

## **2.11 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding staff on long-term sick leave:**

How many staff within the department are currently on long term sick leave and what procedures are in place to manage this situation?

### **Senator M.E. Vibert (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):**

Education, Sport and Culture have 10 members of staff on long term sick leave at present. This represents less than 0.005 per cent of the total head count of 1,847 for the department. In line with agreed procedures, these members of staff have been referred to Capita Health Solutions or are under the care of the appropriate medical authority and will be referred to Capita at a later date. Capita Health Solutions provide employees with support and guidance regarding their condition and support for their return to work. The department receives a report from Capita with advice regarding the employee's condition and circumstances and in most cases recommendations on a return to work programme. Line managers are encouraged, where appropriate, to keep in contact with the employee while they are on sick leave. Human Resources are also in contact with these members of staff either personally or by mail, depending on the employee's personal circumstances.

### **2.11.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier:**

Could the Minister explain the policy where, for example, there is a situation where a person may be involved in possible disciplinary matters and is at the same time on long-term sick leave? What policy is adopted to ensure that at some reasonable time the procedure can go forward?

### **Senator M.E. Vibert:**

The policy is that while someone is on sick leave then all possible disciplinary action is suspended and that is in line with the agreed procedures of the States. Of course, while on sick leave, eventually that has to be renewed by a doctor's certificate and so on. Eventually, of course, the person concerned, if such a person is continuously on sick leave, they go down to half pay and then eventually nil pay on the sick leave, but it is not possible to take disciplinary action against the person while they are on sick leave.

### **The Bailiff:**

I am afraid, Deputy, that we are not quorate, so I must ask whether at least one Member in the precinct could return to his or her seat so that questioning can continue? Deputy Ferguson.

### **2.11.2 Deputy S.C. Ferguson:**

Given that it is roughly a year since the hypothetical case of discipline and suspension sick leave has been going on, what steps is the Minister taking to solve that particular problem?

### **Senator M.E. Vibert:**

In this hypothetical case which people keep referring to... well hypothetically the person concerned is no longer on sick leave and the disciplinary process is in train.

### **2.11.3 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier:**

Can I therefore assume - and I do thank the Minister for that reassurance - that all witnesses and all relevant people in this hypothetical case will now be available to give their evidence?

### **Senator M.E. Vibert:**

I am not prepared to comment further, Sir.