

2015.05.12

3.9 Deputy G.P. Southern of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the cleaning contract for Morier House.

Can the Minister confirm that the cleaning contract for Morier House has recently been removed from cleaners employed by the T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) Department and outsourced to a private company and, if so, will he inform Members of the cost of the new contract, any savings made and any changes to the contract specifications involved?

Senator A.J.H. Maclean (The Minister for Treasury and Resources):

Could I ask my Assistant Minister Deputy Noel, who has responsibility for this area, to answer the question?

Deputy E.J. Noel of St. Lawrence (The Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources - rapporteur):

Up until the end of April, the cleaning of Morier House was undertaken by cleaners employed by the Transport and Technical Services Department. T.T.S. has redeployed the existing 9-strong cleaning team from Morier House to fill a number of vacant cleaning posts within the T.T.S. cleaning portfolio. These vacant posts have been historically filled for the use of zero-hour contracts due to recruitment freezes within the organisation. The charge for the existing contract being delivered through T.T.S. is in line with other contracted works undertaken for J.P.H. (Jersey Property Holdings). As J.P.H. are in the process of finalising terms and costs with an external cleaning provider to undertake the cleaning works with effect from 1st May, it would be prejudicial to disclose publicly the current costs of providing these services. Until final terms are agreed, it is not possible to quantify the cost savings to the public but these are expected to be in the order of between 25 per cent and 35 per cent of the original costs. The cleaning specifications for the external provider are exactly the same as that previously provided by the T.T.S. cleaning team.

3.9.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

A point of clarification, if I may. The Minister seemed to indicate that from 1st May, the new cleaning contract was in place and that cleaning was taking place with a new company and, yet, it seems to be still open for negotiation. Can the Minister clarify whether the cleaning is being done now by this private firm?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

Yes, the work is being carried out by the private firm but there are sundry items that we are in discussion with and that has meant that we have not been able to finalise the final price for this particular contract. But as I have already said, we are expecting it to produce at least a 25 per cent saving and potentially up to a 35 per cent saving on the original costs.

The Deputy Bailiff:

I will allow you a further supplementary.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Thank you, Sir. Yes, a supplementary?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Well, this is the final supplementary. There is no one indicating a desire to ask one on this matter.

3.9.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:

If that is your ruling, Sir, then I will have to accept it willingly with a smile on my face. So the question is, was there any change in the specifications of the cleaning contracts?

[10.45]

Are we talking one dust per week instead of 2 and is the Minister aware of any change in the terms and conditions of those cleaners undertaking this contract? Are they, for example, being paid less than T.T.S. cleaners?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

The Deputy is obviously having problems with his hearing today because he did not hear me answer that in my main answer. The cleaning specification for the external provider is exactly the same as previously provided by the T.T.S. cleaning team. I am also advised that the new firm does not use zero-hour contracts for its staff or for any of their client contracts so what is happening here is we are reducing the amount of people on zero-hour contracts and I am sure the Deputy would applaud that.

3.9.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:

The question was and what rate of pay are these new cleaners getting?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

What private organisations pay their staff is between the organisation and those staff members. What we can be assured is that they will have to pay the minimum wage at least. That is the law. It is not for us to delve into private companies and force them one way or the other to pay certain rates of pay.