



Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Quarterly Hearing

Witness: The Minister for International Development

Wednesday, 13th April 2022

Panel:

Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary (Chair)

Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin (Vice-Chair)

Senator S.W. Pallett

Witnesses:

Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville, The Minister for International Development

Mr. S. Boas, Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid

[11:35]

Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary (Chair):

Hello and good morning, everyone, and welcome to this hearing of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel. Today, we have with us the Minister for International Development. I begin by the usual introductions with myself, Deputy David Johnson, chair of the panel.

Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin (Vice-Chair)

Deputy Steve Luce, vice-chair.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Senator Steve Pallett, member.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Minister, if you would like to introduce yourself and your colleague.

The Minister for International Development:

Deputy Carolyn Labey, Minister for International Development. My colleague is Simon Boas, director of Jersey Overseas Aid.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I begin with a question regarding your recent trip to Poland on behalf of Jersey Overseas Aid. Was it related to the situation in Ukraine or was it separate, and before you answer that we do have some questions on Ukraine later?

The Minister for International Development:

It was specifically to do with our response to the Ukraine crisis.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

All right. On that, can you give an overview of your trip, the impact Jersey Overseas Aid has had on the ... my question was on the Polish community but it probably is more on the Ukraine community.

The Minister for International Development:

I would say it is both. We visited Poland. Simon and I were actually ... now I will find out how to pronounce these words in a second in my Ukraine folder. We were quite close to the border of the Ukraine and the purpose of our visit was because Jersey Overseas Aid has given amounts in humanitarian aid for the crisis. So it was to ensure that the goods, and certainly the goods and the supplies that we had commissioned, were there, were being delivered, and also to attend various co-ordination meetings with the N.G.O.s (non-government organisations). We had not really expected a sort of military co-ordination meeting as well. Both of which were incredibly impressive seeing the co-ordination that is taking place between the N.G.O.s to ensure that there is not duplication. We also visited the warehouses where our goods and medical supplies are being stored before being delivered. We also visited Father Peter - I cannot pronounce his surname, I am afraid - where we saw where the Jersey goods had arrived because he is in charge of Caritas in the village here and how the Polish community, and indeed the Ukrainian refugees that they have in their community, have been sorting the Jersey goods and how they are going to be getting them into Ukraine. So it was just to check up that all the funds that we are donating and it is being delivered and there is the co-ordination with the refugees.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Can you just tell us how much money we have donated now, where that has been donated to and which goods ... when you were talking, I understand what you have just been saying, but I think

there are probably ... you mentioned 2 different streams of goods there. Could we just focus specifically on your overseas aid donations and what is that for and where that is coming from, where it is going to?

The Minister for International Development:

Sure. Well, the Jersey Overseas Aid grant, which come out of our humanitarian emergencies budget, we have £120,000 we have given to U.N.H.C.R., (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) which is the co-ordinating body for refugees. We have given £120,000 to British Red Cross. We have given £120,000 to U.N.O.C.H.A. (United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian affairs) which is a co-ordination body. We have given £98,000 to RedR, which is an N.G.O. And we have given £9,300 to the Normandy Trader, who took the goods over to Poland.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

What is RedR, the N.G.O.?

The Minister for International Development:

They have recently changed their name, have they not?

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

They are a specialist N.G.O. which specialises in training humanitarian responders. So if you imagine you have got this sudden humanitarian crisis where normally there are not most of the usual suspects in terms of aid agencies and suddenly all of these agencies from the U.N. (United Nations), the Red Cross, Save, Oxfam, are suddenly pouring staff and money and goods into a place where they often do not have officers, they do not have the capability. So this organisation specialises in training their staff in humanitarian emergencies. In a way, as well, it kind of follows our desire. We are always trying to look at where can we multiply our force. Where can we apply funding in a way that is going to have a maximum effect because after all the full humanitarian response for Ukraine is billions? But £100,000 for RedR will train hundreds, if not thousands, of humanitarian responders from these other agencies. So we think have a big multiplier effect there.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Beyond that, is that an organisation which does not necessarily get funds from other quarters as much? I mean you singled it out as obviously being more meaningful and thus making a greater contribution.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Yes, it is a recognised specialist humanitarian organisation so it does get funding from the British Government and it has been on our radar for a while, as have almost all the destinations for the

money that we are managing of our own, and for the Bailiff's Fund, and the million that the Government put in. So we are able to do that sort of ... we have to balance of course always doing that due diligence and responding quickly in an emergency so the fact that we knew them already, the relationship with them, meant that we already had copies of their terrorist financing and therefore policies and things like that, and a relationship with them directly.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Can I just ask, Minister, you mentioned U.N.H.C.R. as the first £120,000 and then you mentioned O.C.H.A., can you tell us what that acronym stands for? Is that not the same as U.N.H.C.R.?

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

The U.N.H.C.R. is the high commission for refugees. It specialises in refugees.

The Minister for International Development:

And the O.C.H.A. is the co-ordination body, so it is the U.N. organising ...

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

The co-ordination of humanitarian affairs. Again it is a force multiplier. They are the U.N. agency that specialises in co-ordinating the entire response among U.N. agencies. You have to imagine that there are at least a dozen U.N. agencies, at least 4 dozen large international charities and many more smaller ones, all converging on Ukraine and neighbouring countries. O.C.H.A. co-ordinates the response in different sectors; in health, food and shelter. And also provides all the information that is so desperately needed for us as funders as well. So daily situation updates, updated maps, that kind of thing.

The Minister for International Development:

That was the meeting we attended with all the N.G.O.s, that they will collectively come to ... it was a Polish swimming pool actually because all these places are being used, they are being taken over by the N.G.O.s. The co-ordination meeting that morning with all the N.G.O.s was really impressive. Everyone is heard from and they ensure there is not duplication and if there are ... if the refugees require certain things, if certain things are identified then N.G.O.s are identified to supply and deliver.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

In terms of the focus of the funding that we supply, does that focus money in Poland or is it other countries as well?

[11:45]

The Minister for International Development:

The co-ordination is taking place in Poland at the minute where all the N.G.O.s but obviously the delivery of goods and medical supplies, and certainly the government monies which we may or may not go on to, are delivering goods on the front line.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

It will filter through into countries like Moldova, for example; it is a very poor country and struggling desperately.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Totally. Moldova of course, although it is smaller, has had more refugees per capita even than Poland with its 2.5 million, and part of the art of being a good donor in a crisis like this is trying to anticipate what might happen next. When it looked like the Russian forces were going to Odessa we thought there would be even more refugees going into Moldova, so we have made a grant to a big N.G.O., it used to be called Handicap International, to set up a reception centre in Moldova, which also has facilities for refugees with disabilities. We are now looking at a grant for an organisation in Slovakia for similar things.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Is that in addition to the monies we have already spoken about?

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Yes. If we take the next step because we are focusing of course on the J.O.A. (Jersey Overseas Aid) money, the whole thing that ... we are of course managing the Bailiff's Ukraine appeal, so the £1 million voted by the Government came straight to us and the money coming in from the public, which now amounts to about £700,000 in addition to, as the Minister said, the £500,000 that we have allocated from our existing budget. So that comes to about £2.1 million so far and we have made about £1.8 million in grants because the Minister very clearly said at the beginning we cannot have this money sitting in a pot. As an aside, this is why we are a much more efficient donor, even than the D.E.C. (Disasters Emergency Committee), the big U.K. (United Kingdom) collection of money for Ukraine, because a lot of that money is just going to sit in bank accounts because organisations do not have the capacity to spend it. We are trying to get it out the door pretty much as it comes in, and we have also put a condition that it has to be spent within 3 months. It is very interesting. We have rejigged our grant management system so that agencies can apply to us for money. That condition has precluded some of the big names in humanitarian response actually getting our money because they said: "Well, actually, we are awash with money, we cannot spend it at the minute." So we are making sure not only that the money we are collecting and the public is

collecting and that the Government has put in is getting spent immediately, that it is going to the right place with the level of due diligence you would expect as well.

The Minister for International Development:

Also to answer your question whether Poland or Ukraine, because I only set out Jersey Overseas Aid's money, the government money, the Government assigned £1 million for us to find the right places for it to go. So people like crown agents who work very much on the ground in the Ukraine, we have allocated some of the government monies to them to supply hard hats and ballistic jackets.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

We like the public donating to feel that it is all going into a pot and that they can feel responsible as well for, technically speaking, as the Minister said, we funded crown agents from £1 million from the governments, we have spent the £500,000 on the agencies that the Minister said, but in effect this is Jersey's response. For example the 4,000 trauma kits that we have managed to get into besieged cities into Ukraine, because we have again an existing partnership with a specialist procurement and logistics organisation, technically that came from the government money but this is Jersey's response and the people generously putting their hands into their purses, they should feel responsible for that too.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

That was going to be my follow-up question. How much of our response and the humanitarian aid that we are providing in terms of funding is getting into the areas where we have clearly seen some quite devastating attacks, desperate scenes of people in all sorts of terrible situations? Is that feeding into ... the Mariupol response comes to mind.

The Minister for International Development:

So the Bailiff's Fund, the fundraising, those monies have gone to U.N.I.C.E.F. (United Nations Children's Fund) and U.N.H.C.R., so it is specifically ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

And they are directly providing aid into those really devastated areas?

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Even though that first O.C.H.A. grant from us had had a focus on eastern Ukraine before, so the crown agents ... the goods that we have managed to procure and get into Ukraine so far, which include these 4,000 trauma kits for front line medical staff and now 150 ballistic vests and helmets also for medics, they are absolutely going to the front line. So we can get them into western Ukraine, they go to the Ministry of Health, and of course moving things within Ukraine is now extremely risky

and complex. They cannot be sent just in lorries to places. It is car convoys getting split up. But we are confident, yes, that these goods, and indeed the 200 oxygen concentrators which were donated by our Health Department left over from COVID, have gone to the front line.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

We are in no way challenging your efforts in how to work out where it went and what you said of it is the co-ordination front. To pick up one point, the agencies have to apply to you for these grants, do they, or do you go looking for them?

The Minister for International Development:

A bit of both really. We know there is a humanitarian crisis and there are certain agents that we use and if we feel that we want to respond in a certain way, there are certain agencies that we would choose above others.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Exactly. They apply, we have to still, despite this being a humanitarian emergency, have grant agreements, have an idea that this money is going to be accounted for. So it helps the fact that we have got these existing relationships with lots of people who can respond to it, and that is set up on our system and things. We have streamlined our grant management system so that we can get a response. Commissioners have been amazing and have been able to make decisions within 24 hours. All these decisions also go to the Bailiff because it is his appeal. When we get 2 green lights and we, in the back office, are satisfied that all of the policies and procedures are in place we can get money to them within a week basically of them applying, sometimes a bit less. Then that is the value of going to see things on the ground. Of course we get a lot of information in from other sources, even from Ukrainian community here, even from other States Members. We try to sort of triage that, put the right people in touch. We had information very recently in the last 2 days that the Ministry of Health needs incubators for babies and we are seeing how we can respond to that. Then that might be a case of going to our partners and saying who can do that. Then there is an application. Likewise the Slovakia thing, so who can do something there.

The Minister for International Development:

Someone like O.C.H.A. will co-ordinate it.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Generally speaking, are you viewed with special reverence because you are going out there and looking at the actual problems rather than giving a hunk of cash out?

The Minister for International Development:

I think it is good that we go out there because obviously we are responsible to the Jersey taxpayer, so we have got to satisfy ourselves in that regard that stuff is getting there where it should be. But I think the way Jersey Overseas Aid and Jersey's response is regarded is good because we can respond very quickly. As Simon said, commissioners ... if a proposal is put in front of the commissioner, we will meet and there can be a decision within 24 hours, sometimes sooner. So we can get stuff out, monies where it is due almost immediately.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

It is the third advantage of going to see something. The first is obviously, as the Minister said, making sure that we can put our hand on our heart to you and to the Public Accounts Committee and the Treasurer that we know everything is going. The second is that we get a much better idea on the ground of what is happening and who is able to do what. But the third is, it is important. When General Wayne of the 82nd Airborne is giving a briefing for civil military co-ordination, the fact that Jersey is there, as well as the U.K. and Australia ... when we met the head of U.N.H.C.R., in the great scheme of things what we are giving is relatively smaller than the £1 billion response but what matters is that we are showing solidarity with Ukrainians and the Poles and saying that another country of north-west Europe is there supporting them as well.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you both for going and flying the flag, as it were. But I just want to make sure that your efforts are appreciated from what you say by the wider world out there.

The Minister for International Development:

It was a really interesting trip in that what we saw on the ground, the amount of U.S. (United States) military hardware, tanks, patriot missiles all lined up on the border was quite shocking. Absolutely shocking.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

The head of the F.C.D.O. (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office) who has now been evacuated from Kyiv and is now in Rzeszów in Poland invited the Minister for dinner one of the nights we were there, so we co-ordinated formally with the U.K. as well. They are delighted that we ... we always prefaced this like it might be weird for you that one of the Crown Dependencies is out here but they are so pleased to see us, that we are pulling our weight as well.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

What percentage of the funds that we have sent have actually ended up outside of Ukraine? Do we have a rough idea?

The Minister for International Development:

That is quite difficult.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

No, we have got that. I cannot turn this round otherwise I could literally show you a chart right now. We have set up a dashboard, which I will send you the link for, which on the first page shows what has been collected and the second one shows what is being spent inside Ukraine and what is going to neighbouring countries. Then at the bottom - literally any member of the public can click on this - it is exactly what has gone to which agency and why. That also usually has a column inside Ukraine or outside Ukraine.

The Minister for International Development:

But the reports which we get as well from like U.N.O.C.H.A., this is what we get from them. So they are accountable to us and they certainly give us the information.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

The other thing, you said you try to spend money as soon as it comes in, I mean you genuinely have got rid of all the money that has been donated so far?

The Minister for International Development:

We have spent £1.8 million and we collected ... there has been collected £2.1 million.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

About £300,000 ...

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

We have some more in our tank and commissioners have agreed to move around some of our own funding this year within our budget essentially to delay starting some new development projects, which will free up some money if need be for emergency projects, because we would look pretty silly if we got halfway through the year and said there is no more J.O.A. budget for this.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

I had another question around budgets but I suppose I can use that for this. This is an ongoing situation. It is going to be ongoing for some particular time. How confident are you that you can carry on funding the support, the aid that you really want to put in there?

The Minister for International Development:

Out of our budget, as Simon said, we have earmarked another million within our budget from our sustainable grant giving. So we would delay some projects starting and we earmarked sort of £1 million at this point in time.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

I suppose a follow-up question from that is what impact is that going to have on the other work that you had planned given that work is important otherwise you would not have planned it? Is it merely bringing it back a little bit rather than cancelling?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes. It means not starting it. Obviously the projects we have started we will honour and continue with but it just means delaying maybe some of the dairy or conservation projects.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

That million is pretty pain free at the minute because it just means maybe delaying the starts of new projects, which we can even agree, but say start from 1st January. If we absolutely had to we could start delaying payments to ongoing projects or jiggling things around. I guess if the whole thing escalated even worse ...

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Is that what you are beginning to see from other international organisations as well, they are really going to have to concentrate on Ukraine to the expense, to some degree, of other ...

The Minister for International Development:

Yes. There will always be an expense.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

You hit absolutely the nail on the head, and it is something that we have spent a lot of time thinking about and discussing. So delaying some longer-term development projects does not necessarily have a huge impact immediately. But of course there are other crises going on in the world. There is Yemen and South Sudan and Afghanistan that are serious still. We have still been supporting those and we are hoping though ... and of course actually what is happening in Ukraine will have a knock-on effect on those crises. If you think, for example, the food [audio cuts out] in Afghanistan, likewise in Yemen, a lot of the food aid that is supplied to these countries, a lot of it is grown in Ukraine and Russia so rising food prices plus the diversion of the donor communities' attention to the problem on our doorstep runs the risk of those crises being worse and we have to very much make sure that we do not turn our back on them as well.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Obviously the next job of work will be once we are through this crisis, and I do hope it is going to be sooner than later, will be rebuilding the country. Do you see a role for yourselves in that as well because it is a huge growing producer?

[12:00]

It has got huge economic spend across Europe. Do you see a role in that or is it purely seen as humanitarian aid? Or have you not really thought that far ahead?

The Minister for International Development:

At the minute humanitarian, but I do not know because Ukraine would not necessarily ...

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Ukraine would not normally be on our list for a development project because until the war it is an upper/middle income country and our development work is probably best ... the best value for money is working in some of the poorest countries in the world plus, as you know, we have concentrated our development efforts on dairy, conservation and financial services for the poor, none of which immediately fits probably the profile of what is probably a sort of Marshall Plan is probably needed for Ukraine. I actually hope our finance industry play more of a role perhaps in Jersey Overseas Aid in that when the time comes.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

You had £12.4 million in 2020; what is current budget for this year coming?

The Minister for International Development:

This is £14.63.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

How much of that is committed when you start the year? So how much of that would be going to maintain your existing programmes and how much of that would be destined for new initiatives?

The Minister for International Development:

We like to, as I have explained ... that included an extra £1 million this year for the Ukraine emergency.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

The budget was £13.3 million.

The Minister for International Development:

We have got £5.1 in emergencies for this year. We have got £6.5 million for our grant monies, which is similar to last year so, as I say, we will continue with the ones that we have already started because we need to do more than annual projects, so there are normally 2 or 3.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

That is what I am really ... of projects which are ongoing and in the middle of, what percentage of your budget is spent on projects which you cannot really stop.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Roughly half, is the quick answer to that. About £5 million committed to the longer-term development grants and just over ...

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, £6.5 grant and £2.2 for local charities for which in that is some of the big grant giving for R.J.A. and H.S. (Royal Jersey Agricultural and Horticultural Society) and Durrell and the Gurkhas. There is usually about a third that start new, so if we usually do 3-year projects then out of those funds about a third of those budgets will be new ones in commitments.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Of the £6.5 million for development grants £5 million were committed. We were going to put more into development grants but, as the Minister said, we have put about £6.4 into that this year and of the local charities which is mostly the R.J.A. and Durrell, about £1-and-a-bit was committed.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Will the money that goes to dairy projects in Africa go to the R.J.A. rather than directly to Africa?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Mixture. So the R.J.A. manages the major projects in Malawi and Rwanda and one in Ethiopia. We are still intending to start a new one with them in Zambia this year, and we may start a new one in Rwanda as well with them this year. We also have some other charities that we fund directly in the dairy space, Send a Cow, and there is a Scottish organisation too working in southern Ethiopia.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Just going back to Ukraine; the Bailiff's Fund is still open, is it? The income is not as great as it was initially but I assume given the disaster, and I feel there might be one later on, I can see there being another surge possibly.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

When you are talking one event, like an earthquake, you are best off having a time limit collecting the money and not having cheques dribble in for 12 months but, as you say, this is an ongoing and potentially worsening situation, so I think the public will still want to be able to give and have the assurance that it is going to the right place. I think we have moved from the phase ... the first few weeks were individuals writing cheques and we are now in a phase of people doing sponsored car washes and quiz nights and things like that, but the money is still coming in.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Can I ask a general question to the Minister? Going slightly off-tangent, but you are seen, I think, by many to be the guardian of the Island identity, you have certainly been trying to take that forward. What is your take on the news that we have had overnight around Jersey freezing £7 billion worth of assets of a Russian oligarch and what that might do to Jersey's reputation internationally? To be seen as acting as part of an international ...

The Minister for International Development:

That is why I took the proposition to the States last week ... was it last week or the week before, I cannot remember, I have lost track of time. So that if the States Assembly are bringing forward propositions and making decisions and making policy decisions, whatever they are, then Island identity is considered ...

Senator S.W. Pallett:

But in terms of the way we have acted is actually seen internationally as a ...

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, indeed. But there has obviously got to be huge amounts of due diligence done when taking on clients, the K.Y.C. (know your client) could never be more important for the Island and the Island's reputation. But I think a hard stance on freezing assets at this time is the measure that we need to take.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Just on that, that is not taken as read quite but the administrative acceleration so we have the law and the tools to do it and what passes before us in another area, they are tightening up and so you

are relatively relaxed ... “relaxed” is the wrong word but we are comforted that all is being done to do what we can.

The Minister for International Development:

Well I rely on the Minister for External Relations and Financial Services who is in charge of finance to do all he can, and certainly I would favour a very hard line for him to take on freezing of the assets.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Which presumably is taking a line with the U.K. and other countries.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

I have got a couple of questions really. I have a wider question on the Island identity project but going back to your report, and I think a lot of people have appreciated what is in it, but the board concluded that Jersey’s accurately described as a country or small island nation. I am just interested as to why you, as a Minister, decided to go down the route of calling it an Island identity rather than a national identity? What is the thinking behind that?

The Minister for International Development:

Island identity is something more people identify with than a national identity. Certainly there is one Senator who objects to the word “national”; us saying that we are a small national state, which we are. If you have a look at the word “nation” and “national” in the Oxford dictionary we are a small nation. But we just chose Island identity because I think it resonates more with people than sort of nationalistic-type consultation.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

In terms of the project generally, can you give us an update on where you are with it? I mean (Inaudible) to some degree but are people moving along with the project?

The Minister for International Development:

I am in the throes of writing a legacy report for whoever ...

Senator S.W. Pallett:

That was going to be the next question.

The Minister for International Development:

We feel that we have done the consultation. We did the Parish roadshows. We have got a report out, we have set up a website. We have got quite an uplifting video of it, which sort of states what it is all about, and we have spoken to all the departments. Wherever there were recommendations,

for example, ports; we recommend that the ports in the Island, including the airport, have a better experience for visitors and people arriving in the Island rather than just posters of finance posters, maybe sort of something more akin to what is on offer in the museum foyer; that beautiful film showing. The finance houses can sponsor them perhaps and still have their name up there. So wherever we have made recommendations we have gone to each of the departments or each of the people responsible like Ports, Visit Jersey, and made recommendations to them and the actionable point. It is now down to them to take them forward, hopefully set some budget aside and take those forward. Also on the website, we have uploaded quite a comprehensive resource for teaching about the Island, about our constitution, the Parishes, our economy. It is the sort of thing ... because I had identified quite a long time ago that we were expecting teachers to teach children in schools about the Island but the teachers did not necessarily know about the Island's constitution. So it was a case of training the trainer. So we have uploaded a comprehensive resource - well we feel it is - where teachers can download the information, students can download it, and indeed newcomers to the Island. That is another thing we have done. We have had a conference, Island identity, which brought together a lot of interested people. I think there was 120 people attended. We intend to follow that up. I am trying to think what else there is. The Youth Service have taken on board a sort of project with some of the youths to discuss identity. Like I say, we have engaged the Parishes. We are commissioning ArtHouse Jersey to set up a register of artists and art works and musicians with them because we felt that that was missing. If you wanted to look up all Jersey artists, present ones and past, there was nowhere to go. So ArtHouse have kindly agreed to set up a register. It is obviously a long, ongoing project, which we hope will continue. So in a nutshell, we feel that we have set the groundwork in place, we have put Island identity on the agenda, the departments are aware of it, people that deal with it, I.o.D. (Institute of Directors) and Chamber of Commerce also have taken on board the reports and will think about it in businesses and what have you. I think the next stage will probably be, and I hate to say this, I hate to use this term because it conjures up not what it is meant to be, but a sort of branding exercise, but not sort of like a flying banana or anything like that. It has to come from the bottom up how Jersey ... how we see ourselves and how we want to be seen internationally.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

I am glad you mentioned the arts and our identity because I was looking through some of the opportunities and ideas in the report and 2 sprung to mind, and both of them resonate from my time as being involved with sport and representing sport. One is around the anthem and the other one is around the emblem. I would just be interested to know whether you are or would be at some point bringing forward what should be our national anthem because there have been a couple of occasions when there has been some confusion.

[12:15]

I think from a positive perspective, "Beautiful Jersey" is there as their national anthem, and I am just thinking after recent events and the sad loss of the Constable of St. Saviour, I think that would be a good legacy first of all for us finally to agree that "Beautiful Jersey" is our anthem and get behind that. But the emblem is something I know the Commonwealth Games, for example, were quite keen to have. That they could use in regards to any of the clothing that they wear so that it would be clear you are from the U.K., you are from Jersey. I just wondered your thoughts on this.

The Minister for International Development:

Absolutely. I think an anthem is urgently ... it was needed 10 years ago. I was quite involved with the first competition that we had where "The Rock" was chosen but it did not seem to find favour with the public.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

It is not resonating.

The Minister for International Development:

No, but there needed to be a rollout programme being sung in schools. So I would suggest it is down to the Culture Department rather than Island identity but that might be a discussion for another day. But the Culture Department certainly have the resources to maybe have another competition or ...

Senator S.W. Pallett:

I can see a States proposition ...

The Minister for International Development:

However it is done. But likewise sports emblems, when we looked at that, we felt there were so many different ones. There is Jersey Red, Jersey Bulls, Jets, and we need ...

Senator S.W. Pallett:

We need one.

The Minister for International Development:

We need one, absolutely. It needs to be co-ordinated so we did speak to the Assistant Minister and the Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture about this and those are some of the challenges we have left with them, but both of those things cannot come soon enough.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

They are jobs maybe for the next Government.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Can I ask Minister, what funds did you ... what amounts of funds do you have made available to you for the Island identity project?

The Minister for International Development:

I had £100,000 ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Was that a one-off?

The Minister for International Development:

That came from the Chief Minister's fund. So I had that to organise the conference that we have had, to pay for all the stationery, the consultation documents, the video, the website.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Where would you envisage the funding for Island identity comes from?

The Minister for International Development:

Possibly the Chief Minister's Department. I mean it should be led really from the top, an Island identity and international identity, I would say.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

What is the annual cost going to be?

The Minister for International Development:

That, I would suggest, depends on whether a P.R. (public relations) company is employed to put together this, as I was talking about, branding, this sort of going out to the public to see to identify ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

What is the website costing to maintain annually?

The Minister for International Development:

I think it is a nominal fee. I have got that figure somewhere. You just have to bear with me.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

It is not thousands?

The Minister for International Development:

No. Just bear with me.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

If this project continues I am just trying to work out what the annual cost is going to be to somebody because you have just mentioned culture and a member of Economic Development will be expected to pick up the tab then?

The Minister for International Development:

Well I think culture plays a big part in the Island identity and they have the budget. I mean the States agreed 1 per cent G.D.P. (gross domestic product) for culture. Certainly sports for the emblems, and there are other things like street signs, bus shelters we have suggested there may be a more sensitive [31 seconds audio cuts out]. In the 2 years I have spent £133,000.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

And you were granted £100,000?

The Minister for International Development:

No, well I was granted ... in the first year I was granted 25 and then I have so far used 133.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

You said 10 minutes ago you were given £100,000 for the project.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, I was initially. When it was first set up there was an amount of money that had been put to one side for something - I cannot remember what it was - and the Chief Minister simply applied this to this project. I think he was doing something with putting some books and stationery together, photographs ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

So the £100,000 was just a sort of nominal amount you have been allowed to go ... continue spending on the project?

The Minister for International Development:

So we have spent £133,000 now.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

How much of that is on the website?

The Minister for International Development:

The website, the domain was £75 and then digital so far has been ... that is the setting up and everything has been £12,000.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

And you do not know how much of that is an ongoing cost?

The Minister for International Development:

I will have to find out.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

More about your legacy. What you say from the future spending and the response (Inaudible) is going to lie with the Economic Department, whether it is the culture aspect or maybe sport, is that a fair comment?

The Minister for International Development:

No, I think it is going to ... well, a lot will rely on culture and sport but I think other areas that we have identified like the public domain, the public spaces we have suggested, sort of more tree planting and street furniture and that sort of thing, that will be down to the environment planning, maybe through planning gains.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

So the funding you will be looking to the individual departments?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Sorry, changing tack. On COVAX, basically the general question is we were distributing the vaccine for developing countries and how did it go ordering more and where are we really?

The Minister for International Development:

In the first year 2020, we spent £1.5 million in emergencies for the COVID response, and in 2021 we spent £300,000. Some of those monies have gone to the COVAX programme.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

£300,000 last year went to support COVAX, so we did not invest in COVAX directly. I think there were various issues with the consortium and the value for money and the due diligence, so we supported some of the COVAX partners, specifically U.N.I.C.E.F. and the Red Cross. So the effort is not just procuring vaccines. Actually that is quite easy. COVAX wanted to procure and did 1.3 billion doses and it is getting ... the issue is getting them into arms of people in poor countries. We have even seen for ourselves - you go to Sierra Leone - vaccines arrive, they get to Freetown, they get unfrozen one day, you have one day to get them into as many arms as possible, and then only half the number of people turn up. The rest is wasted, and that is in the capital. Imagine then getting them to regional towns or even villages. Then people have to be persuaded to miss ... day labourers have to miss a day's work to come in from villages. It has been hard. COVAX has done a good job but we think we have had the better value for money supporting U.N.I.C.E.F. and Red Cross both in their support for the infrastructure of COVAX, which is medical personnel and aid workers on the ground. Also some of the public information stuff because, as you probably read, in a lot of countries at least at the start there was a lot of scepticism about vaccines. Not so much the kind of world of conspiracy theories but when they heard our own little vaccine wars and President Macron saying that the Oxford vaccine gives you a blood clot, people are saying: "Well why are we going to put this into our arms?" and then add to that, when you are looking at countries which have dealt with things like Ebola, actually getting people to understand that vaccination against COVID is important, a lot of public health information has been key as well to kind of demystify the vaccine and also just to get that kind of logistical element. That is where our money has gone. We have also, as part of the Ukraine funding, some of the agencies, some of the more broad support packages for agencies working there, some of that money will have gone, or has gone on P.P.E. (personal protective equipment) and on basic hygiene measures for refugees because you can imagine ... I mean most Ukrainian refugees are not being housed in refugee camps. But you can imagine a refugee camp is pretty much a hot bed for spreading any kind of disease. So some of our earlier COVID work on more typical refugee camps in Ethiopia, in Bangladesh, for the Rohingya, and that kind of thing, and our support for U.N.H.C.R. has supported that. Also support for Mercy Corps in part of the Ukraine response has been making sure basically that there are handwashing stations that people have got masks if need be, that there are disinfectants available at soup kitchens, that kind of thing.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

You mentioned the Ukraine and it had not really occurred to me, but prior to the invasion what was the record of vaccination within the Ukraine?

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

I would have to get back to you on specific figures.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I just wondered whether the ...

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

It was working and a lot of people were getting vaccinated, and a lot of people have been double vaccinated. Interestingly our main procurement partner crown agents with whom we have been able to get stuff into besieged cities, the reason we have got such a good channel with them, or the reason we are able to get Jersey's aid to the right place during the war, is that they had been the Ukraine Ministry of Health's main partner for vaccine procurement beforehand. So they had an office in Kyiv and one in Lviv, and they have basically spent most of their time in the last 2 years getting 400 million dollars of Pfizer vaccines, for example, out to Ukraine. So they were able to, with contacts and supply chains and ability to procure for medical supplies, flip quite quickly to getting medical supplies to the front line.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Other than the Ukraine is there an ongoing programme elsewhere or are we finished?

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

It is still ongoing. We have basically turned our attention away from it in terms of our emergency funding. COVID is still an issue. It is still an issue in Africa. Thankfully Omicron of course is a lot less deadly, and particularly of course now that the variants that affect older and sicker people, we are talking about countries whose average age is 19 and you probably do not get to 65 with a heart condition and diabetes. So mortality rates are dropping in these countries but they have been much higher than have been reported. If you look at the official figures for Rwanda or Zambia you see almost just a few thousand but then when you have asked people ... I have actually stopped asking people: "How was COVID for you?" because the answer is always: "My brother died of it" or: "We lost someone in the family." It has been much higher in Africa but fortunately that is waning since the start of this year and Omicron. But no one is keeping records and most people are in the ground within a day or 2 of dying. So no one is testing. The *Lancet* did one study in Lusaka which just looked at entries to the morgue over 2 weeks and a tiny percentage had been recorded as dying of COVID.

[12:30]

But actually 80 per cent of them were COVID positive, so you know it has been a big deal in Africa and it is great that Jersey was there with the COVAX programme but also with these others things we have done, for example.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Further to the figures, £300,000 was mentioned.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, so £200,000 went to U.N.I.C.E.F.; that was for the actual procurement of the vaccines, and £100,000 went to British Red Cross which was to ...

The Deputy of St. Mary:

And that was our investment in that programme?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you. Senator Pallett, were you going to ask a question on the general ...?

Senator S.W. Pallett:

I did. (Inaudible) because it has got loads of opportunities and ideas, and it is great to have loads of ideas. Just one that really rang out to me, it is something that I think has been in the news recently here, how you see your potential role or the role of your department in developing ... the one that rung out to me is developing a talent programme to develop human capital to fill top public sector posts. That has been an issue for me for some time.

The Minister for International Development:

Absolutely.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Trying to bring local talent through especially. How do you see you being able to influence that or the role you have to influence it?

The Minister for International Development:

I have already spoken to the new C.E.O. (chief executive officer). I had spoken to the previous ones about setting up a similar programme to what they have got in the U.K. I think it is something that is fast-track programme whereby good local talent who may or may not see themselves as civil servants, so maybe identifying this local talent needs to be identified before they go to university.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Channel them down.

The Minister for International Development:

Absolutely and put them on the fast ... bring them back, put them on the fast-track programme. I think it is essential for our civil service.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

What response did you get from the chief executive over that?

The Minister for International Development:

She is very responsive, absolutely. She is very keen on it.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I just have a question about websites again. The Overseas Aid website does not seem to get updated. Can you tell us why that might be?

The Minister for International Development:

I think it does get updated but it is something we are mindful that we need to do and we have recently employed a part-time comms person 2 days a week who will be responsible for updating. We know very well that we need to revamp it.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

The work has started on that, Deputy, I can assure you. We have done a redesign, we have ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I know you say that, I am a great fan of the dairy projects and there are no photos of Jersey cows, there is no information about the extent of the help [audio cuts out] that would be good.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

More widely, we are aware that the public does not necessarily know enough of what we have done. We are trying to bring in a kind of communications strategy to make sure that the people do understand it and see what they are doing, see what their money is going to, feel proud of it, and the website is very much a part of that.

The Minister for International Development:

Jersey's best kept secret which we should not be, but I always felt when Simon and I started working together we needed to do a lot of back office work first to get everything right and we were in that place a couple of years ago but we could not really go out and shout about it because of lockdown and all the rest of it. But we are in that place now. So definitely the website needs to be revamped and we need to start shouting about what we do.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

That will be in your legacy report presumably?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, absolutely.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

The one page that does get updated is the Bailiff's Fund 2 or 3 times a week, and I will send you the links for that.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

That will be your target will it?

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you, Minister, for your contribution this morning and you, Simon, and acknowledge today this marks the end of the last of our public hearings. So thank you for your co-operation during this term and I wish you well in the future, whatever that will hold.

The Minister for International Development:

Thank you very much.

[12:35]