

2017.11.14

**2.12 Deputy G.P. Southern of the Chief Minister regarding States Workforce Management programme: [1(607)]**

Will the Chief Minister advise whether the £47 million of “investment” in the States Workforce Modernisation programme over the next 4 years works out as an average increase in earnings of 5.4 per cent and thereby amounts to a wage cut in real terms against estimated inflation ...

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Deputy, if I could ask you to pause. I do not think we are quorate, are we? We are just quorate. I think we are just quorate, so please ask your question again. I am sorry to interrupt you.

**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

May I start again?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Yes, of course.

**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Will the Chief Minister advise whether the £47 million of “investment” in the States Workforce Modernisation programme over the next 4 years works out as an average increase ...

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

I am sorry. I apologise, Deputy, it is my mathematics; we are not quorate, and I apologise for that. We shall call upon you to ask that question when we have a Member in the Assembly. Now we do, so again, third time lucky, and my apologies.

**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Go for it, yes. Will the Chief Minister advise whether the £47 million of “investment” in the States Workforce Modernisation programme over the next 4 years works out as an average increase in earnings of 5.4 per cent and thereby amounts to a wage cut in real terms against estimated inflation of 12.5 per cent over this period; and will he confirm whether this sum covers all annual increments and a contingency for recruitment and retention?

**Senator I.J. Gorst (The Chief Minister):**

The £47 million invested into the States of Jersey’s Workforce Modernisation programme equates to an average increase in pensionable salary of 5.4 per cent over the 3½ years assimilation period. This investment includes provisions for annual increments and contingencies for recruitment and retention. The reward structure has been designed to be affordable and sustainable.

**2.12.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Yes, a reduction in the States employee remuneration is indeed sustainable. We could keep on reducing it for the next decade; we have already had one decade of reductions in effective pay. Will the Minister accept that there is no other money, there are no negotiations to be had in the next 4 years, this is the cap and includes every bit of expenditure, it seems, on States employee pay? Is that the case?

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

That is the case as we stand here today. The States Employment Board, together with the Treasury Department, found extra money for this process to get to this particular amount. Of course, the

average, as I have said, is 5.4 per cent; some individuals will see far greater than that. The corollary of course is that some will not do as well.

**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

A supplementary, if I may, unless somebody else wants to? I can sit down.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

No, no one else has indicated.

**2.12.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Are we racing through things, are we? Yes, right, 5.4 per cent for some on average but 3 per cent for large blocks of workers over the next 4 years. Does the Chief Minister accept that effectively this is yet another wage cut on the back of 10 years of wage restraint and wage freezes and is unacceptable as a civilised jurisdiction to treat its States Employees that way?

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

The Deputy knows that some of what is being proposed in this workforce modernisation is the slimming-down of pay groups, creating fewer pay groups, but, just as importantly, is equal pay for work of equal value. That means that some people who have been, when you do that equal pay for equal value, underpaid. They are being corrected and they will see increases above the 5.4 per cent in their pay to put them on a level playing field to create equal value with others undertaking similar work. I would expect the Deputy to be congratulating the States Employment Board for this piece of work dealing with unfairnesses that have been in the system for a long time.

**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

So that is a levelling-down of standards, is it?