

2018.06.26

Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier of the Minister for Social Security regarding the prohibition of exclusivity clauses in zero-hours contracts: [OQ.75/2018]

Given the unanimous decision of the last Assembly, when adopting zero-hour contracts, P.92/2016, that exclusivity clauses should be prohibited from zero-hours contracts, will the Minister assure Members that she will take action to implement the decision as a matter of priority?

Deputy G.P. Southern (Assistant Minister for Social Security - rapporteur):

The Minister has asked me to answer this question on her behalf while she is out of the Island. The ministerial team at Social Security has not yet had the opportunity to discuss its priorities or the wider priorities of the new Council of Ministers and whether any new policy areas should be prioritised. Work already underway in 2018 includes the Minimum Wage Review, which is expected to require more resources this year to take into account the Council of Ministers' productivity plan to support low-wage sectors. Officers are also preparing a second stage of the family-friendly changes to the Employment Law. This will provide workplace breaks and facilities for breastfeeding mothers as well as additional leave for working parents from September 2019. Each of these items will be the subject of debate in the Council of Ministers as Ministers decide their priorities. I also see the wider issue of introducing legislation to define zero-hours contracts in law and regulating them to end their inappropriate use as a priority. As Assistant Minister, I will raise this with the ministerial team on the Minister's return and ask for it to be included as soon as possible within our planning schedule and also discussed with the Council of Ministers.

10.2.1 Deputy C.S. Alves:

How long does the Minister envisage it will take before this is fully implemented?

Deputy G.P. Southern

Speaking on behalf of the Minister, I cannot commit myself to an answer to that particular question. However, as Assistant Minister, I will assure the Member that I will bring this as soon as possible to the team so that we can decide on prioritisation. I would hope that we might make a start this year. If not, we will certainly - I hope - make a start next year.

10.2.2 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

I was just going to ask the Assistant Minister how he feels being on the other side. **[Laughter]**

Deputy G.P. Southern

The other side is not that much different. The view is the same. **[Laughter]** I say nothing more.