

2024.09.10

**2.16 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Chair of the States Employment Board regarding public sector redundancies (OQ 151/2024):**

Will the Chair advise how many positions across the public sector have been subject to redundancy since the current Council of Ministers took office this year?

**Deputy L.J. Farnham (Chair, States Employment Board):**

The Vice-Chair of the States Employment Board will take the question if that is acceptable.

**The Bailiff:**

Yes.

**Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour (Vice-Chair, States Employment Board - *rapporteur*):**

I thank the Deputy for the question. As of 31st August 2024, 8 positions have been made redundant across the public sector with a saving of £552,000 *per annum*.

**2.16.1 Deputy M.B. Andrews:**

Can the Vice-Chair confirm whether more redundancies will happen before the end of this year?

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

Yes. This is an ongoing process and part of the savings in payroll is to seek out further redundancies within the public sector of grade 11 and above.

**2.16.2 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:**

During that time period, how many redundancies have been made in the Communications Department and how many members of staff from that department are being redeployed to other areas?

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

I thank the Deputy for the question. The savings in payroll are coming from across departments, but so far the ones that have been identified are through the Office of the Chief Executive and through the Chief Operating Office. So the savings in payroll from the Communications Department, first of all we are seeking redeployment and then further to that we will be looking at redundancies on a voluntary basis, and that is the first plan of attack.

**2.16.3 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Just to confirm, there have so far been no redundancies from the Communications Department?

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

That is correct.

**2.16.4 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade:**

Could the Chair or the Vice-Chair tell us whether there is a target for the number of people who will be let go and, if so, whether the target, if there is a target, is being met by asking people to go or targeting particular roles which it is desired to close?

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

I thank the Deputy for the question. The target is not on specific numbers of individuals. The target is on savings. So the £15 million savings as identified in the Common Strategic Policy is what we are aiming for, and the number of individuals that fit within those £15 million payroll savings is where we will end up. Can the Deputy just remind me of the second part of his question?

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

Whether there are specific roles being targeted for closures or whether they are simply a general invitation for people to apply to redundancy.

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

Thank you. No, not specific roles, but the savings are targeted at grade 11 and above. So it will be the upper tiers of management so that we will end up with a flatter management structure throughout the organisation.

**2.16.5 Deputy J. Renouf:**

Does the Vice-Chair not agree that there is a risk that simply relying on volunteers means that key skills and key experiences and capacity will be lost? For example, somebody may volunteer for redundancy in an area where that job is very much required but it is possible to let them go because that meets the target. What is he doing to ensure that vital capacity is not lost and that the decisions over people who leave are aligned with the priorities of the Government?

[11:30]

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

Obviously, a lot of work is going on in that area. So where someone does decide to leave we will seek to redeploy from within existing resources to fill those positions. We also, of course, have a recruitment freeze for a period of 9 months to ensure that we do not take on any more staff while we are trying to rearrange the current staff that we have. So I do not believe that that is a risk, but the mitigations that we have in place should make sure that that is not really a risk.

**2.16.6 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:**

The Assistant Minister talked about the savings that are being made, but what have the costs of the redundancies to date been; for example, what in terms of payoffs that might need to have been made to staff in order to get them to leave this year?

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

I thank the Deputy for the question. So, yes, obviously we have contractual obligations when staff leave their posts and it is down to their grade and perhaps their length of service. So the payments, of course, there is a cost when staff are let go, whether that is compulsory or voluntary, and the payments that have been made thus far range from £9,000 to £115,000.

**2.16.7 Deputy M. Tadier:**

It would be good to know what the total savings are. That does not really give us ... he has given us the savings that have been made but not the costs, so what is the sum of those costs?

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

Yes, the total costs, obviously without ... one of the risks here is I do not want to comment on individual employees so it would be best ...

**Deputy M. Tadier:**

Good, I do not want to hear about that either.

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

Sorry, I missed ...

**The Bailiff:**

I am sorry, please let us not interrupt the speaker when they are speaking, so please carry on.

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

So all I have at the moment is the range from and to on those redundancy payments.

**Deputy M. Tadier:**

Can I ask for clarification? I asked a straightforward question. Does the Minister not have that information of the total?

**The Bailiff:**

Are you able to give the total to the ...?

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

Sorry, just to clarify, the total of all the redundancy payments thus far on those posts is £330,000.

**Deputy M. Tadier:**

Thank you.

**2.16.8 Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North:**

We are here at the Assembly again and again; there is no capacity within the system to develop policy, especially within the policy teams. Can the Vice-Chair of S.E.B. (States Employment Board) reassure that redundancies will not affect the ability of the Government to develop policies and not affect policy development?

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

Obviously, part of the exemptions from these savings are essential and front line services so policy would be regarded ... certain parts of policy would be regarded as essential service for delivering the Government's priorities.

**2.16.9 Deputy I. Gardiner:**

Thank you for the answer. Certain I am not sure. Would also the Vice-Chair reassure that employees who took a redundancy will not come back as standalone consultants, as we had previously cases, because we would not have capacity and knowledge within the system and we require consultancy services?

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

I thank the Deputy for that additional question. Obviously, part of this plan, as I mentioned earlier, is the freeze on recruitment, so anyone who is let go for whatever reason would not then be subsequently re-employed because there is currently a recruitment freeze.

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

I did not ask about re-employment, engaged as an external consultant.

**Deputy M.R. Ferey:**

That certainly would not be the objective of the plan when someone is let go on that basis.