

23.07.04

7 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Chief Minister regarding non-sector entities and the publishing of information on gender pay (OQ.126/2023)

Will the Chief Minister advise whether any consideration has been given by the Government to requiring non-public sector entities to publish information on gender pay and, if so, to who would be responsible for providing oversight of this publication; and if no consideration has been given, why not?

Deputy K.L. Moore (The Chief Minister):

Consideration has been given as part of work to develop the next Government Plan to requiring non-public sector entities to publish information on gender pay. This is a matter that Ministers consider requires ongoing dialogue with industry and the private sector and not an immediate move to force private entities to publish this information. By way of example, and following the adoption of P.31, the Assistant Minister for Home Affairs, Deputy Jeune, has written to those Ministers with oversight of arm's length organisations to encourage and commence these discussions with a view to information on gender pay within A.L.O.s (arm's length organisations) being published as soon as practicable. We expect to be able to provide an update in this particular respect by the end of 2023, as we continue working more broadly to increase our understanding and transparency around this important issue across the economy.

[10:45]

3.7.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

Does the Chief Minister accept that in addition to the potential for a gender pay gap there is also the possibility, both in the public sector and non-public sector, for pay gaps to do with other minority traits, such as ethnicity or disability? Is her Government concerned about the existence of this pay gap in addition? What steps would she be taking to look at that?

Deputy K.L. Moore:

Equality across all groups is, of course, the desire. Nobody should face disadvantage due to their disability, their gender, their race, anything. We have, of course, as an Island committed to antidiscrimination law. That is the right thing to do. What we do have to balance, particularly in these times, is the cost of monitoring various measures and the requirement on workforce that that may take. One of the key issues that we have had to grapple with in preparing the Government Plan so far this year is that many costs in growth bids come, not only with financial cost, but also with increased workforce demand. When we have such demands for skills and for homes in key areas of our public service, but also in the private sector, we have to balance out our desires for equality and better data and communication with our needs to service our economy and, of course, our key service areas of health and education.

3.7.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

I understand that argument, but presumably that balance needs to be struck irrespective of which traits we are looking at. If we want to establish whether people are not being paid like for like for any given jobs and if there is any discrimination going on, does the Minister accept it is irrelevant whether that is gender-based, ethnic-based or disability-based and that if that piece of work is going to be done, it should look at all the traits that could possibly be affected and not just one single strand?

Deputy K.L. Moore:

Indeed, as I mentioned in my earlier answer, quality is, of course, centre to that. There is ongoing work, particularly within the Home Affairs brief and the work permit situation. Follow-up checks are being done to ensure that employers are following the responsibilities that they have within the work permit scheme. I will also acknowledge the work of Scrutiny, who are looking into this issue. I applaud them for doing so.

3.7.3 Deputy M.R. Scott:

Given arm's length organisations are in receipt of public funds, will the Minister be reviewing their memorandum of understanding to see if there are reporting requirements on gender pay or to seek that they are introduced into such memorandum of understanding.

Deputy K.L. Moore:

It is my understanding that all the requirements that have been agreed to date are being published.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Sir, that does not answer my question. My question was whether the Chief Minister will be reviewing the memorandum of understanding herself or her officers will to seek to see whether there are reporting requirements and, if not, to seek in future that they be included in future memorandum of understanding?

Deputy K.L. Moore:

My sense is that that would not be necessary, because all requirements are being fulfilled. If the Deputy has an example that she would like to raise with me then I would, of course, be very happy to understand more.