

2015.12.01

4.8 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour of the Chief Minister regarding the 'Jersey Women in Business' report:

Has the Chief Minister received and considered the *Jersey Women in Business* report recently sent to him by the Jersey Community Relations Trust and, if so, does he accept the recommendations contained therein and what plans, if any, does he have to implement them and within what timescale please?

Senator I.J. Gorst (The Chief Minister):

I am aware of the report but have not yet had time to thoroughly digest its recommendations. I have however asked Human Resources, in conjunction with the Social Policy Unit, to review the report and to bring forward an appropriate action plan. The States of Jersey already of course operates a flexible system for many staff, which enables employees to accommodate their family commitments alongside their working lives. The organisation itself is committed to family friendly policies, which enable many people to work part time and there are many other work streams as part of workforce modernisation that I think will help give effect to the recommendations in the report.

4.8.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I hope to return to this then once the Chief Minister has had a chance to read it. Could I just press on, on one specific recommendation on page 10? This was that the States of Jersey should set aspirational agenda equality targets of 50 per cent, and this is not a quote and this is an aspirational target for senior states appointments and States-funded bodies or boards to have 50 per cent of women and men on those bodies. Could I just ask the Chief Minister what his opinion is of that recommendation please?

Senator I.J. Gorst:

I think that diversity on boards of the body suggested and in senior positions is extremely important. I think the challenge for our organisation and those associated with the States is the same challenge that others experience. One does not want to see diversity as a matter of quotas but one wants to ensure that people are all the time encouraging applications from diverse applicants because the value that they bring to boards, I think, is extremely important.

[10:30]

So that particular one is one that I personally would have a lot of support for. We would need to understand what an aspirational target would mean in practice, and that perhaps is where the difficulty would arise. But if we can find a methodology that is going to help and encourage that then I would be in favour of it.

4.8.2 Deputy A.D. Lewis of St. Helier:

Would the Chief Minister also be prepared to have this similar discussion with the chairman of P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee) to try to encourage more women to stand for election for the States, as I think if we look around us we have very few ladies among us, and that does not send out the right signals perhaps across the private and public sector. Would the Minister be prepared to discuss that matter with the chairman of P.P.C.?

Senator I.J. Gorst:

Of course I would but I am sure any other Member could equally do so and Deputy Doublet might wish to do so together with other members of the Community Relations Trust to present the report to P.P.C. as well.