4.5 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée of St. Helier South of the Chief Minister regarding the International Cultural Centre (OQ.109/2026)

Will the Chief Minister provide an update on the services currently provided by the International Cultural Centre and the support, if any, it offers to migrant workers facing work and life difficulties who are seeking assistance in navigating the different Government departments in Jersey?

Senator L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister):

Deputy Porée has kindly agreed for Senator Miles to take questions.

Senator H.M. Miles (Assistant Chief Minister - rapporteur):

The International Cultural Centre, known as the I.C.C., provides support to Islanders from diverse cultural backgrounds with a particular focus on new arrivals and minority communities. Its services include community outreach and engagement, information and signposting, a community grants programme and a confidential personalised casework service. A key part of the I.C.C.'s work is supporting individuals who are experiencing work or life difficulties and helping them navigate public services. The I.C.C. receives referrals covering a wide range of issues including employment, housing, healthcare, immigration, residency, financial wellbeing, English language learning and social integration. The I.C.C. works directly with individuals to understand their circumstances and provide tailored support. This includes helping people access the appropriate government services, explaining processes, assisting with applications, liaising with departments on their behalf where appropriate, and signposting them to relevant community and voluntary sector organisations. The service has supported individuals facing employment challenges, housing difficulties, residency and immigration matters, access to healthcare, language barriers and family reunification applications. Through advocacy, practical assistance and partnership working, the I.C.C. helps people overcome obstacles and access the support available to them. It complements the work of government departments by providing culturally responsive personalised support to those who may otherwise struggle to navigate processes and services.

4.5.1 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Given the positive answer from the Minister, could the Minister please outline what evidence has she got that the community of migrant workers, including seasonal hospitality and agriculture workers, are being reached effectively.

Senator H.M. Miles:

One of the focuses of the I.C.C. is on community outreach, and I think that is a very important aspect to develop over the next few years. The other development that we are looking at is a hub and spoke model whereby the hub of the I.C.C. will remain in Union Street at the Customer Services Department downstairs, but for certain times and days there will be a presence in the Town Hall which hopefully will give extra confidence to people that the service provided is being independent.

4.5.2 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier:

Would the Minister also advise the Assembly that as we are finalising the arrangement, that in the new year the group meeting with the community leader will take place to explore through the community leaders the challenges that the minority is facing?

Senator H.M. Miles:

I thank the Connétable for the question. In previous Governments there was a political oversight group for the International Cultural Centre. I proposed to establish a steering group instead of a political oversight group. I was due to meet with the Connétable to discuss that memorandum of understanding today, but we are going to do that later on in the week. So, yes, I can give the Connétable that assurance that there will be significant community involvement in the International Cultural Centre moving forward.

[10.30]

4.5.3 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central:

I note that the Assistant Chief Minister has mentioned that she will look into a steering group and speak with the Connétable. There are also other Members in this Assembly who have been at the forefront of this, including myself in the last term. So will she, in the first instance, commit to speaking to all of us, ideally? Will she also consider whether a steering group is the best way forward, as this was how it was initially set up when it was first set up, and is she open to maybe revisiting that and maybe looking at other options?

Senator H.M. Miles:

I thank the Deputy for the question. Perhaps I should have said that the steering group would be extending an invite to the existing States Members who were on the political oversight group, and I had assumed that they would welcome the opportunity to join that group. But I take nothing for granted, and there will be an opportunity and an invite to all Members of the Assembly who wish to join the steering group.

4.5.4 Deputy C.S. Alves:

I thank the Assistant Chief Minister for that assurance. Is the Assistant Chief Minister confident that the services and the future of the I.C.C. are secure and will be able to be continued, at least for this term of office, and hopefully into the future?

Senator H.M. Miles:

Yes, I can give the Assembly that guarantee.

4.5.5 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

My next question, the supplementary, will be on the lines of Deputy Alves, and is to ask the Minister, if you do consider that I.C.C. is adequately staffed to meet the current demand and are there any plans to increase funding or staffing if demand continues to grow?

Senator H.M. Miles:

I am satisfied that at the current time, before we establish the steering group and do a little bit more work on the role of the I.C.C., that the budget allocated is sufficient for the purpose.