedone Productions Limited for the filming of *Knights of Impossingworth* in Jersey. Can the Minister confirm that that is the case?

**Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

I can.

**4.7.2 Deputy T.A. Vallois:**

Therefore, could I ask that with regards to the grant that was given, £200,000 towards a project, it would be for: "Expenditure incurred in connection with filming costs arising from the logistical planning, rewriting and general reorganising of the location schedule in order that the film," [bearing in mind that is *Knights of Impossingworth*] "... may be undertaken significantly in Jersey." So can the Minister, therefore, stand up and tell this Assembly that that £200,000 grant is representative of a new film, a new company, a completely different, separate obligation that E.D.D. (Economic Development Department) had?

**Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

If the Deputy wishes, she could draw the conclusion that the £200,000 grant for pre-production work of the title “Knights of Impossingworth” was indeed and has indeed fulfilled its function. It has been paid. The work has been undertaken. However, as often happens with filming, there has been a change on a number of occasions to both the location of all the filming - it is now all going to be undertaken in-Island, or that is the intention - the title of the name, and, indeed, the script has to a certain extent changed as well. If that opportunity is still delivered for the benefit of the Island, that is a positive thing. Certainly, the £200,000 pre-production works for Knights of Impossingworth, as it was then called, to the film production company Canbedone was spent on Island.

#### **4.7.3 Deputy T.A. Vallois:**

Sorry, can the Minister, therefore, please just explain whether he will be addressing these issues in terms of not following procedures that are laid out by the States of Jersey?

#### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

If the Deputy is referring to her report, the P.A.C. (Public Accounts Committee) report, which I know has been published - it is on Members’ desks and I believe she is going to shortly be making a statement about it - then within that report, I have only had a quick scan read of it but I do believe it raises some issues with regard to financial directions across the States of Jersey and those are matters that the Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers will need to consider and act upon in due course. It is a matter for the States to consider all of those issues and implications of the report.

#### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

Are there any further questions for the Minister for Economic Development? The Connétable of St. John.

#### **4.8 The Connétable of St. John:**

It would appear that the Minister has not got to grips with his department. Would the Minister tell us whether or not the funding is still being given to the rugby club? A couple of years ago we were told £250,000 would be handed to the rugby club. Is that still ongoing and how is that progressing, please?

#### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

The Connétable will be pleased to know that I have a very good grip, as a matter of fact, on the department. With regard to the rugby club, it was not £250,000. I am not quite sure where the Connétable got that figure from. It was £75,000. That is the annual sum, unless he wants to add a numbers of years together, and for this year, yes, there is continuing support for the rugby club. I am delighted that from a Jersey perspective it has been very successful. I wish the rugby club success. I hope they stay up. [Approbation] They are certainly bringing many high-spending visitors to Jersey in an off-peak period and that is really important.

#### **4.8.1 The Connétable of St. John:**

A supplementary: that £75,000 that he refers to, that is on for how many years? Does it not amount to in excess of £250,000?

#### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

No. Well, if he wants to add it all together, then it gets not quite to that level. Initially, it was £75,000 with a review at the end of the first year and then for a further 2 years. So, one more year to run after this year.

#### **4.8.2 The Connétable of St. John:**

Therefore, it is very close to the figure I mentioned, contrary to what the Minister tries to tell Members.

#### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

No, because at the time we had a break after year one, so it was a £75,000 grant for the first year, with a break clause. The total amount that it runs is £235,000 ...

#### **The Connétable of St. John:**

Just be honest with the public, please.

#### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

The total amount is £235,000 if it runs for the entire period, but the relevant point here is the return on that investment, which has been significant to date and we hope it continues.

#### **4.9 Connétable S.W. Rennard of St. Saviour:**

I was wondering whether the Minister could do me a favour. Going back to the film business, we have changed the film. A lot of youngsters auditioned and got quite excited about the auditions. All I have heard from a lot of them is that they were not called for a second time. If the youngsters that were called for a second time auditioned for the first film, which no longer exists, are they going to be in this new film? Can you just reassure me and the youngsters that came for the auditions that there is something at the end of this? Because they all have a dream of being something and I think the rug has been pulled out from underneath them. I would just like some reassurance for them if you could, please.

#### **Senator A.J.H. Maclean:**

I am sorry that the Connétable has been confused by the earlier questions, which were more of a historical nature. The film branded now Crystal Island was the one that was doing the auditioning. There was an incredible response from Islanders. I believe that they have selected a number of Islanders to be party to this film. We also believe that the main filming is going to be undertaken in the summertime and I would suspect those that have been identified and selected will have been notified, but that is clearly a matter for the production company themselves. It is, we understand, still progressing.