

2020.06.02

13 Deputy K.F. Morel of the Minister for Social Security regarding consultation in respect of family friendly legislation (OQ.138/2020):

Will the Minister confirm what consultation, if any, was undertaken with stakeholders prior to lodging the Draft Employment (Amendment No. 11) (Jersey) Law 202- (Appointed Day) Act on 19th May 2020, and will she provide the names of any groups or entities consulted, together with the dates of any meetings?

Deputy J.A. Martin (The Minister for Social Security):

Thank you, Deputy. I did not undertake any consultation with external stakeholders in respect of lodging the Appointed Day Act. Thank you.

3.13.1 Deputy K.F. Morel:

Could the Minister explain why she chose to undertake no consultation, given that we are in the midst of a crisis and all stakeholders would have been affected by that crisis?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

It would be very, very unusual to take any consultation on an Appointed Day Act. The Deputy says everyone will be affected, in fact it will be very, very few people affected. Again, I reiterate how few babies we have born and it will be a very few over the last half of this year. It is long, long overdue.

3.13.2 Senator K.L. Moore:

Given the small number of babies that the Minister has pointed out would be affected by these changes in this time period, could the Minister describe to the Assembly any consideration that she might have given to funding the family friendly policies in a different way, in order to assist those businesses that might find themselves in a very difficult situation during this economic crisis.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

That is what I did do. We have got a temporary scheme between now and Christmas because the employer of the second partner has no input, they pay the full wage, it is 2 weeks now and it will go up to 6 weeks if the Appointed Day Act goes through. My scheme will support that employer, as they do with mum now. That is why I can bring it in. I did say to employers out there I would not make them worse off. Treasury and the backing of C.O.M. (Council of Ministers) have come up with this scheme, which I will be bringing to Scrutiny with officers very shortly to go through.

3.13.3 Deputy K.F. Morel:

The Minister said it would be very unusual to undertake a consultation for an Appointed Day Act; well these are very unusual times. While few babies may be born, many businesses, in fact every single business in the Island will be affected by the need to change their H.R. policies, update their administration systems and change their employee handbooks. Could the Minister explain why she feels that it is appropriate not to, during a period of crisis, ask those thousands of businesses affected for their views?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

The Deputy insists there will be thousands of businesses affected. There is a lot of work going on with that, there are online training sessions, they hold 10 people. There are 8 booked already and they are fully booked. The employer will be able to get money under this scheme, much more

support; why we have Jersey Business, why we have the co-funding scheme, and there was a choice of possibly moving it back a few weeks. This date has been in the public domain ... I have had questions asked on it in the Assembly and on the balance I wanted to give those few babies, their parents, some surety and certainty of what they can do, and they have been waiting for this in Jersey for a very, very long time. We have nothing before 2015. Thank you.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Deputy Pamplin, you missed the opportunity to ask a question and there are no points of clarification in ...

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

No, thank you, Sir, I had realised and I will take it up with the Minister. Thank you.