

2019.06.18

**12 Deputy K.G. Pamplin of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the procedures which applied to the determination of grants provided by the States to external bodies such as charities or event organisers: (OQ.163/2019)**

What financial directions, or other procedures, are applied to the determination of grants provided by the States of Jersey to external bodies such as charities, or event organisers; and, when notice is given that such funding is either to end or continue, what timescale for the notice, if any, do these directions, or procedures, state must be followed?

**Deputy L.B.E. Ash of St. Clement (Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources - rapporteur):**

Grants are provided on the basis of financial need, or to help deliver Government objectives. By their definition, grants for events are rarely provided on a long-term basis, as the intention is for events to become sustainable, without the need for Government financial support, although, obviously, that is not always possible. Rules relating to grants are currently contained in Financial Direction 5.5 and I can provide a copy to any States Member who would like one. This will be replaced, within the next couple of months, by the publicly-available Public Finances Manual and, again, I can provide the draft section on grants, should anyone request it. Neither currently includes the timescale for notice of continuation, or withdrawal, but I would expect - and indeed I am sure the Assembly would expect - departments and Ministers to act in a courteous manner and have regard to the activity the grant-receiving body may have planned, as long as it is based on a reasonable expectation that funding would continue, if no indication has been given to the contrary.

**3.12.1 Deputy K.G. Pamplin:**

I thank the Assistant Minister for the answer. The grants 5.5 that he noted is very interesting reading. It is not easy to find. I did find it on the F.O.I. (Freedom of Information) website and, having worked for charities and applied for grants previously, having that information of what is expected, before you lodge the grant, should be made readily available. Does he agree, therefore, with the change coming in a couple of months that more information is put out and is easy for anybody who wants to apply for grants of what is required, what checks and balances will be needed when applying for grants in the future?

**Deputy L.B.E. Ash:**

I think that is a very good point the Deputy makes. I think, in the Public Finances Manual, which as I say I am quite happy to provide him with a draft, he will find that it is a lot more clear cut.

**3.12.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Does the Assistant Minister, as his predecessors did, accept that when it comes to funding services particularly performed by charities with the intention of providing business of the Government, that grants should be awarded for a 3-year, or 5-year, period so that some stability is given to those charities delivering services, rather than a scramble every November for the next year's funding?

**Deputy L.B.E. Ash:**

In an ideal world, yes, I would concur with the Deputy; it would be fantastic. However, we do not work over a 3-year, or a 5-year, term. For instance, very recently, we passed extra funding for arts, so we have to be flexible within that one-year framework as to what money we have available to go out, even if it is for charities.

### **3.12.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Do we, or do we not, work to a 4-year title in terms of budgeting? Is it not as simple as that?

### **Deputy L.B.E. Ash:**

We now work on a one-year rolling contract, if you like. I believe that is the modern terminology for it.

### **3.12.4 Deputy M. Tadier:**

Does the Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources believe that there is merit in pursuing an idea of some kind of arts council in Jersey, that could have money allocated to it in part from Government, but also from other areas, which could take out some of the politicisation of decisions to give grants to whichever organisations, which could include, for example, Jersey Sings?

### **The Bailiff:**

Deputy, the convention is that Assistant Ministers do not ask questions in relation to their own areas of responsibility, because that is something you should be able to take up privately in Government.

### **Deputy M. Tadier:**

I am still learning the rules, Sir, and sometimes when we try and ask questions privately they do not get answered. I am asking the Minister, who has responsibility for Treasury, whether this might help, but I will take the ruling from the Chair if that is considered out of order.

### **The Bailiff:**

Otherwise I have no idea where we will end up, but I do not think it will be a good place. Are there any further questions for the Assistant Minister?

### **3.12.5 Deputy K.G. Pamplin:**

I raised this issue, as the previous speaker spoke about my previous question and also to the Minister for Education about Jersey Sings. The grant assurance statement of the grants as it is at the moment at 2.2.6 is: 'Where an individual organisation is applying for a repeat grant, departments must obtain assurance over the use of the current year's grant at the time of the application.' With this new process going forward, will there be better checks and balances, so that we do not arrive in the very public situation that we saw very recently?

### **Deputy L.B.E. Ash:**

Possibly we do need better checks and balances. In the case of Jersey Sings, that is a lot more complicated than it first appeared and I think the Minister for Education explained that earlier. I am sure that, should you wish to later, we can talk you through the whole process that went on with Jersey Sings, but it is not as perhaps the media place it.