

22.01.18

3 Senator T.A. Vallois of the Chair of the States Employment Board regarding policies and investment (OQ.13/2022)

Will the chair advise what policies and investment the States Employment Board, as an employer, is putting in place to support succession planning of current staff and to enable school leavers to join the public sector, in order that the resilience and long-term sustainability of public services and the public sector workforce are maintained?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré (Chair, States Employment Board):

A longish answer, I will do it as quick as I can. The people strategy delivery plan details a number of workstreams that are in train including the framework to enable succession planning of current staff and importantly to enable school leavers to join the public sector. Key among those workstreams is the development of a strategic workforce plan, which commenced last year. The strategic workforce planning toolkit includes a succession planning approach which leads to other initiatives to establish internal development and promotional opportunities for current staff as well as the school leavers to become public servants. Other initiatives which tie into those plans include a new apprenticeships first strategy, that means from this month all roles of civil service grade 6 and below will automatically be considered for apprenticeships and those apprentices will be paid in line with the Jersey living wage. School leavers are one of the target groups when recruiting for apprenticeships. All care leavers will be guaranteed an apprenticeship, should they want one, and all successfully completed apprenticeships will be guaranteed a permanent role at the end of the programme. Work has commenced to identify a competitive apprenticeship programme for 2022 and to develop an integrated marketing campaign to inspire more young people to consider the public service. In summary, there is a significant amount of work to do to implement these plans. Once those plans have been implemented the expectations over the next few years is there will be a genuinely sustainable increase in planning development and internal moves for current staff and a higher proportion of school leavers working with the public sector.

3.3.1 Senator T.A. Vallois:

Can I ask the chair whether, as part of the people strategy and the toolkits that have been developed, what discussions or what interaction have the board had with the likes of the Curriculum Council and Skills Jersey around communicating and advancing encouragement of our younger generation, including graduates, to join the public sector workforce?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

In terms of the Curriculum Council, I will come back to the Senator on that. In terms of within Skills, as per my expectation and understanding that that is part of the overall programme, whether full discussions have taken place in developing the workforce plans to date or whether it is something in the pipeline, I am unclear. But my full expectation is that certainly Skills will be heavily involved in this because it directly ties to it.

3.3.2 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence:

In his answer the Chief Minister spoke a lot about apprenticeships, which was really good to hear, but could he also explain what investments, if any, and what pathways have been created to enable young Islanders to leave school or university and move into management? What kind of management pathways have been created in the civil service for young Islanders?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I do not have direct information there, I will come back to the Deputy on that. What I can say is that we have been running an internship programme, which does relate to graduates, and therefore it is my assumption that basically it would turn to more senior levels obviously over time. That internship programme was definitely running last year. I do not have the number immediately to hand but, from memory, it was either somewhere around 20 or 14 internships during the course of last year. It was a good news story because it was again an improvement in trying to, if you like, grow our own. I will get some further facts on that for the Deputy and Members in due course.

3.3.3 Deputy K.F. Morel:

I thank the Chief Minister for his answer. Could the Chief Minister advise the Assembly as to whether it is the aim of the current Government to ensure that public service or jobs in the public service are seen as an aspiration and ambition for young Islanders?

[10:00]

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

The logical answer to that is of course, and the reason I say that is because, as we have said, we have been trying to do a major change in culture within the organisation. There are a whole range of things, whether it is diversity or whether it is the "I Will" campaign, all those type of areas. It is about making us a go to employer and therefore that is part of, as it were, growing our own. Therefore that means bringing people in from the school leaver, from the graduate age, into the organisation, growing our own so they can develop and progress with a proper career structure, all those type of things that you would expect from a modern organisation. As we said, and as we know, we have had to go through a lot of change and continue to go through a lot of change to change that culture in the organisation to bring it into something that everyone would expect it to be, fit for the 21st century. We are midway through that process. There is always further to go but the principle that the Deputy is alluding to is absolutely what we are trying to achieve.

3.3.4 Senator T.A. Vallois:

I am grateful for the chair's answers with regard to this question. Would the chair commit to providing a specific update in the States Employment Board's annual report on the success of whether that is the new apprenticeship schemes, the grade 6 and below, whether that is graduate internships and management leadership inclusion for the public sector and any gaps in that analysis that may require further changes to education or policy or changes to training initiatives in the public sector workforce?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

The short answer is yes. It is eminently logical ... the reason I am pausing is we went through the framework for the next annual report at the last meeting. I am trying to remember if it is already in there. But if it is not, absolutely.