

2.3 Deputy D.J.A. Wimberley of St. Mary of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding a senior Human Resources post at Health and Social Services:

I think Deputy Tadier has been caught out by the dropping of the 2 questions. Would the Minister advise whether there is or will be a new senior post for H.R. (Human Resources) at Health and Social Services, and if so, will he explain how the current policy of providing a centralised H.R. function is affected by having departmental H.R. capacity as well?

The Connétable of St. Peter (Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources - rapporteur):

The short answer again is no, but I am sure the Deputy wants a bit more than that from me, so basically it is intended that the new senior member of the States of Jersey human resource team will lead H.R. for Health and Social Services. The post will report directly to the States Director of Human Resources. This is entirely in keeping with our single model for H.R. and reflects the approach which most large organisations now take. In summary, this model is made up of 3 key elements: firstly, business partners based in departments providing strategic advice to management teams on a range of people issues; secondly, centres of expertise, for example, teams specialising in organisational development, reward and employee relations, which provides specialist support to business partners; thirdly, H.R. services. This team provides employee guidance, administers training and helps recruit staff. Over the coming months, we will be building the skills and capabilities of the entire H.R. team to support significant organisational changes which are needed to deliver the £65 million savings agreed by Members.

2.3.1 The Deputy of St. Mary:

Could the Assistant Minister clarify perhaps - I hope he has done his work in preparing for this question - the sort of numbers we are talking about? We do seem to have a 2-tier system. We have a centre for H.R. and then we have H.R. capacity in the departments. That seemed to be what the Minister was saying. Could he give us some idea of the numbers involved in the centre and the numbers involved in the different departments?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

I think I was answering the Deputy of St. Mary's question basically on senior posts within departments, and those senior posts remain within the core team within Cyril Le Marquand House were funded by Treasury and Resources, but just to give him a flavour of the sort of ratio that we need, the current requirement for H.R. to staff is one to 100 members of staff, so one H.R. personnel to 100 members of staff, and that meets the internationally recommended ratio of H.R. staff to employees. Basically, I have not got figures to drill down to give the number of H.R. staff per department at this stage. If that is what he wishes to have, then I can get those developed up and delivered to him at some later time.

[10:00]

2.3.2 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

I have got a 2-parter. Does the Assistant Minister not think that 600 H.R. personnel for the States is a little excessive, and how will central H.R. ensure that complete

information is given to the central department from H. and S.S. (Health and Social Services) and hence the S.E.B. (States Employment Board)?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Yes, I agree with Senator Ferguson, 600 H.R. staff does seem to me rather excessive. I have to say I am advised that the ratio should be 1 to 100 staff, that meets the internationally recommended H.R. staff to employee ratios. It will be interesting, and I will also undertake to the Senator to come back with the actual figures of H.R. staff across the States network. I would be rather surprised if we are at 600, but that needs to be proved and I will come back to her on that point. Can I just ask the Senator to repeat the second part of her question? Sorry, I have forgotten it already.

Senator S.C. Ferguson:

How will the central H.R. Department ensure that complete information is given to them by ancillary H.R. departments, such as H. and S.S. and hence to the S.E.B.?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

By basically placing people within the departments which are linked directly to Cyril Le Marquand House and the main core of H.R. within the States. They are going to be responsible for delivering the information back to the centre, where it is then correlated and then obviously that will identify where pinch points are in staffing, sickness and other matters which need to be addressed. So it is via that link. Unfortunately, we did have the human resource information system, which was supposed to have delivered as part of the J.D. Edwards package, but that has not worked out in the manner that we would have wished to have done, where that would have been done automatically from departments back to Cyril Le Marquand House. At the moment, we are working on a new system to put that in place to ensure that we get the right information to be able to manage our staff appropriately.

Senator S.C. Ferguson:

A supplementary, Sir.

The Deputy Bailiff:

No, I am sorry, Senator. You have had 2 questions.

2.3.3 Deputy A.E. Jeune:

Could the Assistant Minister explain how H.R. or the S.E.B. for that matter has allowed for a contractual employment to be offered without having agreed the remuneration?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

I am sorry, I do not believe that is a question that I can answer at the moment. That is really a question for Health and Social Services, because the contract was awarded by them, I believe. I stand to be corrected.

2.3.4 Deputy A.E. Jeune:

I understand that S.E.B. are always involved in these senior appointments?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

This is not a staff appointment. This is a contract for services, [Members: Oh!] though I think it would be fair to point out that a contract for services are not dealt

with by the S.E.B. Staff are... and this member I think that the Deputy is referring to is not a member of staff.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Deputy, as I understood the answer from the Assistant Minister, the permanent contract is under consideration at the moment and no doubt therefore all will become clear in due course.

2.3.5 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Would the Assistant Minister not acknowledge that the model which he outlined has in fact been the model for the last several years? Why has it not been working and how is the new model going to be substantially different?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

I cannot fully answer the Deputy's question unfortunately. We all live in hope. Certainly there was a significant promise from the H.R.I.S. (Human Resources Information Services) system and we have 2 interim managers within H.R. at Cyril Le Marquand House at the moment working on developing up a new system of works, and also supported by the information services to deliver a product which is going to meet my expectation, and I will certainly be demanding that expectation to be realised, that it does deliver the information so we can properly manage our staff.

2.3.6 Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier:

Maybe I can shed some light for Deputy Jeune, because perhaps the Assistant Minister could tell us how closely these things are monitored at H.R., when a former H.R. official, now departed, told me only 3 years ago how she was basically allowed to write her own job description.

The Deputy Bailiff:

How are these things monitored was the question, Assistant Minister.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

I am not aware that that is the situation that H.R. managers can write their own job description. Certainly they write them for the rest of the staff, but I would probably need more information to be able to drill down into the detail of that. Sorry, Deputy, I cannot help you with that at the moment, but if you can give me the information a little more to identify that, I can get back to you with a full answer.

2.3.7 The Deputy of St. John:

Is the Assistant Minister happy that in a department like Health, for instance, some 35 H.R. officers would be employed, and in a department like Education, there be some 20-odd officers when we have got a shortage of nurses and a shortage of skilled teachers across the various zones? Can it be right that we have got so many people covering each other's backs?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

No, I am not happy on the principle, as the Deputy has put forward, but clearly there is a requirement for a number of H.R. staff, and we are not necessarily talking about H.R. managers. We are talking about basic clerical staff as well included in all of those numbers, but we are not at that sort of level within the departments anyway. My advice is the ratio that I gave to the Assembly earlier of one in 100 is correct, and

I certainly will go back and double-check that one, because it does seem somewhat excessive.

2.3.8 The Deputy of St. John:

A supplementary, Sir. Would the Assistant Minister therefore agree that the original information he gave us was somewhat misleading?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

No, I will not. The information was given to me in good faith, I have accepted it in good faith and delivered it to this Chamber in good faith. There is no attempt to mislead this Chamber by the officers, myself or anyone else involved in preparing this answer.

2.3.9 The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, it will be most useful for Members to have the actual numbers involved in all the departments and the centre. Now, just a 2-parter, a quick one is what happens with smaller departments when you have a ratio of one in 100, and there may be departments or outposts that are well under 100; so how do they report to the centre? How are they brought into the system? A specific question on training: is all training done from the centre?

The Deputy Bailiff:

I do not think the training... perhaps it is. Carry on, Assistant Minister.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Regarding the small departments, clearly within the small departments like the Health ... sorry, not the Health team, everything but: the Housing team and Property Holdings as well, the team that I am particularly involved with, do not have an H.R. person within it. They are consolidated and they are put together and covered by H.R. teams in other areas, which are commensurate with them. With regard to training, I will just answer that very quickly, if I can. General training within general roles is done from the centre, but where they are job specific or role specific training required, those are done by the departments.

Deputy M. Tadier of St. Helier:

On a point of order, could I just apologise to the House and the Minister for missing my question. I was working from the old Order Paper, so I thought I was on question 5. My apologies.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Members, I am sure, will accept your apology, Deputy.