



Public Accounts Committee

Performance Management - Follow Up

Witness: Assistant Chief Executive Officer

Wednesday, 27th September 2023

Panel:

Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central (Chair)
Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South
Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat of St. Helier North
Mr. G. Phipps
Mr. M. Woodhams
Mr. P. Taylor
Ms. L. Pamment, Comptroller and Auditor General

Witnesses:

Mr. T. Walker, Assistant Chief Executive Officer
Mr. M. Grimley, Chief People and Transformation Officer

[13:02]

Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central (Chair):

Good afternoon and welcome to this public hearing of the Public Accounts Committee. Today is Wednesday, 27th September, and we are questioning the Assistant Chief Executive Officer in relation to our follow-up review regarding performance management. We will start with introductions. I will ask the committee to introduce themselves first. I am Deputy Lyndsay Feltham and I am Chair of the Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. G. Phipps:

I am Graeme Phipps. I am a lay member of the committee.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat of St. Helier North:

Deputy Mary Le Hegarat, District North of St. Helier.

Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South:

Deputy Tom Coles for St. Helier South.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Matthew Woodhams, lay member.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Philip Taylor, lay member.

Comptroller and Auditor General:

In attendance Lynn Pamment, Comptroller and Auditor General.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

The officers attending today?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Tom Walker, Assistant Chief Executive.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Mark Grimley, Chief People and Transformation Officer.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Thank you. We have an hour and half set aside for this hearing. We do have quite a lot to get through so we would appreciate succinct answers where possible, please. Firstly, we are going to be asking you questions in relation to your role with regard to People and Corporate Services and Modernisation and Digital. So please could you outline what your responsibilities are in relation to both those 2 areas, please?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes. My responsibilities are the same across all 3 areas. So I am responsible for people, policy and digital. So I am the chief officer for all 3 areas and accountable officer.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, thank you. I will hand over to Graeme to start with the questions.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Thank you. The first line of questioning pertains to Connect People, but my first question will be regarding those that are not involved in Connect People. As a large per cent of the organisation is not within the scope of Connect People, do you feel this is appropriate? Do you feel this can be accurately managed, performance management, across the organisation where it is not being utilised? Any comments on that domain?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Just one question of clarity. Did you mean the performance management part of Connect People or the more wide kind of Connect People system that we are rolling out?

Mr. G. Phipps:

I think both I would like your views on.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Both. All right, sure. So in relation to the Connect People programme, obviously we have implemented some of it already, such as the Connect Performance module, and then some of it is currently being rolled out as part of the project. So I am at the moment focused on the things that we have currently got in place, and then in terms of the Connect project and the continuing rollout, the accountable officer for that is the Treasurer. Mark is the senior responsible officer for the next phase of the rollout of Connect People, which I know is a bit of preamble but it was just to make sure ...

Mr. G. Phipps:

I think the line of questioning is where it is not being rolled out and where a conscious decision is that it is not being utilised in parts of the organisation. We are just wondering how that is being handled. That is the line of questioning.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes. So in relation to Connect Performance, perhaps we should start there as that is the bit that has been rolled out already. You can see that the Connect People system is very easy for the people in office-based environments to adopt quite simply and it has good coverage there. But there are some groups of our employees where we need to do more work in order to make the system both accessible to them but also to make it fit with their professional frameworks. I do not know whether, Mark, you want to expand upon that.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Could I just ask a very quick question? Just for clarity, because you have the most up-to-date figures, what is the percentage in both areas who are not covered by the system?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

So we have 5,000 people in scope; 3,000 are out of scope. Most of those are in schools and front line workers, manual workers. States of Jersey Police are not in scope at the moment because they have a different framework. If it helps, the Connect People comprises of performance management, learning, central employee information, recruitment and retention, and the H.R. (Human Resources) ticketing system.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I think what we will do, given that we have so many questions, is we will focus on the performance management aspect in this hearing.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

So in the performance management, the performance management system has replaced what we called "My Conversation, My Goals". That had very, very low take-up. We have just published information to the C.S.S.P. (Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel) about take-up in mid-year reviews and final year reviews, year on year. What we have seen is an increase in take-up on those who have access to the system but the system is not rolled out, in terms of accessibility, to everybody at the moment. We are shifting the system from the old one to the new one in November and then we start a rollout in January of the whole system.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So I guess the question is pertaining to how comfortable are you that performance management has been properly implemented in areas where this is not been addressed.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

So in the key areas that are not being addressed - for example, in schools - they have the school improvement framework, and from that improvement framework you have your head teacher's objectives, heads of departments, and then that flows down. So they have a structure for the largest group of the workforce that are not in there. Other parts of the workforce, like manual workers, will not have one to ones regularly but they may have group objectives, and performance management is really where there are concerns about performance at that point. So there are different ways of managing performance. Where Tom has said that we are looking at the professions, we do not have performance management for the whole organisation. We have not had performance management for the whole organisation before, because it is not linked to professional standards. So, for example, social workers will have regular supervision, but the old system stood separate to

that. We are trying to integrate those so it links to their professional standards and development, not just a stand-alone system, and that will take some time.

Mr. G. Phipps:

I presume at some point you will report back what learnings you have and what the appropriate mechanism is to enhance performance management across all elements of the organisation that you are comfortable with?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes, we have already looked at that in terms of My Conversation, My Goals. It was not a performance management system; it was a self-reflecting system. It was of its time. It was the first introduction, really, of systematising performance conversations. But the approach that we are taking is to configure locally to what is more appropriate. So if there are existing professional supervision mechanisms, we are implementing it alongside those as opposed to putting something on top, because it is not very efficient. We have about 64 different professional groups that we will work through their standards and configure that into the system. So the learning was not to do a one-size-fits-all because it is not appropriate to the different professions. That is how we are going to configure the system going forward.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Then, I guess, to loop back to your original question, which is how comfortable am I, I am fairly comfortable with this because one of the things that the earlier review from the Jersey Audit Office highlighted was the challenges of taking a big bang approach to any of this. You can see why some of those decisions were necessary with the financial system, but actually with the Connect People system it is possible to take more of a phased approach and then to cover progressively more and more groups as we move on. But in the meantime, for areas like the police, I am assured that they do have good performance management systems in place.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Just building on that, did the rollout of Connect People highlight any shortfalls within performance management in the organisation? As you rolled this out, were there learnings regarding performance management that came out?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Performance management is not systematised within the organisation. Without it being systematised, i.e. linked into what you are trying to do, you do not really have a performance management system. The organisation is immature, we have recognised that previously, and the mechanisms are not there. The learning from that is that the one-size-fits-all that went in previously was not adopted. It was not seen as valuable to the employees and, therefore, it was not used. I was just trying to bring up some figures, which my laptop has frozen. But I have seen the latest cut of half-yearly reviews, and we have seen a significant uptake in people using the half-yearly reviews using the new system than we had on the My Conversation, My Goals.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, and I think it is a reinforcement, is it not, that a lot of this is around habits that form culture rather than around systems. So the system itself is much easier. I use it. I find it much easier to use. The previous system was more difficult. So the system itself is good. You can see that the habit of performance management, the practice of doing it, is building. You can see it from the figures. Now the system is easier to use, then the habit is building in the organisation. But I suppose the big learning point is to reinforce that very point that you get good at what you practise, and so if you want to become really good at performance management then you need to build the habit into the routines. That is what is still building within the organisation.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Very, very simple question, sorry, just to repeat part of it. It is a yes or no. Do you feel you can accurately manage performance across the entire organisation today?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

I want to answer a different question.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

That is the only question I am asking, though.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Do I feel that performance is being managed across the organisation? Yes.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Can you answer mine now?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Is that all in one system? No.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Yes. But the question is not in one system, but can you accurately manage performance across the entire organisation as matters stand today? It can be different systems.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes. Yes, we can.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I can see Philip wants to ask a question.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Yes, thank you. You have mentioned that it has not been rolled out uniformly across the organisation because different elements of it, like the police and education, needs work doing to make it more ease of access and relevant to those bodies. When the system was selected, how was this tested in terms of making sure that it would actually be relevant to all aspects of the organisation?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

So there is a difference between the system's relevance and the requirements of the organisation. So the system was selected because it is highly ... what the consultants would say "highly configurable", which means that we can adapt the system to different needs. So we can create different configurations depending on each of the different work groups, and that is why it was selected because it was easy to use, easy to access. It was integrated into the employee record. The actual performance system itself, Performance Management, also links to regular reviews, so you can record not just when people do quarterly or half-yearly reviews, but when you have your one to ones or any concerns you can add objectives and take them out at any time. So it is a lot more simple and flexible. But we selected that knowing that the organisation has not got professional maps yet. That is the next stage that we have to get in. So we have done a very quick rollout to make sure that people are getting used to the system. The next stage is working with the heads of professions to say what are the competencies, what are the objectives that people should have, what is in common, and then the line manager can add the local objectives.

Mr. P. Taylor:

So all that was known when the system was selected?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Was it discussed with the police and the Education Department? Was it known in advance that they would not be able to adopt it immediately? I say this because, of course, education is a fundamental part of government, as is the police.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes. We selected the system because it gives us the capability to do this. The fact that the police are not on it at the moment or education are not on it at the moment does not mean they are not doing performance management. What the system ...

Mr. P. Taylor:

That is not my question. Was it known ...

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes.

Mr. P. Taylor:

... when the system was selected that those 2 departments would not be able to adopt it initially?

[13:15]

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes, and there are lots ... we have 64 professions. We are more complex than the U.K. (United Kingdom) Civil Service and we have to map those professions, their competencies and their standards. None of those exist at the moment. We have started to do that work and it is part of a 5-year strategy that we have to introduce this. Because it is not just about performance management; it is about succession management, it is about training and development, and it is about the relationship with the management. So focusing on one small part of the system and saying it cannot be used is not correct. This system gives us the capabilities that we have been waiting for.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Okay. I understand the complexity of the organisation. I have worked with the States of Jersey for over 30 years, so I know it is not simple. I know it is complex. At what stage do you think we are in terms of the total rollout, 10 per cent in, 20 per cent in, 30 per cent in? When will it be completely rolled out in your estimation?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

I think to get every profession in will take longer. To get everybody on it will be by the end of next year. So we have to go with the school cycle, so September next year is when we see the schools. In order to get every single profession in - and this is being done as part of business as usual, not as a project - that means we have to stagger this and work through each of the professions. So what we are doing at the moment is we are working on mapping the professional groups for nurses, for example. We are trialling that and doing proof of concept with that because, as Tom alluded to, big bang is not going to work. We do not have the capacity, nor have we got the knowledge of the system to do everyone at once. So we are doing it by profession by profession, and we are targeting key professions to learn as we go.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Okay, thank you.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So along that line, what has been the role of Corporate Portfolio Management Office in relation to this Connect Performance, Connect People programme? Is this role proving to be effective? How is it being monitored?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Sure. Well, maybe if I summarise and then you can do the specifics. The Corporate Portfolio Management Office give us the framework to manage the projects and programmes. So they give us the rules of the road and the tools to be able to manage projects and programmes. So their role in giving us the tools to do this is really important and they also fulfil a really important role through regular reporting. So you get good, rich reports back as chief officers and as E.L.T. (executive leadership team) on all the major and strategic projects. So they have a really important role in reporting back on what is going well, where the issues are, where programme managers are flagging issues. Then I think probably an area we will come on to, but next year, as you saw from our earlier executive response, they will also fulfil a role towards the end of next year on benefits tracking as well. So their role will expand further. So that, in a nutshell, is the value that they add into what we are doing. I do not know whether you want to talk about your experience as a senior responsible officer, but ...

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Only to add that C.P.M.O. (Corporate Portfolio Management Office) makes sure that the governance documents are in place. So when I took over as the senior responsible officer in May, there is a formal designation from the accountable officer, who is responsible for the money, to say: "This is what I expect of you, this is how I expect you to run the programme, and this is how you will report the programme".

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Just while we are on that point, can I just ask within that C.P.M.O. framework, and within this particular programme, who is considered to be the senior user?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

The senior ... we are not running the programme in a senior supplier/senior user. So we are running it ... we have spec'd it and we are running it in a slightly different way because there is not a senior user. So that is why I am the S.R.O. (senior responsible officer) and I have what we call the ownership board. The ownership board has representatives from the organisation and my team, because there are different bits of functionality at different times.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

What about supplier?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

So the supplier is the consultants, Deloitte. They are there to deploy it. So the supplier have what they call the work bench. The work bench is the communication between us as a user and them as a supplier. There are gateways in that. There are milestones that we sign off, and that is how we manage the programme.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Has M. and D. (Modernisation and Digital) had any involvement whatsoever in this project?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

M. and D. to date are just doing the technical ... one technical aspect, which is what they call the integration layer. So where the Connect system has to join with another bit of I.T. (information technology) infrastructure, then M. and D. are doing that. So to date there is 2 or 3 really top class, excellent, knowledgeable people who are doing what they call the integration layer, just to join it together. But that has been there ...

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So just one quick question: in the absence of a senior user, who put together the requirements?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

So the requirements were gathered through a number of workshops from across the organisation, I think back in 2019 now. They were the requirements that went out in terms of detailed specification.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Who signed off on those?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

The Chief Operating Officer, who was at the time the accountable officer.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Just for further clarity on the implementation, so what is currently on your high-level to-do list in relationship to Connect People? Just in summary of where we are at with this transition, what are the most important items you are addressing right now, just so we can understand where you are at?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

It would be a case of where do you start. Let us start with ...

Mr. G. Phipps:

At very high level.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

I think the most immediate thing for me is the change management. So the system can be configured however you like it. Systems tend to do what you tell them; people do not. So the change from multiple systems, new processes, the change management, that is the immediate part because getting adoption of the system by everybody and a good experience first time means that we can roll out functionality over the next couple of years. The key thing for me after that would be the employee central area. That is the single source of the record for employees. So data is held in different places at the moment and this committee and other panels, and in fact the States Assembly, will recall many, many questions where they asked how many vacancies have we got, how many staff have we got, and we do not have that. That is putting it all into one place to have a single view of the workforce. That is the absolute basics. Then the next stage, for me, is looking at the feedback

from the staff survey, where people want to understand about learning development and career options. That is where I was talking about the 64 different types of career paths that we have got, or professions, because we can start to map those in the system and then start to have plans for succession planning and future workforce planning.

Mr. G. Phipps:

It sounds like it would be good to maybe do another questioning in about a year's time when this has progressed, I am presuming. Maybe I will turn it over to Mary for some additional questions in this area. Thanks.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

What, if anything, have you decided not to deliver?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

So the system has lots and lots of capabilities. What we have done is stripped back to what we call the minimum viable product. That means that we are not going to roll out the compensation module, the succession planning module, and there was one other module, because those are capabilities that we do not have at the moment. What we need to do is transition from, for example, recruitment. That needs to go into the new system and work before we try and make the rest of the system run. So we are taking what we have already, existing capabilities, existing functions, putting those into the system, and then after that we will start to roll out the more complex stuff around compensation management, which could include changes to benefits and things like that, where people select, and to succession planning because we can do that outside the system in the meantime.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Okay. How are you monitoring ... this is probably more for Tom. How are you monitoring whether ministerial priorities and resulting actions are on track or not?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

That are related to Connect?

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Yes.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

So, in relation to monitoring the progress of Connect, we do that through C.P.M.O. reporting. That reporting comes to E.L.T. but it also goes to Ministers. So the Minister receives the same information that E.L.T. receives so they can see where we are up to as well on this particular strand of work.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I think we are talking more broadly about the golden thread. So the golden thread from the ministerial plans to what people are inputting.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Oh, so not Connect People?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Well, it is being ...

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Through the performance management, so I will take recruitment and retention.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, now I see what you mean. So the system is ministerial plans, they then get converted into delivery plans. The delivery plans are then ... the major stuff is enshrined into the portfolio management system, so that comes through as part of C.P.M.O. reporting to us and to Ministers. But also there are regular meetings with each Minister to go through their plan. So, for example, with the Chief Minister, we meet with the Chief Minister on a regular basis and sometimes we look at the whole plan and sometimes we deep dive into certain areas of the plan. So yes, if you use your example on recruitment.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

So on recruitment and retention, Tom is my line manager. In my objectives, which I will not go into too much details, there is recruitment and retention. That is linked to the ministerial plan, and then I cascade that down. So I am the lead officer for recruitment and retention and I report back up into that group that Tom talks about. But on a regular basis we talk about progress, rollout and achievements.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

So what actions, if any, will be taken if some of the things fall by the wayside, so they are actually not on track, effectively? So what would you do then?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

So where we have an item on the ministerial plan that is not on track, then sometimes that might start with a conversation between myself and the responsible director as to why that is not on track and what are we going to do about it. If we think that there are enduring issues that we are going

to, as officers, not be able to bring it back on track, then obviously that is a discussion with the Minister themselves and talk about what we are going to do about that. So we have good monitoring. I have good feel for what is on track and what is not as a result of both the one-to-one conversations with my direct reports, but also from the conversations with the Ministers themselves over their ministerial plan delivery.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

So as an organisation, what is your performance dashboard and what do you do about it and how do you use it to enhance the performance?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

As somebody with extensive responsibilities across the Cabinet Office, I am using a range of different dashboards to tell me how I am doing. So I do not have a single instrument in front of me; I have a number of different ones. So I am using the finance dashboard data, I am using the people data, I am using the portfolio data, and really I am using different instruments on the overall panel because they are telling me different things. Usually the corrective actions that are needed are different. If we are under or overspending that is usually a different question to whether we have vacancies that we cannot fill, which is usually a different question to whether something is on track or off track in the portfolio. So I use a range of different ones, including the risk profile and other instruments that are telling me how different aspects of what I am doing is going.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Okay, I think I am handing over to Philip now.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Yes, thanks, Tom. It is all very interesting. Can you give us some ... what type of things cause us not to be on track?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, that is a good question. So sometimes you get interdependencies. So sometimes there is quite significant interdependencies with other parts of the organisation or other projects or programmes. Sometimes they are going off track and, therefore, you are coming off track. Sometimes you are up against resourcing and prioritisation. So you have allocated all of your resource to delivering what you said you would deliver at the start of the year, but of course things happen. You might get a resolution of the Assembly where they want to achieve something different and that is what the democratic system says we should do, so then we have to reprioritise. As ever, it is a small public service in relative terms, so when something new comes in, something else has to get deprioritised. So you get a range of issues like that. Sometimes you get key personnel that

advance their careers and move on somewhere else, either in the organisation or externally. They are kind of critical points of success and you might lose them just when you do not want to. So a whole range of issues really. Any one of them can happen at any one time and so you have just got to stay on top of it as the Chief Officer because it is a highly dynamic situation.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Where I am coming from, I recognise all the issues you have just talked about. Sometimes this comes down to competence, because the people who have responsibility for implementing these plans are not competent or failing to do what we expect them to do. Do you have that situation? I cannot believe you do not.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

You always get instances where an individual or a group of individuals who are relied upon to deliver a critical piece of work are struggling to deliver it. Sometimes that might be for personal reasons. Sometimes that might be for reasons of skills, capability.

[13:30]

So, yes, obviously you get that on occasion, but that is the job of the Chief Officer to deal with that. When you come across it, you do all the things that you would expect us to do. So you are seeing whether it is a personal or professional matter. If it is a professional matter, what you can do to help that person deliver what needs to be delivered, and then ultimately if it is something that they are ... that it is unfair to ask them to continue to try and deliver, then you just need to make a change and move work around to get a better match between competencies and the work that needs doing.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Yes, but where I am coming from here is all organisations implement systems and too many rely on the system for good management. Actually, it comes down to the people who are managing those systems, because systems are only tools for managing. This is where the whole question of competence comes in. I was interested in what you had to say there. Presumably, you have examples where you have had to deal with those situations of capability, for example?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

I think in any senior manager's career, of course, you have instances. Quite often that is where people come to you and say: "Such and such is really struggling with this, I think they need some help". Often that is an early indication to you that as the chief you need to intervene and you need to help them. Because, of course, it is unfair on the person to ask them to deliver something that they are not able to deliver. That is highly stressful, demotivating and difficult for them. So, yes, of

course, you have to intervene and, of course, I have done that on a number of occasions. It is the kind of difficulty that tends to rise its way up to the Chief Officer to deal with, appropriately. I think that is the right place for it.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Okay, thank you very much, Tom.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Could we just turn to the Cabinet Office restructure; I know everyone's favourite topic. I like to focus on objections and outcomes of things, so when you were looking at the Cabinet Office restructure what were the expected benefits that were set out as part of the objectives for it?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Sure. So the creation of the Cabinet Office was a commitment made by the Chief Minister in her nomination paper to become Chief Minister, and she said in her nomination paper that she wanted to create a Cabinet Office in order to coordinate the work of government and strengthen collective decision-making. That was clearly the objective of the Chief Minister and the basis on which she was elected by the Assembly into office, and so that was our starting point. We then, in order to deliver the 100-day commitment, did that by August last year, so it came within the 100-day window and the Chief Minister brought it into effect through ministerial decision, which again repeated her aspirations for it. So in terms of then implementing that ...

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Just to go back a second; so had you sat down within ... obviously you get the very broad political viewpoint which then comes to the Civil Service to deal with and to set down what the benefits of that are going to be, and then obviously have the part of testing those later on, but was it broken down from that very big picture to a more manageable part about what were the actual benefits you were going to realise?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

It was an implementation of a strong democratic mandate which we did and did quickly within the 100 days, but it was not a process that was driven by a business case.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Did you have any outcomes that you had set down to test whether it had been successful or not?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

We aimed to deliver the overall aspiration of strengthening the coordination and the delivery of decisions, and then you will have noted that as part of implementing the Cabinet Office, therefore, we created a delivery unit which had not been there before in order to realise that benefit that the Chief Minister wanted to achieve. We identified early on that we needed to enhance the Cabinet Office.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Is there a business case for the delivery unit?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

That is a good question.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

There is a proposal that went to the States Employment Board.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, there is a proposal that went to the States Employment Board which articulates the intention and the reasons why we wanted to do that in order to help drive ...

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

But no business case?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

... forward ministerial decisions and coordinated working. It would not have needed a business case.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Are there any testable outcomes?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

For the delivery unit?

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Yes.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, I mean, the test for the delivery unit is: is it helping to drive forward ministerial decisions and is it helping coordinated working?

Mr. M. Woodhams:

No, that is the goal that you want to get to; it is not the testable outcome. You have to have an outcome; how can we demonstrate that is happening, because that is a very subjective test.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

That is demonstrated through the projects that the delivery unit are working on, including the work that they have done on recruitment which delivered solid and tangible outcomes.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

How can that be tested? How can it be shown demonstrably that it has been successful? It is saying that we are doing other work in other areas; does it mean it has been a success or it just means you are doing other work?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

If I give an example on both recruitment and retention, or recruitment and key worker housing, 2 of the main programmes from the Chief Minister's ministerial plan. In recruitment and retention the delivery units worked across the organisation, so recruitment moved into my area but recruitment is devolved into, let us say, schools. We had high levels of vacancies, high turnover, and particularly with teaching assistants. The delivery unit did some analysis around the recruitment model and proposed changes and then ran a proof of concept. That proof of concept was then signed off and has now been transitioned into business as usual. We have had less teacher vacancies at the start of this year than any year that I have been here, and we have 100 more teaching assistants in post; so it has dealt with the problem which was the vacancies. The same with key worker housing, which is we did not have a single view of the estate and, therefore, we were spending nearly a quarter of a million pounds extra per quarter on additional accommodation. That has gone away now and it has achieved the plan for value for money. So there are specific things that the delivery unit look at; they are not a generalist unit, they are given a task and finish.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

But in terms of its relationship to the Cabinet Office restructure, can you say it is the Cabinet Office restructure that has enabled you to deliver it as opposed to just having good staff?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Can I just ask, though, in relation to the recruitment and retention, are these permanent individuals in permanent posts or are they still interims?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

For?

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Well, you talk about teaching assistants and teachers.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Permanents.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

So they are all permanent posts, all people living here?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes, people living here, or during the summer - particularly in the secondary phase - we would have to go to the U.K. and other jurisdictions, but the vast majority are from the Island.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

What I was trying to establish is whether they were actually permanent roles and they were not interims, because we seem to have a lot of supply - or we have had a lot of supply - and I just wanted to establish that these are not still posts that have been filled by suppliers and people that are not here permanently.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

At the start of term we have 8 external agencies in schools out of nearly 800 teachers.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

You will be pleased for the final question from me, and it is about the previous Public Accounts Committee, a wonderful group of people. They did criticise the process that was adopted during restructures of target operating models. What did you do to take those helpful hints and indications to change how this one was done? What did we learn?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

I think that for me, because I was involved with implementing part of the change under the previous target operating model changes, and of course I was heavily involved with doing this, so I think that one of the things that I learned early doors was that it is better to do these things quickly. Through the wholesale restructuring ...

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Why quickly? What do you mean “quickly”?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Well, the target operating model restructuring, because it was the whole of government, because it was multi-departmental at the same time, it was quite an elongated process. As we know, that restructuring creates uncertainty for people and uncertainty is not what you want if you are trying to get high performance. So one of the big things for me was to punch through this much more quickly in order to reduce the period of uncertainty for the staff involved, and then I think that I saw the benefits of going through restructuring much more quickly and closing down the period of uncertainty to as small a time period as we can in the Be Heard results. Because quite often an employee survey run after a major restructuring of someone’s department will go backwards a little bit because people naturally do not like all of that uncertainty. But I thought the fact that the Be Heard results had gone forward for large swathes of the Cabinet Office was strong evidence that the staff felt much more positive about the restructuring experience in the Cabinet Office.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

It is very good that staff feel more positively and it is a commendation that it has been done well, but the question is when you are doing things sometimes if you do things quickly there is undue haste, and if there is undue haste you do not have a proper business plan, you do not have objectives, you do not have outcomes because you do not have time to plan. So if you decide you want to do something quickly, quick cannot be the only measure; it is making sure it is done properly.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, it was done both. I did it properly and quickly.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Can I just round this off? All of those people following the target operating model, so all staff now have jobs and they know what their jobs are?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

In the Cabinet Office?

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

No, across the organisation.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Well, the target operating model was completed, was it not, Mark?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes, so the target operating model, the new departments are all in place. The final changes I think were made back at the end of 2021. It was elongated; it was very disruptive to the organisation and productivity. That has now settled down and we are seeing that in results. In terms of the Cabinet Office I think part of the issue with Tom is the proportionality of change, so it was quite engineered, that made it very long for people. The main part of the Cabinet Office were senior officers, so there were 2 deletions, which was the Chief Operating Officer and the Chief of Staff. They were consulted, I was consulted about the move into there, and that was the level of the consultation. It was proportionate but the communication was throughout the departments to let them know what was going on.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Just before we move on from that, I am struggling to understand why a business case was not required for this particular change. Can you explain to me why there was not a business case required?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

First of all, in the organisational change policy we do require a case to go to the States Employment Board and to the Council of Ministers. That was done at a high level by the then Chief Executive to say: "This is how we intend to create the Cabinet Office, this is the commitment of the Chief Minister in the 100-day plan, and this is how we intend to do that." The objectives being about the coordination of Government and the team around the Minister. That was the high-level plan. The next stage of that was then to quickly bring the Cabinet Office into being with minimal disruption, so the 2 chief officers' posts being deleted, but everybody else coming together. Then the next bit of it is to ask for the interim Chief Executive to review the functions and operations of that before the new Chief Executive comes in.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

But when it came to demonstrating that this structure was going to be the most efficient and effective structure to deliver what was required of the Cabinet Office ...

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

That was done. We took the case for change to both States Employment Board and to Council of Ministers. Perhaps I was being too literal, Chair, I was thinking you were looking for a Treasury business case.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

If there was additional expenditure then absolutely we would expect to see a Treasury business case.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

No, there was not.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, so no additional F.T.E.s (full-time employees) have been created so that is why we did not have a Treasury business case. In that case can you supply P.A.C. (Public Accounts Committee) with a copy of the business case, or not, that was supplied to the States Employment Board?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

The case.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

The case, okay, thank you. I will look forward to receiving that in writing as a follow-up. We are going to move on now and talk a bit about the role of the States Employment Board and how you work with them, as well as the role of the Chief People and Transformation Officer. Is that the correct title?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

That is the one.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

There you go. Just to clarify, how do you both interact within your roles with the States Employment Board?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

I am the principal policy adviser to the States Employment Board, alongside the Chief Executive who is head of the public service. My team are the secretariat for the States Employment Board and I report to the States Employment Board on the people strategy, risks, risk management, health and safety, all of that. Then there is a scheme of delegation where it goes to accountable officers or chief officers around their discharge of the policies in the States Employment Board, and that is where it goes over to Tom.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, so you report directly to the States Employment Board and you report directly to Tom?

[13:45]

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

My line management is to Tom. I am accountable to the States Employment Board for the delivery of the strategy and management of the risks, so I report to them all the time. But that is through the management structure of Tom as Assistant Chief Executive, and the Chief Executive.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, and then, Tom, your role within the States Employment Board structure?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Sure, so I substitute for the Chief Executive in attendance at the States Employment Board when the Chief Executive is unable to make it, and otherwise I appear in front of the States Employment Board as a chief officer quite often on things that they want to be briefed on. Then of course, you know, I am the accountable officer for People and Corporate Services, which are quite often tasked through the Chief People and Transformation Officer with implementing the policies and procedures agreed by the States Employment Board.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

What is the role of the States Employment Board in relation to performance management?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Article 8 of the Employment of the States of Jersey Employees Law says that S.E.B. (States Employment Board) are responsible for procedures for appraisal of the performance of States employees.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

What does that mean in plain English?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

It means that S.E.B. are responsible for the procedures used to assess the performance of all States employees.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So in practical terms what do they do?

Mr. G. Phipps:

For example, they approve the process that you are now implementing, as a pragmatic example.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, this States Employment Board have published a code of practice which they are required to do called Performance and Accountability and that sets out the responsibilities of the Chief Executive, Chief Officers, line managers, me and employees. It also sets out the duty to have performance management arrangements in place. That is the policy framework. Below that we then have the reporting of performance management as we can, so we know that it is distributed across different systems at the moment which we have previously discussed. That then goes back as a quarterly report to the States Employment Board, and in the submission to the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel who are looking at people and culture - and we will share the link with this panel if it is helpful - there are tables about showing how that works in practice. So, what are the numbers, how are we getting through, and what are the plans on performance management.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So in effect they are overseeing this entire process?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

They set the policy and they then monitor the effectiveness of the policy, yes.

Mr. G. Phipps:

You report quarterly how this has gone?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, so you are confident that the States Employment Board can be assured that performance is being managed across the organisation?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

I think that for any States Employment Board being assured is an ongoing process. I do not think it is a single event that happens and then they are assured. I think because it is part of their statutory function to have those procedures and, therefore, the desire to know the procedures are working, I think that is ongoing, Chair. They have a good flow of information, I think that they ask for the information they want, they are provided with a good flow of information, and then assurances is ongoing and continuous. I do not think it is a point that is met in that sense.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Well, I think you need a process in place: if it is happening and then can you say it is continually improving.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So those are 2 questions. I think your question was more pertaining to the former; is it all happening?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

That is exactly the process the States Employment Board are undertaking.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Just to give a little bit more detail, so the Comptroller and Auditor General wrote a report in 2018 and then a follow-up report, and that was about the police framework, so how can the States Employment Board assure itself if it has not got a framework or a basis to look at that? So they have set out the new codes of practice. Those codes of practice are then linked into the people strategy and the policy framework, and the policies are monitored and then those go back up into the States Employment Board for assurance. You are absolutely right; now that we have got that framework we are getting better on the data and the reporting and that data and reporting then allows us to better manage how things are happening. So the example of performance management conversations, we have seen a significant increase in that because we now have the data in one place and the board are asking for that data. The board have said they have 3 areas of policy focus: recruitment and retention, which we have just discussed; performance management; and health and safety. Each of those areas go to the board at least once a quarter, health and safety every single month. The dashboards are presented to them and the improvements, so we are continually improving now we have that framework in place.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So with regard to performance management, where there might be underperforming areas is that escalated up?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

How is that escalated? Do they have a list? Do they have a risk register?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

We definitely have a risk register and I think I am being scrutinised on that later on this month. They get the full dashboards and they get an officer's report and where there are concerns in a particular area the Chief Officer will come and talk to that particular area. For example, over the summer where we had escalation in terms of fire safety in schools, the Chief Officer and the Director of Education reported to the States Employment Board at the beginning of the summer and towards the end, they have put the plan and they have monitored the plan so that S.E.B. were assured about fire safety in schools.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

If there is a perception that a senior official is underperforming, how would that be communicated to the States Employment Board and how would that be managed in practice?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Well, the Chief Executive forms part of the regular meetings of the States Employment Board so I imagine that the Chief Executive would take the opportunity to raise it if he felt that the States Employment Board needed to know about that, and he would probably do so with individual Ministers as well if he felt that the Chief Officer's Minister needed to be part of the conversation. Likewise, if the work of the States Employment Board raises concerns about different departments, well, of course, the Chief Executive is in attendance to hear that first-hand.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So it is both ways?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Just to be clear, the States Employment Board are informed but they do not involve themselves in any employment matters; that is delegated to the Chief Executive. The only employee where the States Employment Board would have a protocol and policy written is for matters concerning the Chief Executive's formal procedures.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So when it comes to performance management of a senior official if they were not performing, what process would happen in relation to that?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

It depends which way it comes in. If it comes in as a concern of a Minister or of a States Member that would go to the Vice Chair of the States Employment Board who would raise it with the Chief Executive, and the Chief Executive would manage it in the usual way in terms of line management, so if it was the Chief Officer or tier 2. If it was from a Chief Officer ...

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Can I just double check? When you say a "usual way" are you saying that they would be performance managed in the same way as somebody that was on a grade 6?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes. It is the same policy that applies to everybody.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Employees are employees in that sense.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

You are confident that that policy is applied equally across all grades?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

If it was the Chief Executive officer that was underperforming how would that be handled?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

There is a formal procedure in place where the States ... the formal manager is the Chief Minister. If the Chief Minister has concerns they will report that to the States Employment Board. The States Employment Board sits into 2 parts; one would be any formal hearing that was required and one would be to hear the appeal. That is all written down in terms of a formal procedure.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Who would provide the - I suppose for want of a better word - H.R. support to the Chief Minister?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

That would be me.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

That would be you, okay. I am going to hand over to Mary.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

This is going to be one for you, Tom, really. What statutory protection is in place to ensure the Chief People and Transformation Officer is able to act without fear or favour?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

The role at the moment is not in statute and so it does not have statutory protection.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

So what are we doing about that?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

That would be a matter for Ministers and the Assembly. That would require legislation, so that would require legislation to be brought forward to the Assembly in order to provide it with statutory protection. But that is not a decision for officers, that is a decision for Ministers and the Assembly, I would have thought.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Well, my next question is: are you aware that that legislation is being considered?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

I have heard it discussed informally. I am not aware that the officers have been formally asked to bring that forward.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Thank you.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Just a quick follow-up: how do you feel about that, Mark? Do you feel comfortable or exposed, I mean, because in effect you are in a position to bring forward fairly difficult situations?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

This came as a recommendation from the Comptroller and Auditor General resulting at one of the Chief Executive's exits. So I am technically within the chain of command and can be directed by the Chief Executive but I also have a duty to provide fair, objective advice to the States Employment

Board. I also have responsibilities in delegation for the States Employment Board to represent them legally and to instruct for them legally. So it was more about the conflict of interest between being able to be instructed by line management, which would be reasonable, and actually my duties and obligations towards the States Employment Board.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So my question is how do you feel about this situation, given that there is no protection, in effect?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

I will take the fifth on that because it is more about an issue of policy rather than me.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Tom, how do you feel about it?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

I think that probably I will take the fifth as well.

Mr. G. Phipps:

That is a bit of a copout honestly because I think there is a potential issue. If you say no, it is not an issue and you feel totally comfortable, that is one thing, but if you potentially feel exposed in some of these things then I think it needs to be elevated.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Well, obviously if you are an officer in a senior position where you are required to provide the kind of advice that Mark is often required to advise, then of course it must be a more comfortable position if that comes with statutory protection. I think that is just logical.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Well, that is kind of like whistleblowing in general. There is a process where people that whistle blow at lower levels feel that they are protected in doing that. That is where I am coming from.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Over the years the Assembly has decided the various public offices held by officials require statutory protection for different reasons, so whether it is the Chief Statistician, which is in my area and does have statutory protection, or whether it is the official analyst, which is a role that the Assembly recently agreed should have statutory underpinning. You can see that the Assembly quite often makes these decisions and this is something for the Assembly to consider.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Mark, would you feel more comfortable if you had that protection?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

I think it is about the post rather than me. I am quite experienced both in the political arena but also in the public arena. If it was not me and there was perhaps someone less experienced or someone with a different type of approach to H.R., I think they would be quite exposed. I can stand on my own 2 feet but there are times where it has been quite difficult to make sure that there is that objective advice without feeling the pressure at the same time.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

A very simple theoretical question. There is a different Assistant Chief Executive, there is a different Chief People Officer; you have a scenario where there is malfeasance by the Chief People Officer's boss or the Chief Executive, and you have a situation where the worst has happened and you do not have a strong candidate. Is it likely without a statutory protection the Chief People Officer's position could become untenable very quickly?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Thank you.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Just the final one, really, just to tie this all up. We note that obviously your role, you are responsible for implementing performance management policies that apply to yourself as well as to the line manager and the C.E.O. (Chief Executive Officer). How does performance management work in this instance and what processes are in place to performance manage the executive leadership team?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

The executive leadership team is directly managed by the Chief Executive. I will provide advice to the Chief Executive and the Chief Executive will also speak to Ministers because the ministerial line is much clearer now for those chief officers. If there are concerns about performance, the Chief Executive would get advice from me before we go to the States Employment Board.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

How would you address conflicts of interest?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Given the size of the organisation and the proximity of people there will always be conflicts of interest. I think we have just got to be clear about the mechanisms of decision making, the advice, making sure it is all written down. There are times where I will step back from a particular process and ask a colleague to do that because there may be a need for me at a later point. So I cannot, for example, advise if there was to be a dismissal and then advise again on the appeal, so there is always a separation of duty in those situations.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I can see that, Philip, you have been very patient there with your hand up for a while.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Thank you, Chair. You talked about frameworks implemented by the S.E.B. to oversee the performance management system which is in place. Taking Tom as an example, he is responsible for assessing the people who are direct reports. What happens if there is a conflict between the executive's assessment on performance and that of the State Employment Board? Who is in charge, in other words?

[14:00]

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

The Chief Executive. The Chief Executive is the line manager and there is no difference between a line manager at a lower grade than a senior grade. Clearly, the implications could be riskier, could be more severe, but there is still the principles of good line management. If the Chief Executive has a concern about a chief officer they will deal with that in the same way but they may report it to the States Employment Board if they are taking formal action.

Mr. P. Taylor:

So effectively the States Employment Board is respecting the Chief Executive's judgment?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes.

Mr. P. Taylor:

I am not querying whether that is right or not; I just want to be clear in my mind as to where the responsibility ultimately lay. Now, my colleague talked about malfeasance and how is that treated. How does the whistleblowing process go?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, so we have a whistleblowing policy which is published on gov.je so everyone can see it. Any employee can raise a whistleblowing concern and they can do that either anonymously or they can do that in their own name. Then there are a small number of officers named in the policy who deal with whistleblowing concerns; primarily it would be the chief internal auditor and/or myself. Then there is also a senior officer that deals with any fraud or financial whistleblowing concerns that are raised. Then myself or one of the other responsible officers - so either myself or the chief internal auditor - once we receive a whistleblowing concern would then decide how to deal with that. They are often very broad range, different topics, and then we would feed back to the whistleblower how we are proposing to deal with it and then we would take it forward. Obviously if it is ...

Mr. P. Taylor:

So the Chief People Officer has no role in that? He is being protected?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Because quite often the requirement is to have a separation of function, so if it is a concern about people management the Chief People Officer may have a role down the line in reviewing a particular case and the way it has been handled. So generally the Chief People Officer is kept separate from that so that we can have a separation of functions.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Sometimes the complaints come in because they are frustrated with the H.R. process so it allows an external review rather than all roads pointing to human resources.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

The final point I would want to make about the whistleblowing policy as well is that I am conscious that the Assembly has asked for proposals to come forward for statutory protected disclosure regime for all employees in Jersey, but our whistleblowing policy in terms of the States of Jersey does already have protection. So it is very clear in the policy, if anyone is victimised in any way as a result of whistleblowing then that represents misconduct on behalf of the person doing the victimisation. So there is very strong internal protections in the States of Jersey already.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Are you happy - and obviously no details, I would not want them - are you happy that in practical terms it works?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Thank you very much.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

We are going to move on to the next question area now and that is going to be in relation to your time in the interim role as principal accountable officer.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

I hope you enjoyed your summer as principal accountable officer. So just the overview: how does the C.E.O. (Chief Executive Officer) effectively performance manage the entire organisation?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

When you are the C.E.O. you always end up working across the different kind of domains of chief executive work. You spend part of your time being strategic, part of it being operational and part of it on the interpersonal. Primarily, you are doing that through the chief officer, so the chief officers are your main way of performance managing the organisation. Then what you are doing is supplementing that with reviews at the executive leadership team of things like service performance measures, and you are supplementing it by attendance at the States Employment Board to get their perception as well, and your attendance at Council of Ministers also indicates areas that might need your attention. So you are getting multiple inputs and then you are focusing primarily on the chief officers.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

So from your perspective as your time as the interim principal accountable officer did you find this was the most efficient and effective way?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

I think it does work as a system with the Chief Executive managing the chief officers and the chief officers managing their team. In terms of just a classic kind of management structure it does work at the senior level. I think that the challenge when you are the chief executive is really around time and focus. What I found over the summer is that an awful lot comes your way which is fairly operational, you know, it is about what has gone well today, what was difficult yesterday, what we need to get right tomorrow. I think the tension, if there is one, is in being able to focus those discussions with chief officers and the discussions in those other forums kind of in a more strategic way, so you are looking ahead at where you are trying to get to in 4 or 5 years' time. I think that is

challenging in the role to be able to bring that strategic focus and not get completely drawn into the day to day operational.

Mr. G. Phipps:

To what extent are your key performance indicators and all those charts and graphs able to help you do just that, and can they be improved in that context?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Different fora help you focus in different ways. So a lot of the dashboard information that you get is really about kind of how it is going today, so you are getting a lot of information about where you are on budget this year, a lot of information about how many vacancies you have got today. You get a lot of information which is about today and it is really when you start to work in the Council of Ministers and those more policy-focused forums that you start then to be looking ahead at what the demographic challenge is going to mean for the structure of healthcare in the future, and some of the more strategic matters that need not just the chief executive but chief officers to really focus on as well. So there are some parts of the regular information flow and meeting cycle that support you as chief executive being more strategic, but I think if there is a tension it is between the operational and strategic.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

I am going to steal one of Matt's favourite lines in these. So from your observations and learnings during your time as principal accountable officer could you give us your top 3 pros and your top 3 cons of the new system?

Mr. M. Woodhams:

That is copyrighted.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Everything in 3s. I am not sure there are pros and cons; I think there are different tensions in the system. As I said, you have got to find the right balance between operational and strategic. I think the reality of any chief executive's job is it has those kind of classic 3 domains of strategic, operational and interpersonal, and getting the right balance between those when there is only so many hours in a week I think is something that all chief executives need to work at. It is something I need to work at constantly as the Assistant Chief Executive and I am sure it is something you need to work at as a leader of the people function as well. So I think that is a reinforcement of that learning. I think I knew that already but it has kind of reinforced it. I think that the other thing that I might pull out is it reinforced in my mind how important the chief executive is to the culture. You know how culture is built out of habits and practice, the things that you do habitually, the things that

you practise doing kind of form your culture. So where the chief executive spends their time and what they spend their time on is really important to how we move the culture of the organisation forward. It really reinforced that in my mind because people were more aware of what I was doing when I was doing it, so what I spent my time on culturally was much more important. Then I suppose my third point kind of relates back to my last appearance in front of the Public Accounts Committee in that I have discovered that it is possible to do 3 jobs at one time, but only just and probably only during August.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Recently a report by John Mills discussing the role of the C.E.O. was published. How is this paper to be used to improve the role of the C.E.O.?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

John Mills is part of an advisory panel to the Chief Minister and the purpose of that was to take a look at where we were with the chief executive, how the role could or should be structured, and how the public service could be governed in different ways depending on the requirements of Ministers. It is very clear that this Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers want a politically led organisation, not a public service led organisation and, therefore, it was to help shape: "What do you need in a chief executive?" So it started off looking at the statutory provisions of the chief executive, so chief executive to the Council of Ministers, head of public service under the States Employment Board, and on the Public Finances Law as principal accountable officer. They looked at whether or not there were changes required in legislation before recruiting to the chief executive. The reality is it is how you shape that job and focus that job, and that is where the report has come out. The Chief Minister was in scrutiny this morning and she set out that she does not need to see statutory changes and the focus of the job is very much going to be set out in the new role profile that comes out. Therefore, we then test that in the recruitment process about getting the right person who fits those needs.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Just to follow up a little bit on that, the other source of feedback is from the previous C.E.O.s we have had and the comments and the effectiveness and ineffectiveness in their role in being able to properly implement. How are those comments and suggestions also being incorporated into looking forward?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

It depends on the previous chief executive that you are talking about because they all have very different experiences.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Well, it was different feedback from different sources and it is important to take all of that into account.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

So the most recent Chief Executive, Suzanne Wylie, she took part in those advisory groups and she also provided some written feedback about her experiences and what could or should be different in the size, the shape and the focus of the role. Paul Martin before her as an interim made observations about how the role could be shaped and he handed that over to Suzanne.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Tom, do you have any specific suggestions, given your experience, of how the structure of the organisation and the role of C.E.O. might be changed or supported to better deliver performance management, from your brief experience?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

I think my take on it would be that making further improvements to performance management is probably less about the chief executive's structural role or the structure of the organisation. I think now the gains that are to be made are there as a result of introducing more of a performance management and delivery-focused culture. So I think it is more about habit and practice and becoming really, really good at doing it much more than it is about structures.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Walk the talk sort of thing?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes. You know, it is like you become good at the things that you practise. You become expert at the things that you do over and over, and so I think now if we are to make the next set of gains as an organisation, which is not to ignore the huge gains that have been made from when I joined the States of Jersey 15 years ago, I mean, there has been a transformation in performance management and that is down to the dedication of public servants that have done that. But if we are to make the next set of gains then I think really it is around those cultural factors as much as anything.

[14:15]

Mr. M. Woodhams:

A very quick question: obviously the role is going to be very easy to fill because it is a wonderful place to be, Jersey; just saying for the rest of the world if you are listening, apply now. Let us say,

for example, in 8 and a half months' time the job is not filled and you are asked to do the job again, would you?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

What would you do differently?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Perhaps it depends upon what time of year it is.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

It is going to be June, summer madness, it is hot, there is loads of stuff to do.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

That is good. In that case I am happy that it is summer and, therefore, I can do 3 jobs at once and so that is all good. What would I do differently? Reflecting on the learning points that we were talking about, I would probably think even harder about where I am seen to spend my time during that period because people do watch the chief executive and what they do much more closely, which I kind of knew but it was a really good reminder of that. So I would think doubly hard about where I am seen to spend my time.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

We are going to move on to the final question area now, which is in relation to your role and your responsibility with Modernisation and Digital. I am going to shift the question order around a little bit just to confuse Philip, who is out of the room, but I will get to you, Philip. We will start with Deputy Coles first.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

I remember my first Public Accounts Committee public hearing and I asked a question - because we had been promised back in 2019 - of a digital strategy, and then we were promised in that one in 2022 that we would hear something in early 2023. Here we are September 2023 and I am just wondering if you could provide an update on your digital strategy working group.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, so the working group is chaired by Deputy Curtis, the Assistant Chief Minister for Digital. It is progressing very well and, as I said in my letter to the Committee in July, we expect the 3 main

components of the strategic framework to be completed by the end of 2023; so that is the digital strategy, the data strategy and the technology strategy.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Exact date in 2023?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

End of.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

End of; so 1st January. It was also advised that the digital working group would meet on a 6-weekly basis thereafter. Can you advise on the developments that have been made following these meetings?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, it has been meeting on a regular cycle and it has been considering drafts and redrafts of the digital data and technology strategy. The working group has been considering each of those in turn and then coming back to them so that we are in a position to have completed the development of those strategies by the end of the year.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Can you say what the cycle is, because it could be 6 monthly; is it 6 weekly?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Excellent.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Despite the lack of a digital strategy there have been some quite sizable I.T. projects being delivered, so I am going to hand over to Philip to ask about some outputs from those.

Mr. P. Taylor:

When you implement new digital processes - and Connect Finance would be the example of that - how do you assess the implication from outside stakeholders who will also be dependent on that system?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Obviously, as we established earlier, M. and D. have had a fairly limited role in relation to Connect, but if we take something different like the hospital system that recently needed to be renewed with a different hospital system, then that is being done by the M. and D. team in full partnership with staff at Health and Community Services. So they have a shared programme board, they have senior leads on each side, and it is being done fully in collaboration with H.C.S. (Health and Community Services) staff.

Mr. P. Taylor:

You quite understandably sidestepped the question of Connect Finance as an example. What happened there?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, I mean, Connect Finance questions are probably more for ... well, in the recent times for the Treasurer as the accountable officer, and he can probably update you on all of that. I do not really want to answer questions on another senior officer's responsibilities.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

There was a plan around stakeholder engagement and suppliers who were using the existing system; communications were regular with them. The teething problems we had were around the adoption. I think a lot of those have worked through over the past 9 months and I think we are back up to where we were before in terms of payment times. So I think there has been a system improvement over time but the most difficult was small suppliers, particularly those on-Island. So large suppliers are used to using requisition systems, smaller suppliers were not, and I think that was one of the areas that we learned for future releases.

Mr. P. Taylor:

So what learnings have come from that or are you not qualified to say at this point?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Well, I think that you have seen from the letter that I sent the Committee when I was Acting Chief Officer, Connect Finance is working as Treasury would wish it to now and has really settled down. But I think if you want to do a delve into the lessons from Connect Finance then you are probably better having a conversation with the Treasury team.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Chair, if I could give another example because it is pertinent around how we think about digital services and accessibility to those services. So most services are or were accessed through the

Yoti digital I.D. (identification). One of the things that the Government has done through the customer strategy is think about those who do not use digital I.D. or those who struggle with digital access, and we have now worked with a supplier so that people can go in and get their I.D. validated in other outlets closer to them rather than just having to do it all themselves online. That was from feedback from people saying that they were struggling with their digital services online, so we have introduced a community-based I.D. system.

Mr. P. Taylor:

So presumably then when the learnings are learnt, so to speak, there will be sharing across the organisation of some of the pitfalls that can go wrong and need to be addressed in advance. Is that a fair assumption?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Yes. The C.P.M.O. do the lessons learned.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Okay, thank you.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Just a very quick question about that area as well. Obviously there have been a variety of issues with it, as referred to in your letter. What is the situation with regard to identifying those suppliers who may wish to withdraw services? Anecdotally, I am aware of a number of them from the States of Jersey because they do not wish to deal with the finance system.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Again you are kind of down in the details of the Connect Finance rollout and ...

Mr. M. Woodhams:

That was quite a high-level one.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, but it is a specific question about how they are managing suppliers, and probably Treasury and commercial colleagues can help you there.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

I do not have the details for it but we have recently through the Commercial Services team and Treasury published the amount of spend on-Island, so you may be referring to particularly smaller providers on-Island.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

No, quite a significant one.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Okay, so sometimes those significant people will take their commercial decisions, but this is an industry standard solution, it is a worldwide solution, and people are used to doing that. It may well be that people just have really struggled with the change, or the big finance systems do not talk to each other. I think the key thing is making sure that we have supported particularly small providers on-Island to make sure that they can use the system.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I can see Philip is waiting.

Mr. P. Taylor:

I am segueing a little bit just to talk about sort of interdependencies, whether it is with the general public with the organisation or within the organisation. Who is responsible in terms of interdependencies? You talked about this, Tom, about how you track forms and some of the issues you address. Who is responsible for dealing with the complex of interdependency and should some of these be looked through in advance before the policy is implemented?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Generally speaking, on major or strategic projects then that is the role of the senior responsible officer, and it is usually their job to oversee and ensure that things like the interdependencies have been worked through.

Mr. P. Taylor:

But you were talking about those interdependencies in terms of the priorities of the cabinet and how you track those and sometimes they are not on track, and you said part of the issue was then conflicts of interest between different areas and the interdependencies which had to work to make sure that the overall strategy was implemented.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, so where I have perhaps a significant programme that is dependent upon support from another department and then that department is subject to having to do some reprioritisation of its work in order to respond to perhaps a change in ministerial priorities, then obviously that can have a knock-on effect on one of my projects. Then, yes, the senior responsible officer for the project would then work out how we mitigate that and what we do about it and then I would look at that as the

accountable officer to make sure that we have a way of getting back on track or rescheduling. But, yes, some big projects do have interdependencies with other departments and priorities can change in other departments, absolutely.

Mr. P. Taylor:

So it is down to you?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

It is a mixture of me as the accountable officer and the senior responsible officer for the project.

Mr. P. Taylor:

Thank you, Tom. Thank you, Chair, I am sorry to go off-piste a bit.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

That is okay. I just want to clarify why you as the officer that is responsible for digital is not involved in one of the most major I.T. projects that has been delivered.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

I mean, there are a number of significant I.T. projects which I am not the accountable officer for, so I am not the accountable officer for the replacement of the social security system ...

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Absolutely, but when we are talking about strategy and having an overall strategy for I.T., you as the responsible officer that might have a view to what that strategy might be, you are telling us now that you were not involved in the I.T.S. (Integrated Technology Solution) project. Obviously there is the project that is going on within C.L.S. (Customer and Local Services) at the moment, the transform project. How is that going to come together under one overarching digital strategy if you as the responsible officer for digital do not have oversight of it?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

The digital strategy, data strategy and technology strategy that are under development include colleagues from C.L.S. and elsewhere, so the digital leadership group is cross-government, cross-departmental. Then once those strategies are established by the Minister then my role will be to implement those strategies. So when we have those I will definitely have a strong and clear role to implement them on behalf of the Minister. There is a separate discussion which is ongoing with the C.P.M.O. about how we manage the portfolio of digital and I.T. projects and what might be the best way to do that to ensure coherence at the moment but also to ensure that they can reflect things like the technology strategy once that has been agreed.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Then one final question related to this. Given the issues that we now know existed with the rollout of that I.T. system within Connect Finance, do you think that had you - as the responsible officer for digital - had more involvement in that we would have seen fewer issues with that rollout?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

That is probably too hypothetical.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Maybe another way of getting here is to say if you see a direct conflict between your I.T. strategy and what is being proposed in a specific I.T. project through another department how do you deal with it?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, so once the Minister has settled upon say the technology strategy, I think if another department wishes to do something which is not consistent with that technology strategy, then it would very much be my job in the first instance to seek to address that, because the Minister will naturally expect that I am implementing the technology strategy that the Minister has agreed.

Mr. G. Phipps:

So you are waiting on your strategy before you have the ability to cross-test this; is that fair to say?

[14:30]

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

In the meantime we have good dialogue in the digital leadership group that include colleagues from C.L.S. and Health and other places, and so while we are building up the strategic framework they are involved in that and so they can understand the direction of travel and ensure that what they are doing is consistent with that. It is not going to be a surprise to them.

Mr. G. Phipps:

Okay, so even though it is not finalised there is enough communication on where you are going with it so that these projects that are going ... it is a loaded question. I am hoping there is enough dialogue going on that there will not be any surprises with the kind of projects that are coming on while you are waiting for this strategy to be implemented.

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

That is what I am relying on as well.

Mr. G. Phipps:

That is what you are hoping for.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

How are you going to avoid that?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Well, it is a very short hop now until the end of 2023 when the strategies are finalised, and so we can now be sure that going into future rounds of portfolio management, future Government plans, that we have the strategies in place and, therefore, the guides are there for the rest of government. So I think through October, November and December that mechanism that we have talked about should be working through the development process of the strategies. Once we get beyond the end of this year we will have them settled.

Mr. G. Phipps:

I presume you do not see any projects coming that there could be a bust between now and year end with what they are bringing forward? That is where your role of getting out and talking, I presume, is ...

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, I have not seen anything that is inconsistent with where the Minister is going with the strategy so far.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Will there be any major I.T. projects left once the strategy is published?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Maybe I.T. projects will always continue. Major systems continue to need to be replaced. They all have a limited lifespan, a bit like one of the primary drivers behind Connect, as identified in that Jersey Audit Office review. The primary mission there was to replace a system so that we had a system which was up to date and, therefore, we had something that would support modern business processes and would support cybersecurity.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

But the specific projects that might ...

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

That is going to continue.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Specific projects that might be in the pipeline post the strategy?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

Well, we have already got I.T. projects in the Government Plan. So Government Plan 2024 as proposed to the Assembly now has some capital projects for I.T. and I think that will always be the case. Just because of the way I.T. has a shelf life and appreciate that there is a rolling programme of renewal and improvement. So that is there in Government Plan 2024 and I imagine that will be there going forward. I cannot see how that is not going to be the case.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Do you have a complete inventory of all the I.T. systems?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

No, we have a semi complete inventory, as I understand it.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Ten percent, 20 per cent, 30 per cent, 40 per cent, 50 per cent?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

You would probably need one of my M. and D. colleagues to answer that with any certainty, but it is, I would say, more than half. I think there are some areas of the public service which are very software rich and system rich, such as Health, where we have probably got most of those systems tracked and in the inventory, but there is always the potential for systems in individual Health departments to have been procured that are not in the inventory. So I think we are well over half but I would not claim to be at 100 per cent. That work is ongoing. I think over the next couple of years we have to do a piece of work to really as completely as we can document the I.T. estate.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

Is there a formal plan for that?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

A formal plan is being developed.

Mr. M. Woodhams:

When will that be ready?

Assistant Chief Executive Officer:

I would hope that that will be ready by early next year. We will have a plan on how we are going to do this and then that will probably roll through 2024 and 2025 because it will need to be area by area. We will need to be systematic and methodical and document it in a consistent way as we go.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I am conscious that we have run over time, so unless there is any urgent questions for now I think we will leave any other questions for follow up and put those in writing, if they are any. So I will thank you both for attending today. Thank you to the Public Accounts Committee and the Comptroller and Auditor General, and also to the supporting staff.

[14:36]