

2.9 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier of the Chief Minister regarding the salary of the incumbent Director of Social Services:

In the light of the statement on 15th March 2011 by the Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services that the salary of the incumbent director of Social Services was still under negotiation, would the Minister confirm whether this reflects States Human Resources policy and, given the absence of a cap on the 'Grade A' pay scale, would the Minister outline the factors that determine a final pay offer?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur (The Chief Minister):

Yes, I can confirm that the reason for the delay in confirming the salary for the post in question was because of issues of States Human Resources policy. There are a number of factors that may determine a final pay offer in a recruitment situation. In the vast majority of cases, this is simply a matter of offering a salary consistent with the evaluated grade for the post, but in a small minority of cases, when dealing with very hard to fill jobs it is sometimes necessary to offer a salary in excess of the evaluated grade rate in order to appoint a good candidate. This is often particularly necessary where the market rates proposed in either Jersey or the U.K. exceed the normal States salaries.

2.9.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier:

Would the Chief Minister confirm then that there was an offer made but it was not acceptable and then this rather bizarre spectacle occurred of ongoing negotiations once indeed the job offer had been made?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

It may appear to be a bizarre spectacle but first one has to acknowledge the fact that that particular role was a difficult one to fill, and it then had to be re-evaluated in the light of the concerns of not filling it properly. That has now been done and it now follows the proper procedures.

2.9.2 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

In light of the C. and A.G.'s (Comptroller and Auditor General) report, it appears that salaries are being determined before a job has been evaluated. Can the Chief Minister assure us that this practice will be stopped?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

The Comptroller and Auditor General identified one particular area of concern but, in general, he said very clearly that policies and practices were adhered to.

2.9.3 Deputy C.H. Egré of St. Peter:

The Chief Minister indicated that this particular post was hard to fill. Could he indicate how many applicants put their name forward for this post?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

That is what I was talking about in general terms about a States pay policy for hard-to-fill jobs. I was not necessarily referring to this particular job in that policy. It relates not only to health professionals but any professional where you have perhaps requirements for specialist legal or accountant skills as well as medical skills.

2.9.4 The Deputy of St. Peter:

Supplementary. Could the Chief Minister indicate how many people applied for this particular job?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

No, I am afraid I could not because the recruitment process was carried out by the Health and Social Services Department in accordance with the general policies of the Human Resources Committee, with the exception that we have already discussed, but actual recruitment processes, it would be a matter for that Minister.

2.9.5 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

I think we are quite frankly - maybe for our own failings - in a state of confusion. I wonder if the Chief Minister could outline did he say that this post was not attractive even if it was pegged at Jersey and U.K. scales and then it had to be re-evaluated presumably to make it more attractive? Why was it not attractive even if it was pegged at U.K. scales, and one would have thought would have attracted people at that particular level?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

I cannot assess why people do or do not choose to apply for a particular job at a particular level but clearly if they do not then there must be a good reason. It may be because of the salary scale. It may be because of the working conditions or it may be because of other factors. The fact is that one needed this post; this is a very important post to fill. One needs to achieve that and if one cannot do that by any other means, then one has to look at re-evaluating the criteria for that post.