

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 17th MAY 2021
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 24th MAY 2021**

Question

Further to the response to Written Question 6862 on 15th May 2012, when the Chief Minister of the time indicated his satisfaction that the use of zero-hours contracts by departments was regularly reviewed to ensure appropriate use, will the Chief Minister advise what action is being undertaken to stamp out poor practice and to ensure the appropriate use of such contracts currently to prevent staff from losing out on pension rights, holiday and sickness terms; and what ongoing monitoring of such contracts is taking place?

Answer

The States Employment Board instigated a review of zero-hours contracts in 2019, initially focussed on the use of such contracts in education services, and subsequently extended across the Government and Non-Ministerial departments. More than half of the work undertaken through zero-hours contracts are undertaken by employees with another contract of employment, for example, nurses who provide bank nurse cover, those supporting youth clubs or after school activities etc.

We undertake monthly reviews of the use of zero-hour contracts and will transfer such contracts onto full employment contracts as a matter of policy. Zero-hour contracts are reported monthly as part of the wider performance report.

Additionally, the Board are currently reviewing options in relation to the total remuneration of employees and those on zero-hour contracts – including the terms set out in the question – that will ensure parity across pay groups and contract types.

During the initial phases of the pandemic ‘stay at home order’ we identified a number of zero-hours contractors where there was either a commitment or reasonable prospects of them working in normal circumstances and these contracts were honoured whether they were able to be fulfilled or not by the contractor.

Zero-hours contracts do benefit both the employer and contractor, so we assure ourselves of the appropriateness of the use of these types of contracts. We are currently reviewing the use of zero-hours to cover vacancies. This will ensure that our workforce plans and recruitment activity do not substitute zero-hour contracts where there should be an employment contract in place.

The Board do not permit restrictive clauses, such as exclusivity, for zero-hours workers.