



Gender Pay Gap Review Panel

Witness: Chamber of Commerce

Tuesday, 30th November 2021

Panel:

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour (Chair)

Senator S.Y. Mézec

Witnesses:

Ms. L. McCrann - Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce

Ms. B. Hill - Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce

[13:03]

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour (Chair):

This is a public hearing with Jersey's Gender Pay Gap Review Panel and we are currently doing our follow up review. Today we are delighted to be receiving the Chamber of Commerce for this public hearing. Welcome, and thank you very much for agreeing to come into to talk with us today. I am Deputy Louise Doublet and I chair the panel. I will the rest of the panel - all one of them - introduce themselves and our officers and then I will ask you to introduce yourselves.

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

So I am the other member of the panel here this afternoon, Senator Sam Mézec.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

We do have 2 apologies from our other 2 panel members. They regret that they cannot be here today.

Principal Committee and Panel Officer:

I am Kellie Boydens, I am the principal committee and panel officer.

Communications Officer:

Ed Le Gallais, communications officer.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Lovely, thank you. We have Josephine as well. She is doing the transcripts today so she is busy doing that. Okay, Leonie and Becky, I would appreciate if you could introduce yourselves and just explain a bit about who you are here representing, what roles you are here in and a bit about your organisation, please.

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I will jump in first, Becky, if that is all right. Hello, I am Leonie McCrann, I am the CEO of Marbrel Advisory but also the Chair of the Employment and Skills Committee for the Chamber of Commerce. I took up the chair position in April of this year. Interestingly, one of the first presentations we had was from P.w.C. (PricewaterhouseCoopers) on the gender pay gap. So it is something that as a committee we have prioritised for this year and for next. I will hand over to Becky.

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Thank you. I am Becky Hill, I am Director of HR Now and I sit with Leonie on the Employment and Skills Committee. I have recently joined her this year.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Brilliant. Thank you, that is great. You are both here representing the Chamber of Commerce although you do, of course, have outside roles as well. Thank you for your written submission as well, that is much appreciated. Becky, I think that came from you. Just for the benefit of those listening I wonder if either of you, whoever wants to jump in, could just briefly outline your understanding of what a gender pay gap is, please?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I do not mind, I can do that one. So our understanding of the gender pay gap is the difference between pay for men and women for the same type of work or role.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay, Becky, do you have anything else you want to add? Just for clarity because sometimes - and this mostly for people that might be watching - people get confused between equal pay and the gender pay gap. Of course the gender pay gap is the difference between men and women's pay across the whole of an organisation, if you are looking at an organisation. Not just comparing one

particular job and what a man or women might be paid in one particular role but it is averaging out all the men and all the women and then comparing that figure. It is great that we have a shared understanding of that. Becky, do you believe there is a gender pay gap in Jersey?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think at the moment the stats are a little unclear, are they not, because we have not really tackled this deeply enough yet. Based on stats and data that we have from other jurisdictions then the assumption is that the answer would be yes, but I think we need to do more to understand what that data is and then respond further to that data.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you. Leonie, what do you think? Do you think there is a gender pay gap across Jersey?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think the data is telling us that there is and that is more predominant in certain sectors, particularly financial services. I think we have data to indicate that but to Becky's point, I think we potentially need to do more and make sure that that data is effectively backed up and is based on a scientific method of assessment calculation.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

What do you think might be the main causes of the gender pay gap?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think there is a number of reasons and it is perhaps not cause but consequence of ... so rather than assuming that we would deliberately move to have such a gap, there is a different speed perhaps to which people move up the hierarchy. Typically males have moved up the hierarchy faster than women and partly because of women's career choices, family choices. There are lots of reasons why things have created a gap, it is not necessarily about employers deliberately forcing such gap.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

What is your take, Leonie?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Again, it is opinion rather than based on fact and data, because I do not think we have enough data evidence to support this but my opinion would be that there are potentially less opportunities. I also think that there is somewhat of a traditional mindset and culture, particularly within financial services,

and I think that can have an impact on progression for women. Certainly progression to the sort of executive and director level roles.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

You mentioned a traditional mindset and culture. Can you elaborate on what you mean by that and do you think there has been any change in that over, say, the last 5 years?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I have been in Jersey now for 15 years and I have to say there has been, I believe, a considerable change in those 15 years from where things were when I arrived in 2006 to where they are now. However, that said, I still think that there is still ... and again it is a personal opinion but I still feel that there is a fairly traditional hierarchal model in a lot of these organisations which requires certain development skills and, in some case, perceived delivery to move up. That is supported by discussions that I have had with people in those sorts of roles and also women who have progressed to senior roles. There is an expectation that long hours equates to promotion and often women are not in a position to offer those long hours for various reasons but including childcare and general family care. I think that is demonstrated as well in the findings of the Channel Islands Well-being Report, which was released in September, where we saw a high number of women respond to that report - 60 per cent female versus 40 per cent male - but generally across the piece 50 per cent of people ... it was almost half were saying that they did not feel they had a healthy work/life balance. So I think there is definitely a link between a healthy work/life balance and progression to senior roles and what that might mean for the work/life balance.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you. When you mention the work/life balance, is there a gendered element to that? Is it easier for men or women to have that balance. What does that look like for men in general perhaps and women in general understanding that we might be generalising?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Yes, of course. Interestingly, we did look at whether there was any difference between what men were reporting in that survey versus women in relation to work/life balance and there is an insignificant difference. I think it is the difference of half a per cent. It is a general point, well-being point, but I think sort of broader to ... you know, outside of Jersey there is quite a lot of evidence, particularly in assessments and surveys done through COVID to suggest that women took on the majority of the requirement for childcare in that period. That is fairly representative of the sort of day-to-day, if you like, the non-pandemic situation. There is generally an expectation that women take on a higher proportion of the care for the family.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

We have got some questions on that a bit later on so I am pleased you have raised that. I will hand over to Senator Mézec now to ask about barriers to promotions.

[13:15]

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you, Chair. Becky, you mentioned in understanding how the gender pay gap comes about, you spoke about different speeds of people moving up the hierarchy. Could you just elaborate a bit on that and describe how that might manifest itself in businesses and what are some of the barriers that might prevent women from getting promotions?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Sure. The topics that we have talked about and Leonie has raised, they are all interlinked. There is the opportunity for promotion but with that is the opportunity for women in particular to demonstrate that they are ready for that promotion and what do they need to? They need to be available, they need to attend training and development, go off for secondments with their firm or whatever it is that anybody needs to show to be ready for promotion. That is just less available if you are the main carer. If you are a female that has caring responsibilities and many do. There are unintended barriers, if you like, generally to women being able to demonstrate that they are ready for that promotion. We still have a fairly top heavy male dominated pyramid when it comes to male versus female as they move up to the senior leadership team to the Exco level and board level.

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

Do you think that that is something that there is a wide understanding throughout the business community of that being an issue or do you think it is something that perhaps some people out there just do not notice and just think that is the way things are?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think there are probably 2 sides to that. While this is clearly very important and topical that we address this and find ways to address any gaps, whether it is gender pay or gender opportunity or whatever, so that we can remove the barriers, I think by education and talking about it we can help remove some of the barriers. But also we do not want to ... while we talk about gender pay we do not want to have, again, a different unintended consequence that not all women that are carers want to drive for that executive level role. Not everybody wants it so we have to accept and respond proportionately to what women in business want to do as well, rather than create an unnatural expectation for them to have to follow a track or not because not everybody wants to.

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

Leonie, you mentioned that your committee had looked at this and was aware of it, could you tell us what sorts of discussions are being had among the business community on this issue?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Yes, as a committee we decided to develop our own survey for Chamber of Commerce members, which is actually live at the moment. That is asking just a few questions but wrapping a few different topics into one for us as a committee. So we are looking at generally, you know, do people feel that there are barriers to female progression within their organisation, asking those kinds of questions but then also asking why they think that is and whether there is any particular skills that they feel are lacking or not made available to them. That is live and we are expecting the results of that before the end of the year, which we can then share. The reason for doing that was really so that we had some data to support any further work on this with our members. We want to understand where they think I guess the particular areas are for focus. We, as a committee, have our own views of that but we want to ensure that it is backed by the views of our members. We will have a clearer picture for that when we have the results of that survey.

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

I guess the next question I was going to ask might be pre-empting that survey but I was going to ask do you think that there is a recognition out there among businesses that more needs to be done about ensuring that businesses benefit from the diversity of talent that could be within their organisation by breaking down some of these barriers and helping people move up to the top if that is what they want to do?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

From my experience, and I am sure Becky will have experience and a view on this as well from her line of work, I think there is a recognition that there is value but it is taking time for that to be both understood and something done about it. As with most things, it takes time for some of these organisations, particularly the more traditional ones, to reflect that through the hierarchies of their business. Some of that involves a different mindset, a different way of thinking and some cultural shift. A lot of those things are not things that happen quickly or overnight. It has taken time and it will take more time before we start to see the results of that. Becky, do you have a differing view of that?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

No, I would agree entirely but I think we can also add that there is a little bit of a silver cloud in relation to COVID here as well, because COVID has definitely opened the conversation for different ways of working. We know that employees and candidates too are asking for much more flexibility

and flexibility in lots of ways, but flexibility in particular in the way that they work where and when and how and that discussion is ongoing. It is lively and it is ongoing and there are lots of H.R. (human resources) people in particular that are trying to grapple with what is the right thing to do for that organisation. Into that conversation comes opportunities about making everything more equal because it is equality for flexibility, which is typically traditionally been for females but now we are flipping tradition and making that available for men. Equally it is making other things more available for more people. It is just opening up the equality and the inclusion piece across the board. It is helping. Because it is so new, it is so relevant, we are talking about it now. We are moving up that pyramid of you need to understand it first and then we need to agree it and then if we get to the top and we like it we implement it. As Leonie said, it is the step change in terms of understanding what we need to do and then implementing it.

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

There is definitely some more we want to ask about how that flexible working may evolve in future after we have had these 2 years of having to get used to it, at least to some degree. One specific part of that, though, do you think there are ways that businesses can be more accommodating of their staff when those staff have caregiving responsibilities? Is that a specific thing being thought of at the moment, especially when in many workplaces it is now known that not everybody has to be in the office the whole time? As long as the work is being done, and done to a good standard, it is okay to allow staff members to have that flexibility when it comes to picking up their kids from school and all those sorts of things.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Can I just add to that, before it is answered, based on what you are saying about equality? Just to outline how workplaces can make sure that those opportunities are being afforded to men as well as women, and perhaps even encouraged, because we know culturally perhaps it is not as expected of men, is it, to be caregivers? How can workplaces actually encourage men to take up those roles?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think the starting point is that whatever you put in place for work/life balance, for flexibility, agile working, whatever you want to call it, you make it available to everybody. It is the same principle that is available to everybody in the organisation. Then you have to come down to but what is viable? So what is viable for the roles within an organisation so not the people that actually do those roles but what is available for those roles. So some roles just have to have more face-to-face or working in the office or working in the business, client facing or whatever it is. So there is a viability question. What you must have, assuming it is viable to be flexible, then you need to have trust and transparency. They are the 2 key ingredients that need to go both ways so that if manager and employee trust each other and there is transparency about when the employee is available for work

and is not, so if they are transparently saying I am working between these hours but these 2 hours I am away picking up the kids but then I will be back online, if that is transparent and if that is trusted then that is what is working in my experience. It is getting the senior leadership to have that trust that their employees will deliver that output and that they will do a good job, and it is imperative that the employees demonstrate that they are transparent about it, they deliver, they show what they are doing and with that the transparency and trust just increases and increases. With that the opportunities and the viability becomes wider. That is when you get more equality and more inclusivity. We talk a lot about diversity and equality but the key word to making it all happen, delivering it, is being inclusive.

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I will just add to that as well that COVID ... I think Becky mentioned it is the silver lining, is it not, that there is now a very different relationship between employer and employee when it comes to remote working and working from home and flexible working. It is more of a norm than it ever was previously. I think to your question, Louise, about how we make this happen, so how do we instil this equality, it is the behaviour and it is leadership demonstrating those behaviours. If we were to see male leaders of organisations demonstrating that they split their time, that they do the pick-up and the drop off for kids, et cetera. I think we need to see more of that. If you see that the whole way down the organisation then the behaviours are mimicked and it is seen as being more acceptable. That is a general point anyway, across any sort of behavioural or value proposition, if you want to change the culture, it has to start at the top.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you, I think that is a very powerful message coming from an organisation such as the Chamber of Commerce, saying that we need to see more of that from the top, men being caregivers. Thank you, I do think that is very powerful. I think Senator Mézec, if you do not mind, I am going to skip what we have as question 5 because I think we are already on the subject of the pandemic and how has impacted women. We were planning to ask you about how the pandemic has impacted on women and men and on roles within the home and within the workplace. We have touched on this but is there anything else that you would like to add, Leonie?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Like you said, there is evidence elsewhere to suggest that women's response to this was to take on the majority of the care in the home. I think potentially for lots of people in that situation, the silver lining, what they have managed to do is demonstrate that they can work flexibly and remotely to manage that. I guess we are feeling fairly confident that has had a positive impact in some ways, although it may appear to negative it might have demonstrated to people, particularly women, that they can juggle both things.

[13:30]

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

What do you think were the main challenges during the initial stages of the pandemic?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Generally, as a mother of 2 small kids, I was trying to work it all. I think that was the challenge. The challenge was, whatever age your kids were, trying to keep them entertained, trying to make sure that they were following course work or completing course work that they needed to do or schoolwork, but also keeping your jobs going. Particularly if you have 2 full-time working parents. That was a massive challenge and I think from a well-being perspective that is potentially why we have seen such a significant degradation in mental well-being, as demonstrated in the Channel Islands Well-being Report. Because people were having to cope with essentially 2 full-time jobs at once.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

That level of stress, and you noted yourself that it seems to have fallen - the majority of extra responsibilities - on women and you noted the impact on well-being. Are you seeing within any of the businesses that you represent what I think has been termed as the great resignation? Something that is happening internationally, is it not? Are you seeing any gendered elements to that in terms of men or women either quitting or wanting to go part-time or wanting to work in a different way?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Becky might be closer to this than me but I think from what I have seen it is very equal in people rethinking the purpose of what they do and the value that they add, and what their work/life balance is.

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I would say that from an employee perspective that it is fairly balanced across the gender in terms of what people are looking for. From an employer recruiting, I would say that there is a slight uptake in terms of females ... it is a deal breaker whether they will join you or not based on your response to flexibility and diversity. Diversity is another big thing that people are asking. In finance the all-male, typical Brit interview panel is of less interest to a more diverse candidate base these days. They want to know what else is going on in your business that it makes you more diverse.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you. From an employer perspective, do you feel employers are seeking specific types of people? Do they prefer people without caring responsibilities or do you think they are genuinely accepting of people with those responsibilities?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think people are more generally accepting. Perhaps that is a slight nudge in that direction but I would say if I had to go yes or no, one or the other, then I would say that people are more accepting of the flexibility question, for whatever reason. To take it to another level I think people are more accepting of those that have got family responsibilities but then putting that in the equality base there is more acceptance of people that just have something else that they want or need to do that is not necessarily childcare that is important to them in their lives, that there is flexibility for that too. So we do not just make flexibility only available to people childcare or dependency priorities, it is for the professional sportsperson or the person that has dogs to walk in the morning or whatever it is. There are different things that are important to different people. I think it is going wider than childcare.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you, Senator Mézec has some questions about flexible working.

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

You have definitely touched upon some of the things that I was going to ask there. Do you think discussions are being had at the moment not just consciously about the advantages of flexible working because some of those will have just become apparent out of need because of the pandemic, but do you think there is any conscious thinking going on about the risks that there could be with it and some of the disadvantages? I am thinking here the risks there maybe to parents who become unfamiliar around the office if they are not in the office. Will that be something that could lead to very talented people being overlooked just because other people are not as familiar with them, that sort of thing?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Absolutely. I think it is a hard topic, I am sure Becky will agree. We are hearing a lot of businesses are grappling with the fact that different people want to do different things for different reasons. They may want certain roles or see certain roles as important to have in an office environment where some of those people may not want to be in that environment and then how do you therefore manage what people are expecting now that they have been able to work with what they may have perceived to be more flexibility moving into a less flexible environment and vice versa. We are hearing a lot of businesses are looking at fairly blanket policies around 2 days in 3 days out, that kind of thing. I think there are risks associated with that. A blanket policy was where we were before, let us be fair, and now we are back to another blanket policy. Organisations need to understand what it is their

employees need a little bit better, what the customers need perhaps a bit better, to come up with a solution that is not another blanket policy. There are significant risks, as you say around that particularly, such as promotion, given that although some of our behaviours around remote working and working flexibly might have changed we want to change behaviours when it comes to who we might deem to be more hardworking or more present or more available. Again, some of those unconscious biases still come into that decision-making processing when it comes to promotion.

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

Sure. Taking flexibility to one extreme is people perhaps recognising that some people do not necessarily have to be on the Island to be doing some of these jobs. There is certainly a temptation that I hear from a lot of people to leave the Island because of cost of living and because of not adequate access to some public services that they may want. Do you think that is something that businesses are toying with? The idea that keeping staff on even though they do not necessarily have to be in Jersey, apart from popping in once a month or something like that?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Yes, absolutely. I think as people have had the opportunity through COVID to reconsider their purpose and position in life and where they are physically, as well as perhaps on the career ladder, they will be thinking where they will most effectively be. I think organisations are thinking about how they can support them to do that because they do not want to lose the talent obviously but people can work remotely. I do think this is going to be a significant challenge for Jersey. Also we are seeing businesses who are moving to fully remote models where they are struggling to find talent locally or aware that talent might be expensive. That is going to be a challenge and something that, as an Island, we need to think about and think about quickly.

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you, I will hand back to Deputy Doublet.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

On the question of public services and childcare specifically, I am aware that some companies provide either free or subsidised childcare to their employees and particularly now with more office space becoming available now that a portion of employees are working from home. Is this something that you think more businesses should be prepared to offer to their employees?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Yes, absolutely, why not? Although I guess it comes with its own challenges, as in would you then feel that you had to use those services over others. There is already, I guess, restrictions or constraints around some of the childcare services on the Island so how organisations might be able

to fulfil some of that need when it is not their core area of expertise, I am not sure. But it is certainly something that would be worthwhile for organisations to consider, given it is such a challenge.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you, Becky, do you want to add anything?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Yes, I think in an ideal world they would but I think in Jersey this will be a limited world. I imagine that there are other things that we can do more quickly, easier and more cost effective that would help support childcare rather than put that on to the employer. I do not think you are suggesting that all employers should do this. I am thinking in my head about the bigger corporates that we work with, some do and some do not. That is a big challenge.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Are you aware of any that do offer that locally?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Not anymore. They might offer ... in the U.K. (United Kingdom) there are tax advantage schemes that employers can be supported through with the H.M.R.C. (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) where there are tax breaks for childcare vouchers. There are, therefore, some Jersey companies with a U.K. sister or head office or whatever it is that tries to replicate some kind of financial support for childcare because it is available in the U.K. through a tax effective scheme. But in terms of offering space where there is childminders, carers on hand, I am not aware of any anymore. No, I think there was a couple a number of years ago but not recently.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

You mentioned tax rates and voucher schemes, do you think schemes like that would have a positive impact on narrowing the gender pay gap?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Yes, certainly. Also in the U.K. it is not gender specific as to who gets the tax break and can get the childcare vouchers.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I am just noting the time so I am going to move on to a different area of questioning. Perhaps we will start with Leonie. What is the Chamber of Commerce's view on introducing a statutory requirement for businesses to report on their gender pay gap?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Chamber would be supportive of that. Obviously it comes with the usual caveat that that should be as easy to do as possible and should be particularly mindful of the smaller businesses, the medium-small sized businesses who would be more than happy, I believe, to also report but some recognition has to be given to the effort that might be required to do that. I think the answer is yes, with a considered approach to making that as simple as possible.

[13:45]

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

You mentioned the smaller businesses, do you have an idea of where a threshold could possibly be set. I think in the U.K. it is 250 employees or above but obviously in Jersey, as a smaller jurisdiction, it might be smaller than that. Do you have an idea of where you think the line should be drawn?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think that is a bit more difficult in Jersey because what do we consider a small business really, probably less than 10 people. It is quite a difference between here and the U.K. But equally why would any business not be more than happy to report as long as that process is simple?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Did you want to add anything, Becky?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think I would support that. In terms of reporting, if it is simple then I agree why would we not. I suppose then there is the bit that comes after the reporting, so there is the reporting and now we have data and now what do we do with that data. That is where I think it becomes more complicated for the bigger companies that are more complex into why their data looks different to a 10 and under company. We just have to be reporting, fine, dealing with the data. We do need to very much consider the size of the Jersey businesses and the complexity that comes with it being a smaller business if you are going to try and change it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

We have spoken about some businesses that have reported on their pay gaps already and during our previous review we found that ... we were hoping taking on some of our recommendations might result in a cultural shift that could lead to voluntary reporting. Have you seen evidence of this cultural shift and do you know many businesses that are reporting currently, any of your members?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think the only one that have seen recently voluntary reporting was Ogier. I think they have done that for a very good reason, being that it demonstrates that they are an equal rights employer, it demonstrates that they are the type of organisation that somebody would progress in and do so in a transparent way. Obviously Government reported earlier in the year also. Those have been the ones we have identified.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

In terms of that cultural shift and, Becky, you mentioned the data, in the U.K. there is an action plan that can be also attached to the data. Do you think that should be required in order to require companies to show how they are going to address any gender pay gap that has been identified? If that is a requirement what support do you think companies might need from Government to fulfil that?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

The first question was around how we might pick the data and have the different recommendations for different types of business. Yes, I think it needs to come with education and recommendations. With anything new we need to fully understand the data. The first cut of the data is not necessarily the full picture so we need to understand the full picture, fully supportive of recommendations but I think we need quite a lot of education to go with those recommendations so it is not just a tick box list, it is really understanding what is the data, what does it mean to organisations and then the support and the understanding is what comes first. What are we really trying to achieve by addressing gender pay reporting? It goes back to my point that candidates these days are looking for diverse organisations and those candidates that are looking for diverse organisations are looking to be able to see that there is a progression. They are looking for opportunities, it is not just ... as I said right at the beginning, lots of these different elements are all linked and it is not just about pay. We need to understand, educate, recommend.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Leonie, what is your take on if there was an action plan that was required with the gender pay gap reporting? What support do you think companies might need from Government to be able to do that?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think an action plan is sensible, right, because otherwise you are providing information which is great but that is not the reason for reporting, is it? The reason for reporting is to demonstrate improvement. I think in terms of support, it probably depends on the business sector, type and size in some cases in terms of what support they might need. Some businesses are just better placed to do this kind of work than others but, I think, toolkits, et cetera, that have been rolled out in other

jurisdictions so people can self-serve as best they can are always useful and sensible. Then I think having somewhere that businesses can go when they have a question or when they have a need would also be useful. I do not think it would need to be extensive support, I just think it needs to have some ... another person at the end of the line that somebody can speak to when they get stuck with something. But also there is probably opportunities given the size of Jersey for businesses to support each other. So businesses that are better at this or maybe larger to offer support to some of the other smaller businesses with this kind of thing. We should not lose sight of the fact that Jersey is a small community and with that comes lots of benefits such as being able to support each other with these kinds of requirements.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Is that something that your organisation, Chamber, would perhaps facilitate?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think it is something that Chamber could support or start the discussion on at least and maybe get some of those relationships happening. Yes, I think so.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Great, thank you. Senator Mézec, did you want to add some questions under this topic?

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, I suppose just one main question. In the absence of a law that made it mandatory to report on a gender pay gap, do you think it is likely to take off? We mentioned Ogier that have done it and I think you also mentioned about candidates wanting to find the best employers that can demonstrate that to them. Is it something that is actually likely to take off by us purely focusing on trying to drive forward that cultural change or is something that, when push comes to shove, probably would require a law being passed to make it happen? Which do you think is more likely?

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think there are some employers that will not want to do it because they will be afraid of the consequences of doing it. I think it goes right back to what are the objectives that we are trying to achieve by reporting? What are we trying to change? What is in it for the employer? For example, if they report on gender pay, that gathers data in government to formulate those recommendations that you talked about, to formulate ideas in terms of if employers do X, Y, Z actions the data tells us that the positive consequences of doing that are 1, 2 and 3. If you can provide carrots for people to do it then they are more likely to. If it is just a blanket: "You must ... legislation says you must report" then people will be fearful about why. They will assume that you just want them to put the pay up for females. That will be their default assumption.

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, thank you.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Just one more question on the reporting. Do you think it is perhaps easier for businesses to feel they can report if it is mandatory for all businesses and everyone is going to have to do it all at the same time. Is that perhaps an easier climate, Leonie, for businesses to report in rather than as it currently stands companies having to be trailblazers?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Yes, I do not think it necessarily makes it easier knowing that everybody else has to do the same thing. It probably makes it more standardised. So for people who were interested in these organisations or indeed in coming to Jersey then they might be interested to see as an Island what that looks like. I guess it provides you with a standard that everybody can adhere to, whereas if it is voluntary then different people will do it in different ways and also we will not have that set of data that is representative of the employers on the Island.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I wanted to ask a couple of questions before we finish on pay transparency as a related issue. Do you think more businesses should adopt pay transparency and allow staff to request information on pay levels and perhaps broken down by gender?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think that is a little bit tricky and, again, it would need quite careful management, different organisations would want to treat that differently. It could actually cause a whole lot of unnecessary noise, which probably is not going to be helpful to productivity. Would that transparency result in any form of ... would we be better off for it? I am not convinced. I think it would need very careful management.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you for sharing your views on that. Do you think it is appropriate that some employees are prohibited within their contract from discussing their pay with fellow employees?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think it is something we are probably quite used to, right? I think it is a fairly standard contractual term, certainly in the corporate world. My sense of it is that it is there for a reason and the reason being that that kind of discussion can create a lot of anxiety between people and this sense of

disparity when there might be genuine reasons for that. Often the conversations happen and before you have had a chance to settle the conversation it has blown out of all proportion. It is there to try and prevent that noise and things being maybe disproportionate.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Do you think it has any impact on the gender pay gap, this lack of pay transparency?

[14:00]

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Potentially it does, but probably no more so than any other inequality in terms of pay, right? Yes, I am not convinced that even if that was not stipulated in a contract that people would be willing to have that kind of discussion in any case for fear of the repercussions. Although we would probably see it less so in contracts now than maybe 10 years ago, I still think that behaviourally people understand the impact of having those kinds of conversations.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yes, a tricky one. Thank you. Perhaps an easier question to you both to finish. Please feel free to each answer this one. If you could make any recommendations to Government, what would they be?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Becky would you like to go first.

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

In a particular ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

So recommendations that could help address the gender pay gap. What would you recommend to Government?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I have a list, Becky, it that helps.

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Fire away, Leonie. It starts with the objectives, it comes back to explain what are the objections. What is in it? What are the positives? There are pros and cons to everything and I think we just have to fully understand the overall objective.

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I will go on now with my laundry list of things. So I think the case study that we talked to P.w.C. about when they presented their report findings to the committee, to the Chamber, was around skills and training opportunities and having some government funding around that but, of course, that is going to be very dependent on understanding what those skills gaps are, which we feel that we still do not quite have a view of that and that goes back to the data point, but also retraining people so they can re-enter the workforce, particularly women after they have had a period of leave for childcare. Also promoting work/life balance for everyone. Not just for women but making that something that is acceptable culturally, I think, across the Island and then encouraging cross-Island mentoring. There has been some very positive work over the last few years with board apprentice and the "I will" campaigns but more consistent efforts are needed to essentially see the outcomes of those initiatives. As Becky says, it is really about demonstrating the outcomes of these things and making it a positive outcome for the Island.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you. I am aware of the time, we have gone slightly over but, Senator Mézec, did you want to squeeze in any final questions?

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

I think just one and this might be a slight mischief-making question, I suppose. One of the points that we have had put to us by somebody else who has submitted to us was what she called the importance of calling out bad behaviour. She did mean it in a political context so us as politicians standing up to it when we encounter it and not remaining silent. Do you think that there is more that business leaders can do, maybe not with such a negative focus on calling out bad behaviour but in also highlighting the positives and empowering their staff as well, perhaps when there are uncomfortable moments on the shop floor or in the staffroom or what have you to feel empowered to stand up and say: "The attitudes you are displaying are wrong and here is why"?

Chair, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

Absolutely. As I mentioned earlier, that cultural change is a leadership driven change. Part of that is empowering people to copy the behaviours that the leadership are displaying. That empowerment and empowering people to call things out and have that difficult conversation on the shop floor, as you say, that is sometimes tricky in this environment because you never know who you are going to bump into in Waitrose the next day. There is a small Island aspect across all of this that we cannot lose sight of; it is a small community and everybody is interconnected in lots of different way, but there is a way of having those discussions in a positive way, which I am sure Becky will come in with, rather than a negative way. If it is perceived to be that one company is doing better than

another because this is something they can talk about, their staff talk about and are promoting from the top, the whole way down, then others will follow if they perceive that there is benefit to them being perceived in that same light. I think it is better to focus on the positives than the negatives.

Member, Employment and Skills Committee, Chamber of Commerce:

I think it is very important that we ... you drive a culture of making it safe to be able to do that. I do not mean to go to the extent of whistle-blowers that feels like a big issue but culturally again coming down from the top you can almost provide positive K.P.I.s (key performance indicators) to finding things. I have worked with companies in commercial organisations where they had positive K.P.I.s on spotting health and safety things. Health and safety could be anything, it is just the way they termed it. There was a K.P.I. where every team had to find 3 health and safety problems, if you like. This could be 3 anythings per month. It was a positive: "Go find it. Go find it and tell us about it and we will do something about it." If you can provide the environment: "Go and find it, call it out and then we sit down and we talk. What did we learn?" There is no blame culture. You have to change the culture into it being safe. Again, as Leonie said, that comes from the top.

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you very much for those answers. We really do appreciate your time today. It has been a very interesting hearing. I have enjoyed it and hope you have as well. We will let you know when the transcript is out. I am sure we will be using lots of your answers in the report, which again we will make sure you get a copy of that. Thank you, everybody. Thank you to Senator Mézec and the officers as well. I will end the hearing there. Thank you very much.

[14:07]