

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER****BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 2nd JUNE 2009****Question**

“Given the Minister for Treasury and Resources recent warnings, would the Chief Minister confirm whether he has considered reductions in public sector staffing levels in order to reduce States expenditure and, if so, will he inform members –

- (a) What level of reductions he wishes to see and at what grades?
- (b) In which departments these reductions may occur?
- (c) Whether any reductions or cessation of services are envisioned at this stage?
- (d) What consultation has or will take place with representatives of the public and civil servants involved?”

**Answer**

Whilst the States as employer is always looking to maximise staff efficiencies and productivity, there are currently no plans to make general, across the board, staff and service reductions as a means of dealing with the anticipated shortfalls in States revenues. At present the Council of Ministers is working to the cash limits set by the States last year. Those cash limits were expected to be sufficient to allow services to continue without significant staff reductions or redundancies.

The Council will be presenting the 2010 Business Plan to the States in July, for approval in September. It will be for the States to consider at that time whether there should be reductions in cash limits, or whether it is more important to maintain services.

I have personally written to the local Unite Union proposing that the Union and the Employer establish a joint Working Party that would investigate and develop a partnership agreement providing total cooperation in the areas of staff flexibility, mobility and efficiency, as a way of avoiding redundancies, if at all possible, if and when the current economic situation worsens. I am still awaiting a reply.

Clearly there are areas of the service where increasing automation will, in the normal course of events, result in a reduction of jobs. These cases are being handled under the terms of our Redundancy Policy and appropriate staff representatives are already involved in the consultation process and will continue to be involved in the future.