

19-21 Broad Street | St Helier
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BY EMAIL

Friday 18 August 2023

Dear Chair,

Re: People and Culture Follow-up Review

Thank you for your letter dated 2 August 2023. As the Panel will be aware, the housing portfolio sits across a number of departments, including Customer and Local Services, Regulation and the Cabinet Office.

Although the responses below refer to wider Government policies, they all apply to my housing team. Where there may be some nuance in departmental activities (such as wellbeing activities), my response is centred on the Cabinet Office, and I request that the Panel also refer to the responses provided by the Minister for the Environment and Minister for Social Security, as the Ministers with substantive responsibility for Regulation and Customer and Local Services.

1. The internal processes and procedures in your department which can be used by employees to address complaints and grievances including for inappropriate behaviour, bullying and harassment. We are aware that there are set States of Jersey policies relating to these matters, however we would like to know the specific process that would be followed by employees within your department.

Like all government employees, my officers have the right to be treated with dignity and respect as they go about their work. They can raise any issues through the processes outlined in the policies on [Dignity and Respect at Work](#).

Employees can raise concerns with their line managers or their line manager's line manager. There is an expectation that line managers act swiftly to resolve concerns, as we place a strong emphasis to resolve concerns informally to give the best opportunity for a successful outcome to all parties. If the matter cannot be resolved, an investigation may be required and the Government of Jersey policies and procedures relating to the specific matter would be followed.

2. Whether any internal employee processes and procedures followed in your department differ from those within other departments and, if so, how and why. For example, we note that there is a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian in the Health and Community Services Department to ensure that the voices and concerns of staff are heard and acted upon.

Each departmental area with housing responsibilities (Cabinet Office, Customer and Local Services and Regulation) follow the standard Government of Jersey policies and procedures in relation to these matters. Internal employee processes and procedures for my officers do not differ from those within other departments.

3. The relevant officer(s) in your department available to employees as a first point of contact to raise concerns or grievances.

Officers would raise concerns or grievances with their line manager, or their manager's line manager or a member of the People and Corporate Services. If the employee does not wish to raise concerns with their line manager, they can contact HR Case Management or the dedicated speak-up line. Employees can also raise any issues with the MHFA network if they wish to talk to an impartial colleague who has been trained in mental health first aid.

4. What management information is available to your senior leadership team to enable you to gauge or measure the numbers of informal or formal concerns, grievances or disciplinary actions and how your management information is gathered and recorded.

As you would expect, line managers have a responsibility to act swiftly to resolve any informal concerns. Any formal concerns of Disciplinary and Grievance are recorded by the Case Management Team. The HR Business Partners review cases with the Case Management Team on a regular basis and provide management information to their senior leadership teams, and they report on the outcomes and any learning from the specific cases.

Additionally, information as to the reasons an employee leaves is provided via the operational dashboard which is shared with the senior leadership teams.

5. The challenges, if any, within your department in improving and maintaining a satisfactory workplace culture.

I believe the team of officials who support me have a positive and very "can do" attitude. They cooperate exceptionally well with other colleagues and are open and constructive with me. In saying that, with a significant amount of work to deliver, I am always mindful of workload and capacity issues.

6. Whether your department has any trade union shop stewards or representatives and, if so, the type of relationship held with those people to assist with resolving employee matters that are brought to the department's attention.

People and Corporate Services facilitate the regular organisations meeting with the various Trade Unions. Matters are raised within this forum, as appropriate.

M&D are aware of the requirements for Trade Union consultation and use the facilitated meetings via P&CS as and when appropriate.

7. Specific actions taken within your department to improve staff wellbeing and morale.

SPPP has undertaken extensive work on People and Culture. This commenced with a detailed assessment of how staff were feeling. A national critical incident organisation was engaged to deliver a '10,000 volts' anonymous debriefing session which took place on 17 July 2021 to learn the lessons from colleagues' experience during the Covid-19 pandemic and the results of the 2020 Be Heard survey – both of which indicated the importance of wellbeing in the workplace. This baseline led to renewed efforts to target stress and wellbeing through a series of actions, which have been led by the establishment of a Strategic Workforce Board in line with corporate programmes.

The SPPP 'Work Well' team has staff representatives from each directorate within SPPP and has:

- Organised a wellbeing fortnight in 2022 and 2023, with a range of activities focused on physical, social and mental wellbeing including: health checks, walks, runs, cycles, introduction to meditation, Tai Chi, introduction to Jèrriais, volunteering activities, wellbeing tips (staying in control, mindfulness coaching, how to care for yourself, etc);
- Established a social committee to increase socialising and connectivity across SPPP throughout the year;
- Developed and introduced a SPPP wellbeing charter which has been signed by the Strategic Workforce Board, the SPPP Governance Board, and Chief Officer. The wellbeing charter sets out wellbeing standards that employees aspire to, as well as commitments for leaders. The charter is designed as a call to action for SPPP leaders and to allow individuals to call out if they are not meeting their aspirations;

As well as the Be Heard staff surveys in 2020 and 2023, SPPP carried out additional Be Heard 'Pulse' surveys in 2021 and 2022. This means progress has been monitored year-on-year. SPPPs scores (out of 7) for wellbeing have gone from 4.19 in 2020 and in 2021, 4.90 in 2022, and 4.98 in 2023. This demonstrates that the range of actions SPPP is taking is improving the reported wellbeing of the teams. The Strategy and innovation Directorate (within which the SPPP staff with responsibility for housing sit) has used the results of the Be Heard pulse survey to carry out focussed work on wellbeing including two away days in 2023.

There has been a People and Culture focus at all staff Away Days, maintaining the important dialogue about wellbeing and morale. The discussions at Away Days on 3 November 2021 and 18 January 2023 were used to further develop insight into staff needs, and subgroups across these themes have planned actions and improvements.

8. The creation or improvements of strategy, policy, and procedures in your department for the benefit of employee welfare and workplace culture implemented since the start of the new States Assembly term.

A key focus of the P&CS function has been on the review and update of key policies in line the six published States of Jersey Codes of Practise.

The policy suite has been rewritten from the start to reflect modern, clear, and good management practice.

The first [toolkit](#) of the policy suite is completed and published and is focussed on:

- Dignity and Respect at Work
- Resolving Grievances
- Whistleblowing
- Disciplinary

The overall GoJ People Strategy has led the work of the various Strategic Workforce plans.

SPPP

SPPP's People and Culture Plan and Board was relaunched on 26 May 2023 as the Strategic Workforce Plan and Board, in line with corporate strategic workforce programmes.

The Strategic Workforce Plan tracks the progress of actions across four broad areas:

1. Culture and Employee Engagement
2. Talent and Resourcing
3. Wellbeing
4. Diversity and Inclusion.

The Plan incorporates actions from the annual refresh and rhythm of the People and Culture Plan, the Be Heard Pulse survey in December 2022 and feedback from the Away Day in January 2023 and outlines the objectives and the actions SPPP will take from now until 2026.

9. Whether any routine internal department-specific surveys or polls are undertaken regarding people and workplace culture and the frequency and impact thereof.

Following the 2020 Be Heard survey, pulse surveys have been carried out across the Cabinet Office to track progress.

10. Whether when an employee leaves the department, they are automatically offered an exit interview and, if not, why.

The People Hub offer all employees an online exit interview. Employees are asked if they can be contacted to discuss in more detail any of the answers they give. This process is currently under review by the People and Corporate Services Policy Team.

11. Whether there are any emerging themes that can be taken from previous exit interviews?

Exit interviews are reviewed, by the People and Corporate Services Policy Team, to establish any emerging themes. Any themes and or concerns are escalated to the department's HR Business Partner and/or escalated to the relevant Chief Officer.

The exit interview is not compulsory, and the employee can choose up to three reasons for leaving. The three key reasons for leaving identified by those who have completed the process are:

1. Leaving Jersey.
2. Career development.
3. Change of career within SPPP.

The three key reasons shown across all leavers within Cabinet Office for the 12-month period Aug 22 to July 23 are:

1. End of contract.
2. Personal reasons (not work related).
3. Career development.

These reasons cover 72% of all leavers.

The exit interview process is currently under review by People and Corporate Services.

12. Whether the Minister or Chief Officer works with the HR Business Partner to resolve concerns, the process that is followed and whether you have identified any challenges or concerns with the process that you have identified.

The Chief Officer and the respective departments are supported by Business Partners for both strategic and operational people matters. The Cabinet Office is also supported by the specialist P&CS function for matters relating to their areas of expertise.

The processes followed are in line with the established policies and procedures relevant to the specific matter.

13. Any historic concerns or issues in relation to any of the above within your department.

There are no historic concerns or issues in relation to any of the above within the department.

14. Any other issues that the Panel should consider as part of its review in line with the Terms of Reference for the review, which can be found on the review page.

Please refer to the answer for question 5.

I trust that the above responses are helpful to the Panel as part of its review.

Yours faithfully,



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