

2018.11.06

12 Deputy R.J. Ward of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding growth bids submitted by the arms-length arts organisations: [OQ.181/2018]

Will the Minister advise what growth bids have been submitted by the arm's-length arts organisations, the Arts Centre, the Opera House and ArtHouse Jersey, for 2019 and, if such growth bids have been submitted, to what extent they will be met?

Deputy S.J. Pinel (The Minister for Treasury and Resources):

We are currently nearing the end of year 3 of the current 4-year Medium Term Financial Plan. This means overall spending is set for 2018 and 2019 with the only additions possible being through allocations of growth in the Budget 2019 or through allocation by myself of contingency funding. Arm's-length organisations cannot submit requests for growth in the budget or for contingency. Only States departments can do this. I can confirm no requests were received from departments for growth in the 2019 Budget that related to arts bodies.

[11:00]

As part of a review of funding for 2018 and 2019, all departments were asked at the start of August to submit business cases to support any potential calls they thought they may have on contingency funding for those years. Many requests have been received and there is very limited contingency funding available to allocate. All of the requests are being considered by the new Investment Appraisal Board, which I set up in August to replace the many convoluted and cumbersome ways to request additional funding. I am aware that there are some concerns over this process but I am impressed with the improved rigour that gives me greater assurance when allocating contingency funding. To be clear, I still do this; civil servants are advising me, not making the decisions. To finally answer the question, I can confirm that requests for additional funding have been received relating to on-Island arts organisations. Until such time as I make a public decision, I really do not think it is appropriate to be discussing their financial affairs in public.

4.12.1 Deputy R.J. Ward:

Thank you for the answer. Can I just confirm that any bids will be forthcoming in 2019 so that money is not lost during the shackles of the M.T.F.P.?

Deputy S.J. Pinel:

The shackles of the M.T.F.P. have been referred to beforehand by the Minister for Children and Housing. It is particularly difficult, which is why this Government is changing the finance transformation into a 4-year but on an annual rolling basis, so that we are not as shackled. Bids for growth increase by the year, so growth would be allocated in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, but of course they are recurring bids so they will be there in 2019.

4.12.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Can I ask the Minister whether there has been any involvement, any invite, to consult with the Assistant Minister for Culture during these latest bids?

Deputy S.J. Pinel:

The way it works now, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, is the Investment Appraisal Board receive the bids, who are then asked to recommend the bids in a prioritisation way to the Chief Executive Officer and the Treasurer, who then advise the Minister for Treasury and Resources as to the priority of the bids received.

4.12.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Is the Minister saying then that the bids, the origin of bids, must be individual departments themselves making a bid to you?

Deputy S.J. Pinel:

Yes, it has to come through the department to the Investment Advisory Board.

The Bailiff:

Final supplementary?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

No, thank you very much.