

4.2 Deputy S. Pitman of St. Helier of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding investigations into allegations against staff at the Education, Sport and Culture Department:

Following the naming of a senior civil servant from the Education, Sport and Culture Department in court by alleged victims within the current historic abuse proceedings, will the Minister give Members and parents assurances that the matter has been investigated by his department?

Deputy J.G. Reed of St. Ouen (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):

I can confirm that all allegations about members of staff at E.S.C. (Education, Sport and Culture) have been thoroughly investigated by the appropriate authorities and concluded. I am not prepared to comment further. However, I do want to make it clear that I have full confidence in the integrity and professionalism of all senior civil servants in the Education, Sport and Culture Department. Thank you.

4.2.1 Deputy S. Pitman:

Supplementary, Sir? Could the Minister tell Members when and following what was this investigation undertaken?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

The investigations have been undertaken over a period of time and, as I have said before, the investigations have been conducted by appropriate authorities and have now been concluded.

4.2.2 Deputy S. Pitman:

The Minister has not answered the question. When did the investigation begin and following what? There must have been maybe some complaints from former people who went to Haut de la Garenne, *et cetera*.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I do not think those details are appropriate and I have answered the question already.

4.2.3 The Deputy of St. Martin:

Yes, it is very much in the line of what Deputy Pitman is asking. Could the Minister inform Members who the appropriate authorities were? Were there more than one, for instance, and if there were who were they, please?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Suffice to say they were appropriate authorities.

4.2.4 Deputy M. Tadier:

Yes, just to try and get some clarification because it seems to be becoming more and more obscure as we go on. If the senior executive at Education had complaints made about him, is it one of his employees that would be carrying out the investigation about him and what kind of confidence can we have that that would lead to a satisfactory outcome?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

All the States employees come under the remit of the States Employment Board, not individual departments.

4.2.5 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Would the Minister not concede that in order to bring comfort to parents who may be concerned and in order that if we accept his case, total exoneration has occurred, it would be much better to bring this matter to a total end by a full frank and closure statement from himself?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

As far as I am concerned this has already reached closure. This statement that I have made clearly spells out the fact that all issues to do with staff within E.S.C. have been thoroughly investigated by the appropriate authorities and concluded. I cannot, unfortunately, stop States Members and other individuals making allegations on behalf of the staff. All I can do is reiterate what I have said before, that I have every confidence in my senior civil servants.

4.2.6 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

I have got every respect for the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture but I have to say he is not exactly helping his case in inspiring confidence. No one, I do not believe, is making any allegations. As someone who worked for E.S.C. I certainly know for a fact that in the past anyone who was undergoing an investigation was suspended. Could the Minister at least let us know if this happened on this occasion? That is not to say anyone is innocent or guilty. Everyone is innocent until proven guilty, of course.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

At no point was any senior civil servant suspended.

4.2.7 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

As the allegations, I believe, made in court, were that the person concerned carried out a criminal act, can the Minister confirm whether the police did investigate it? Was that one of the authorities? If no prosecution has been brought then you could argue that there was no case to answer but at least can you confirm that an investigation took place?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I believe that the police were involved.

4.2.8 Deputy S. Pitman:

Could the Minister clarify whether there is a consistent policy on suspensions within this Council of Ministers or is it left to individual Minister's judgment?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

As I have said before, all States inquiries are and do come under the remit of the States Employment Board and, as such, they are the body that oversees all issues to do with staff.

4.2.9 Deputy S. Pitman:

It does not appear as ... recently we have witnessed a consultant at the hospital and the former Chief of Police who were suspended while being investigated and this clearly has not happened with this civil servant, why not?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I cannot answer for the States Employment Board but I would suggest that the reason for people not being suspended is that it is not necessary.

The Bailiff:

Very well, then we come to the next question ...

Deputy D.J. De Sousa of St. Helier:

Sorry, Sir, the Minister's last comment could be misleading. As a member of S.E.B. (States Employment Board), S.E.B. do not make judgments as to whether somebody is suspended or not, what we do is review them.