

2019.06.04

5 Connétable D.W. Mezbourian of St. Lawrence of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding appointments to Heads of Service roles within the Justice and Home Affairs portfolio: (OQ.138/2019)

Following the Assembly's adoption of P.24/2019, as amended and the Minister's letter to the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel, dated 2nd April 2019, will the Minister provide an update on the progress he has made towards the substantive appointments to all the heads of service roles listed in paragraph (b) of P.24/2019; and will he also state when he expects these permanent appointments to be confirmed?

Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement (The Minister for Home Affairs):

Arrangements are currently being made to appoint permanent heads of service for the Police, Customs and Immigration and the Fire and Rescue Service. The Chief Ambulance Officer, of course, is already in post. I hope to be able to make these permanent appointments in early course.

4.5.1 The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

How does the Minister reconcile the lack of appointment of a substantive Chief Officer of States of Jersey Police with the publicly acknowledged low levels of morale within the force?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

The Jersey Police Association were able to tell us, a few weeks ago, that the morale in the States of Jersey Police had improved quite significantly over the last 12 months, which I think was good news for all of us. The Police, as many other States departments, have gone through difficult and challenging times over the last year or 2, so it is good to see that these improvements are being made. Of course, in the not too distance future, we will have a permanent Police Chief, which we have not had for a number of years, for a number of reasons: through health reasons, resignation issues and other officers leaving the service. Hopefully, that will stabilise in the next few months.

4.5.2 Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Would the Minister advise the Assembly where these positions have been advertised and the level of interest of these positions? Also, would he please provide us all with an actual job description of each of these roles and the levels at which they have been advertised and the fact that they are asking for applicants across the community?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

Advertisements have not yet been prepared, because, unfortunately, with appointments such as these, there is a process. There is a system that has to be gone through, steps that need to be completed before we can start even advertising. The job descriptions have been refreshed and are currently being reviewed as Human Resources and the States Employment Board require. They will be approved by the States Employment Board before we can go out to recruitment.

4.5.3 Senator K.L. Moore:

In the past, the role of Police Chief was a Corporate Management Board role. In the new target operating model, it appears that the Chief of Police will, in future, be a tier 3 appointment. Does that trouble the Minister?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

It does not trouble me, because the tier system, as far as the Chief of Police is concerned, is totally irrelevant. The Police Chief will be the Police Chief. He will have all the responsibilities, duties, of the Police Chief. He will have operational independence from the Corporate Services Board, from politicians - except for the Minister for Home Affairs, of course - so the tier levels, as far as the Police Chief is concerned, is totally irrelevant. What the review will do, will be to evaluate the job role for salary purposes and terms and conditions and so on.

4.5.4 The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Will the Minister confirm that the senior management team at the States of Jersey Police agree with the comment that he has just made, that the level of the Police Chief, when appointed, at tier 3 will be totally irrelevant?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I did not quite understand the question.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

I can rephrase it to help the Minister. The Minister has just declared that the fact that when appointed the substantive Chief of our police over here will be at a tier 3 level. He said it is totally irrelevant. My question to him is: does the current senior management team, within the States of Jersey Police, also agree that it would be irrelevant?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I cannot speak for the senior management team of the States of Jersey Police. I can only speak in my role as Minister.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Can I have another supplementary, please?

The Deputy Bailiff:

No, I am afraid not. That was your final supplementary, Connétable.