



Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

Recruitment and Retention

Witness: The Chief Minister

Tuesday, 27th May 2025

Panel:

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade (Chair)

Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement

Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade

Connétable D. Johnson of St. Mary

Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North

Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North (co-opted)

Witnesses:

Deputy L.J. Farnham of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter, The Chief Minister

Deputy M. Ferey of St. Saviour, Assistant Chief Minister

Mr. A. McLaughlin, Chief Executive Officer

Ms. L. Darwin, Chief People Officer

[11:32]

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade (Chair):

Okay, thank you. Welcome to the public hearing of the Corporate Service Scrutiny Panel. Today is 27th May and this is our recruitment and retention hearing with the Chief Minister. The panel is joined today by Deputy Inna Gardiner who has been co-opted for the purposes of this hearing due to her involvement with Public Accounts Committee and the report that was prepared by the Comptroller and Auditor General. I just want to draw everybody's attention to the following: the hearing is being filmed and streamed live. The recording and the transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, should be switched to silent. For the purpose of the recording, I would be grateful if everyone who speaks

can ensure that their name has been stated and their role. If I can begin with introductions, I am Deputy Helen Miles, Chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade:

Deputy Jonathan Renouf, member of the panel.

Connétable D. Johnson of St. Mary:

Constable David Johnson, panel member.

Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North:

Deputy Inna Gardiner, co-opted member, Chair of P.A.C. (Public Accounts Committee).

Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:

Deputy Alex Curtis, panel member.

Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North:

Deputy Max Andrews, panel member.

The Chief Minister:

Deputy Lyndon Farnham, Chief Minister.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Deputy Malcolm Ferey, Assistant Chief Minister.

Chief Executive Officer:

Andrew McLaughlin, Chief Executive Officer.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you very much and I know we are waiting, are we not, for the Chief People Officer.

The Chief Minister:

Yes, Lesley Darwin, the Chief People Officer will be joining us shortly.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That is fine. Can I just ask before we start, does anybody have any declarations of interest? No. Okay, that is lovely. We have got an hour and a half scheduled for this hearing. We have got a lot of questions so we will try to get through them as best we can, but we have got quarterly hearings coming up with you and we can always put something into writing as well. The question planning

today is really around recruitment, retention, public service restructure, senior level appointments. I am going to kick off. We know that we have got a recruitment freeze. In the States Employment Board Annual Report, you said that the freeze had enabled you to maximise opportunities. Could you provide us some examples of how opportunities have been maximised by the recruitment freeze please.

The Chief Minister:

In terms of - I am trying to think back in relation to what came after - opportunities, just to put a bit of context very quickly around the recruitment freeze, we have just had over a year of that now and that has enabled us to almost halt the growth in the public sector. While I want to stress that we have an excellent public sector, we have allowed it to expand beyond, I think, what is required. For example, we have grown head count and F.T.E. (Full-Time Equivalent) by 25 per cent. The cost of running the Island has increased by 50 per cent in the last 5 years and this is against a backdrop of in the private sector we have not seen any growth. In fact, some of our big areas of the economy have seen employment numbers decrease. Government has continued to grow against a backdrop of almost flatlining in economic comparisons. What I think this is enabling us to do is thoughtfully find a path back to what is sustainable, and I think the opportunity we have - and Malcolm, if you want, can just go into a bit more detail - is to make sure we are properly resourced at management level without that impacting on our front line services.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes, and the opportunities for staff are the ability to grow our own. I think traditionally, we have always gone out externally for consultants and perhaps relied too heavily on consultants so there are far more programmes and opportunities to grow our own staff, give our staff those opportunities and that is evidenced through the redeployment register. Staff have the ability to move around within the service and explore those opportunities and those career progression paths that will be good for their longer-term goals.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Can you tell us how many staff have been redeployed across Government departments?

Assistant Chief Minister:

The numbers on the redeployment register are still fairly small but what we have done, rather than when someone has come to the end of their contract or their job is going to be made redundant, then at least they have an opportunity to stay within the service because onboarding and recruiting people is an expensive exercise. If you can already recruit from within your existing workforce, that is better for them, and it is better for our cost base.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Which departments have been mainly affected then by the recruitment freeze?

Assistant Chief Minister:

We said right from the start that essential and front line services will not be affected so it is mainly the back-office function. Some of that comes around through streamlining and automating processes and some of that is better use of technology and that will continue going forwards. We do know that Education and Health are still the biggest sections of our work base but what we are planning to do is make sure that those essential and front line services still do not get affected and that where we can make those efficiencies in the back office we can. Of course, Cabinet Office and some quite high positions you see recently over the last year, we have pruned those out. We have made those savings and going forward that is a recurring saving.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Where has the freeze bitten the hardest then across the departments?

Assistant Chief Minister:

I would say in top layers of management we have seen those big savings made. That is where it has bitten hardest and we have seen that where we have replaced those positions, we have not backfilled, so if someone has stepped up to the role that someone has left then we have not backfilled those posts which still creates the real term savings.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

What sort of internal feedback are you asking for and receiving about the impact of the recruitment freeze on service provision and workloads in general?

Assistant Chief Minister:

We survey our staff with Be Heard survey and the overall feeling is that people are still proud to work for Government of Jersey. They still see it as a good place to work. Yes, it has its challenges, but overall, the output from the Be Heard survey has been positive and increasingly positive. I think overall people that even work for Government recognise that it was expanding beyond where it should ever have been and they see the curbing of the growth as a positive thing.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Have you had any feedback at all about the increase in workloads, people feeling that they have to do 2 people's jobs because staff are not being replaced?

Assistant Chief Minister:

It is about people being rewarded properly for the work that they do and it is about feeling valued for the work that they do and properly recognised and, generally speaking, that is what comes across. Yes, there are some challenges where people perhaps say that it could be better in some areas, as you will always get in any survey of this nature, but the overrider is that it is still a very positive place to work.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

If somebody wants to express their dissatisfaction with workload, how does that work?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Firstly, they can speak to their line manager obviously. They can contact the Chief People Officer with any concerns that will be dealt with in a confidential way. If they work within Health Services, of course, there is the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, so there are lots of mechanisms that people can make their voices heard and not wait for surveys to come out.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Are you confident that the States Employment Board is on top of the feedback that is coming from grassroots members of staff?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes, I am, and we are very confident that we make every avenue open for people to be able to give us their feedback and as was heard recently by a question in the States Assembly about rest breaks, that is dealt with properly and efficiently and a full review has taken place and there was an endpoint to that review.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you.

Deputy J. Renouf:

One of the Common Strategic Policy priorities was a commitment to reform the Planning Service to enable sustainable development in Jersey. Can you describe the impacts of the recruitment freeze on the Planning Department and planning policy areas?

Chief Executive Officer:

Do you want Lesley or I to come in first?

Chief People Officer:

We have recruited 8 civil servants into the I. & E. (Infrastructure and Environment) regulatory roles during the recruitment freeze so we have been very clear there has been no impact on that department in terms of regulation.

Deputy J. Renouf:

The feedback we heard was that there was quite a big gap between the people leaving and places being filled and this did impact on the policy agenda.

Chief People Officer:

In terms of recent recruitment during the actual freeze, we have recruited 8 permanent full-time roles into that department. The Chief Executive has been very clear that the recruitment freeze should not impact on that department because of the responsibilities it has.

Deputy J. Renouf:

How do you explain the feedback that we have had that suggests that there has been considerable delay?

Chief Executive Officer:

Just so that we are clear, a big focus of the C.S.P. (Common Strategic Policy) was improving the operational performance of Planning which Islanders felt - in terms of its responsiveness, in terms of how long it would take to get things done, particularly for smaller schemes - was unacceptable. Deputy Luce, I am sure, has given publicly statistics that show the significant improvement in the operational performance of Planning this year, which obviously was a C.S.P. commitment. I am sure we can get those sent along to you. Because it was a C.S.P. commitment in the context of the overall freeze, we focused quite a lot on making sure the resources were there to reduce waiting times to clear out the backlog. I think they are having a lot of success with that. That is a C.S.P. commitment. I think you are referring to policy rather than to operational performance.

Deputy J. Renouf:

The commitment was to enable sustainable development in Jersey which is a policy area as well as a practical area in terms of delivery so, yes, I wanted to address that point.

Chief Executive Officer:

With respect to that, again, I think if you look at the remarks from Deputy Luce, which I believe were public, he has been focused on, in particular, a consultation about the merits or otherwise of interventions in the Island Plan within the terms of Government. He has been progressing, obviously, the Wind Farm project. I have to say I just do not recognise it. If you tell me where the

feedback is coming from, I might be better able to answer you, but I do not recognise your feedback to me.

Deputy J. Renouf:

Can you explain the rationale for extending the recruitment freeze to roles at grade 9 or above?

Assistant Chief Minister:

We wanted to give it a longer period of time, so as well as reduce it down to grade 9, we have also extended it to March 2026.

[11:45]

We are already starting to see that the growth is being curbed but we need to give it more time to do its work, and we are starting to see the early signs that it is working. We do need to extend that period of time to give it a better chance.

Deputy J. Renouf:

What data/metrics did you use to determine that the recruitment freeze should go down to grade 9?

The Chief Minister:

Yes, Lesley will have that.

Chief People Officer:

I can help. In terms of the feedback that we received from Chief Officers and others was that in some departments they had not as many roles in terms of senior leaders and managers, so they wanted the ability to be able to look at all of the roles within the department. It was based on that information and feedback that it was reduced to a grade 9.

Deputy J. Renouf:

So Chief Officers came to you and said: "We would like to extend the freeze further down the scale."

Chief People Officer:

To have some options in terms of the recruitment freeze.

Deputy J. Renouf:

Cannot Chief Officers just choose not to recruit? Why do they need a freeze in place to help them?

Chief People Officer:

In terms of the recruitment freeze, it was to curb the growth, especially in terms of the senior roles and they just wanted some flexibility in terms of reducing the numbers at a lower level rather than it having to be at grade 11 and above.

Deputy J. Renouf:

I am still perplexed that they do not just choose not to recruit into those roles and needed a freeze to help them.

The Chief Minister:

Can I come in at this stage, Lesley? We are perplexed as well because if you do not do anything like that, the organisation just keeps evolving and it keeps growing. It got into a pattern where we had 1,000 vacancies being advertised for on top of the 25 per cent increase in head count that we have seen. It took the best part of a year for that recruitment freeze to really become effective while departments changed the way they were doing things. They got into, in my view, a process of ... and then they needed somebody or felt they needed somebody just taking them on. There were no real bars on that and what we were beginning to see was because the wage budgets were increasing exponentially, that was starting to put pressure on other areas of the budget. That is why, I think, we have seen underinvestment in certain aspects of our infrastructure, public realm and other areas. The sole purpose of this recruitment freeze is just to stop the growth, and it is just beginning to work.

Deputy J. Renouf:

How have you monitored, or are you monitoring, the changes that have resulted from the recruitment freeze and in particular any problems that it might throw up?

The Chief Minister:

Yes, we have been monitoring. In fact, of late we have seen the figures and stats of that have been developing. Despite the growth in the public sector, I have not been inundated, shall we say, with letters of congratulation from the public saying: "How fantastic the growth in the public sector is. We can really see the difference in our society", because we simply cannot. If anything, it put pressure on front line services. It put pressure on infrastructure because we were seeing, as I said, to repeat, exponential growth in requests for payroll budgeting. Sorry, what was your ...

Deputy J. Renouf:

What are you monitoring?

The Chief Minister:

We have been monitoring just exactly where the growth was across grades. We have seen a lot of grade inflation coming into play and that is where we have been reducing numbers at lower levels, but the executive function has been growing. Lesley, do you want to just pick up on that point?

Chief People Officer:

Yes, so in terms of monitoring, we look at all of the posts that are going to be advertised. We look at those posts and see if there is anything that can be done differently.

Deputy J. Renouf:

I was particularly interested in monitoring the changes that result from the recruitment freeze, not monitoring the growth part of it. You have put the recruitment freeze in place, there could be problems that arise, how do you monitor the situation to make sure that problems do not arise?

Chief People Officer:

Our business partners work really closely with the Senior Leadership Teams within the departments and any issues that arise are discussed in those meetings. If there are issues, they are fed back to myself, in terms of what that impact may be. We have really good working relationships with the Chief Officers and those S.L.T.s (Senior Leadership Teams). They go through their resource plans on a regular basis to see in terms of where those skills are needed and for the future roles that might be required. If we can do something differently, so in terms of internships, apprenticeships, we are looking to just review what we do and see if we can do things differently, bringing apprentices in or new to careers because that help us in terms of the age profiling as well.

Deputy J. Renouf:

The panel has been made aware of a recent example involving a local primary school that was unable to replace a vacated learning support assistant role due to the recruitment freeze. Can you advise how you are ensuring that the recruitment freeze does not impact on front line and essential roles, which may not be at the absolute front line?

Chief People Officer:

In terms of those roles, I think they would be seen as front line roles to the departments and the Chief Officer within that department, they have authority in terms of the work and the recruitment process. What I would say is that they are doing a review in those areas so they may be looking at doing something differently as well in terms of inclusion. I think there is a bigger picture in the round. I think if they are made aware that there is a concern regarding a particular role, then they would review that and action it appropriately.

Deputy J. Renouf:

So you are confident that there is no situation where these problems can arise and there is not a resolution.

Chief People Officer:

There is an escalation process.

Chief Executive Officer:

There is an escalation process. I think the specific example you have given sounds to me like a misunderstanding. That role would not be affected by the recruitment freeze. It may well be affected by the fact that the department is looking at the whole issue of inclusion and learning and development but that is within department issue rather than a macro issue. When we get feedback that the recruitment freeze is biting a particular area and it may be unsustainable ... and of course the whole point of a freeze is that it should throw up these examples where it bites otherwise there is, frankly, no point to it. I can think of 3 of those so far this year where the service has come forward and said that the recruitment freeze is giving them particular challenges and we debate that out with the team itself, with Lesley's team, sometimes with the E.L.T. (Executive Leadership Team) depending on the nature of it but we have got an exceptions process for that. If people feel that they do need an exception for whatever reason, then we have got an exceptions process, and I think that works pretty well. Also, frankly, and this is really important, it gives us an opportunity to do 2 things which we were not doing before. One is to use the Resourcing Team in People Services properly, focusing on the priority jobs we need to fill and not have them stretched all over the place so if we find pinch points we now have capacity in Lesley's team to say: "That is a real pinch point. We need to get that prioritised." The second thing it does is it allows us an opportunity to say: "This pinch point you have got can be addressed through secondment or transfers of colleagues from other areas of the service." It does not need to lead to recruitment, so it allows us those opportunities to have those discussions. In fact, we just had an example of that recently where one discussion we felt that the team progression would not benefit from external recruitment, it would benefit from us finding colleagues from within other parts of the service and supporting them through a period.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

What were those 3 areas and how did the discussion result in the conclusion that ultimately addressed the challenge?

Chief Executive Officer:

I talk about the departments they are in rather than areas because you are getting down to specific job roles here so one was in the Department for the Economy, from memory, one was in C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills) and one was in Treasury.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

But the discussion ... you have had a discussion, you have made a decision either to flex a policy, to learn from it, what were the learnings that each of those discussions led to?

Chief Executive Officer:

In each area, these were areas that were not C.S.P. priorities or fell into the areas that were initially excluded, so we have to debate through the merits of prioritising them. In all 3 cases this was the case and secondly to understand if that pinch point was occasioned by a sudden rise in turnover or 3 or 4 people leaving quickly, which is always very difficult to adjust to if you are running a service. In one case that was potentially the issue. In fact, it was resolved. In one case it was just about finding colleagues from around the service and utilising a network. The final one was really a prioritisation call within Treasury, and I think this may have been debated here, I cannot recall, but within Treasury they wanted additional resources because they felt there was an opportunity, broadly speaking, within the revenue area to gather more revenue and they wanted to resource up for that. We had to debate that out. In fact, I think we took that to Council of Ministers in that instance and flexed the policy, so it is pragmatic.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

It was flexed.

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, it was flexed.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Chief Minister, Special Educational Needs Team, which we will call S.E.M.H. (Social, Emotional and Mental Health Inclusion Team), would it be considered as front line?

The Chief Minister:

I would believe so, yes.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Why was the recruitment freeze imposed on this team and schools saying that they do not have the support that S.E.M.H. provided because there was a recruitment freeze on this team?

The Chief Minister:

Can anybody answer that? Front line education staff are not bound by this recruitment freeze.

Chief People Officer:

That should not be the case so I would need to look into that.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

S.E.M.H.

Chief Executive Officer:

The Chief Officer in C.Y.P.E.S. or the Minister have told you that S.E.M.H. was subject to recruitment freeze?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I have heard it from ... not from the Chief Officer but I know there is a recruitment freeze because schools do not receive the service that S.E.M.H. provided as they do not have people as it is a recruitment freeze. This message was delivered to the schools.

Chief People Officer:

I am not aware that that is the case.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Okay, I will leave it with you.

Chief People Officer:

Okay, sure. Thank you.

The Chief Minister:

It is quite convenient to blame the recruitment freeze on a lot of things, but we will look into it. We will look into it to make sure.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

It would be good to know what the difference is, yes.

Chief Executive Officer:

We will check that out.

Deputy J. Renouf:

In relation to independent authorities and A.L.O.s (Arm's Length Organisations), how are you ensuring that, for example, the Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey is able to discharge their legal functions despite budget cuts and the recruitment freeze and so on?

The Chief Minister:

I think through the Government and its estate, if you want, of A.L.O.s, and when we say A.L.O.s, let us talk about the whole group. I am not sure what the collective noun is for those that receive Government money, taxpayers' money is generally very good. Against a backdrop of what we are doing within Government and how Government has expanded in relation to the rest of the economy in employment terms, I think it is reasonable to expect all those in receipt of taxpayers' money to look at their growth, restricting their growth appropriately as well. In relation to the Children's Commissioner, who receives a budget in excess of £1 million, which when you compare to other jurisdictions in Wales, for example, I think it is about a similar sort of budget. We believe the Children's Commissioner is well resourced. Although there is, I think, a conversation pending. I think the Children's Commissioner would like to look at expanding the service but that is for another debate to come.

Deputy J. Renouf:

I think she said when her report came out that she was questioning whether she could meet the statutory requirements imposed on her.

The Chief Minister:

I would have to see the detail. I would have to understand what her concerns are. We would have to look at that.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Before I move to my question, a quick follow up on your answer, Deputy Ferey. You said there are people who might do a double job because people left but they are rewarded. Does it mean that they received higher wages for doing more work?

Assistant Chief Minister:

I understand. Yes, so if someone steps up to that role because someone has left then the role that they have come from has not been backfilled so there is still a saving because the role where they very often come from is a step down from the role that they are fulfilling but there is still a saving because we backfilled and then not backfilled to that post.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I think the example that we were giving of the learning support assistant was one of the learning support assistants had left, they were told that they could not re-recruit because the school was in deficit so therefore the current learning support assistant then had to be supporting 2 children as opposed to one child, which has an impact on the classroom and an impact on the family and an impact on the children.

Assistant Chief Minister:

I see. Okay. We need to look at that specific case. I was talking generally about ...

Chief Executive Officer:

That example has got no relationship with the recruitment freeze, for the avoidance of doubt.

Assistant Chief Minister:

No, it does not.

Chief Executive Officer:

That is about the education budget presumably and what is happening in schools.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Again, you have said this means people are blaming the recruitment freeze. It is still a recruitment and retention issue, and this mixed message is of concern in itself.

Assistant Chief Minister:

They just need to have more clarity around what is and is not in scope.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

What I tried to pick up because ... thank you and one of the things, if people are doing more jobs, they started to have their wages as the higher grade. What can explain the growth by £76 million wage bill between 2023 and 2024?

[12:00]

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes, so that was before what we started to put in place.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

No, it was 2024.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

The pay increase in terms of the 8 per cent.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Fair enough, 8 per cent. It is the pay increase, so the wages bill started to be £76 million more. Okay. Now going to the C. & A.G. (Comptroller and Auditor General) report, I am not sure who will be answering but let us start with the Chief Minister. Comptroller and Auditor General report. The main Government recruitment policy is acknowledged to be out of date. Last time it was updated was 2019. The Government are working on an update. Can you please update the panel about the status of the updates for overarching recruitment policy?

Chief People Officer:

It was published in March 2025. It is on OurGov. When we were being audited, the Chief Internal Auditor was aware that it was being developed, and we had gone out to significant consultation. We had looked at U.K. (United Kingdom) best practice. We have incorporated a number of policies to make it easier for our line managers in terms of when they are recruiting because we used to have lots of different policies. They have all been incorporated but, yes, it is on OurGov.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

It is published.

Chief People Officer:

It is published along with safer recruitment as well.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Good. How are you ensuring that the policy is interpreted consistently across departments?

Chief People Officer:

We are doing lots of audits and checks at the moment and we have a toolkit created for a line manager with checklists in terms of what is required of them. One of the actual recommendations was to go back to centrally holding the interview records because managers were meant to be keeping the interview records, so we now have a checklist in place where we get a full pack now that we go through and check to make sure that they are complying with recruitment and selection.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

How are the risks associated with potential bad hires being mitigated? That was very clear in the C. & A.G. report that we have bad hires, employing wrong person, so how will the risks now be mitigated in a different way?

Chief People Officer:

If you are thinking about our safer recruitment in terms of our regulated posts, we have introduced a one-day training for all managers that have responsibility for regulated recruitment. That is a one-

day course. It is certified in terms of the U.K. That is already in place and the first sessions have already taken place but specifically within schools for our hiring managers in Children's Services.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Can you give me an example please from your new policy because I still did not look into the new policy. I did not know it was published. It was probably advertised. The new policy needs to introduce modern methods of recruitment to address bad hires. What is in your new policy to address this point?

Chief People Officer:

It goes through in terms of what a manager should be looking for and the checks that should be taking place for line managers when they are recruiting so in terms of the C.V. (curriculum vitae) that they review, looking to make sure that all of the employment dates are within the policy. There are numerous examples of what a recruiting manager is meant to check in terms of qualifications so when they arrive for interview the recruiting manager has to check in terms of the qualifications that they are certified. There are numerous checks and balances in place at the moment in terms of bad hires and specifically if we have got concerns during any employment checks, so we are doing more in terms of employment checks as well.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

In the C. & A.G. report there is a very clear example when C. & A.G. asked for packs for recruitment from H.C.S. (Health and Community Services) - it was H.C.S. then - and basically 10 of 13 packs requested for a review were not able to be really provided. We are talking about the report that was published recently. How do you ensure that you produce the packs but that the department has this in place because only 3 available out of 13 samples, it is really low.

Chief People Officer:

That is why we put the toolkit in place for recruiting managers in terms of the checklist. They have to provide those full packs back to us within H.R. (Human Resources) so that they are saved on a file. We do the checks that everything has been reviewed and is consistent so that is what we have put in place.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

How often do you monitor? Because it is really difficult work. How often do you monitor and what accountability? Would it be part of the Chief Officer Performance Assessment, for example?

Chief People Officer:

We will be providing updates to the States Employment Board in terms of the packs that are returned so in terms of how many recruitments and then how many packs have been returned. If we have got a department that is not doing that then that will be highlighted prior to ... we will not be waiting for the States Employment Board. We will be progressing with the Chief Officers so we have those processes that are being developed but the checklist is already in place.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Okay. Thank you. Please can you provide timeframe for the development, consultation and implementation of updates to the organisational rewards and benefit policy.

Chief People Officer:

We have a report that is due to go to the States Employment Board, I think, at the end of June. In terms of the recruitment and retention allowances, we have done quite a bit. If you go into our career's portal on gov.je, you will be able to see rewards and when somebody is looking to join us or seeing if they want to progress with an application, we have got our rewards on the career's portal, so they see it very early on at the recruitment stage. That was updated, I think, in March/April this year so it is very clear in terms of what the rewards are when joining Government. It goes into detail about pension, annual leave, what is available.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

How do you ensure consistent policy applies to provision of Government accommodation for employees?

Chief People Officer:

That is more difficult. I am being honest; it is more difficult. We have an Accommodation Team, but we also have accommodation within Health, and C.Y.P.E.S. as well, when we are allocating. What we are doing though is having lots of check and balances and what can be provided. If we do see that anybody has been provided with anything inconsistently, we are raising that and there is an exception process that needs to be followed.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

How will you ensure that in the current application if you do not have a fair distribution of accommodation between different employees, how will you ensure that this will not affect staff morale negatively?

Chief People Officer:

We have got more accommodation at the moment that is vacant so the issues that we had 2, 3 years ago are no longer relevant.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

But if somebody does receive, somebody does not receive, we are talking about inconsistency with allocation. The recommendation interestingly enough ... this is kind of: what is your view, Chief Minister? Recommendation 11 from the C. & A.G. is to ensure that consistent policy applies for Government provision of accommodation and this recommendation was not agreed. I mean I am not entirely sure why this recommendation does not seem to be important that consistent policy applies to accommodation provision for new recruits.

The Chief Minister:

I think one of the things we are looking at and we are recognising when we look at regeneration plans for the future is the need for better quality, more consistency among our state of providing staff accommodation. That is something we are going to have to address into the future. Without the recommendation and seeing the rationale and the context, I cannot explain.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Would you review the executive response to C. & A.G. report regarding the accommodation? It is recommendation 11.

The Chief Minister:

Recommendation 11. We will have a look at that.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Okay. Thank you. How have policies and procedures been updated to better support colleagues affected by redundancy following the recruitment freeze?

Chief People Officer:

Our policies have just been updated. I would think that it was April that they went live. We have done a full review. We have also looked at legislation to make sure that any changes in legislation have been incorporated within the policy. We have done work with our trade unions as well in terms of those updates. Our priority is to redeploy and not make anybody redundant so from that we have enhanced our redeployment process to make sure that individuals are getting the opportunities to move in Government rather than having redundancy.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you. Can you give me specific example of what has changed in the policy to support employees that faced redundancy?

Chief People Officer:

In terms of our redeployment, that is what has changed within the policy. We have a designated team within People Services at the moment so anybody who is on the redeployment register gets issued with all of the roles that are available. They are guaranteed an interview and trial period, so we have done a significant piece of work in terms of that.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Okay. Thank you.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Turning to retention and the recent C. & A.G. Staff Recruitment and Retention Report highlighted that 4 departments, C.Y.P.E.S., part of the Cabinet Office of course has changed between the time surveyed, C.L.S. (Customer and Local Services) and Treasury, all experienced first year staff turnover rates in excess of 10 per cent. What is your view from a States Employment Board perspective of those numbers?

The Chief Minister:

We are always working to keep retention rates as high as possible. In actual fact, the attrition rate is significantly lower. We have, I think, the lowest number of staff vacancies I can remember in my 25 long years as a States Member. It is currently at 0.8, Lesley, if that is correct?

Chief People Officer:

Yes, that is correct.

The Chief Minister:

I mean they have been as high as 5, 6, 7 per cent. The freeze on recruitment has meant we have been filling up a lot of the vacancies. In relation to the specific question, perhaps Lesley can put a bit more context around exactly why it is happening in those departments, why the level is slightly higher.

Chief People Officer:

In terms of C.Y.P.E.S., our total head count is 2,941; total new starters on a permanent contract were 304. The percentage of total workforce affected was 0.65 per cent in terms of those. There are a number of reasons we have identified via the exit interview: personal reasons, leaving Jersey, and career development. In the 17 cases that we have had there has been not one particular issue that we have been able to identify. It is normal turnover effectively.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

My first question to that is: do you, when you look at employment and retention, consider early-stage turnover - so that is a one-year or 2 year - as an important measure ...

Chief People Officer:

Yes.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

... and, if so, why is it important given the numbers if you think are not that bad at the moment?

Chief People Officer:

Because there is a significant cost to recruitment so we would always look if we have gone through the process of recruitment and at that significant cost the reason why people are not staying with us within the organisation. I have to say some of that is that we are better managing probation and performance so there will be some involuntary departures within those figures, but it is important because we need to understand why people are not staying with us.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Are you happy - back to your point there - that the numbers experienced across the board are broadly what a healthy organisation hiring would look for?

Chief Executive Officer:

There are 2 things. There is obviously the cost of recruiting. The other thing we are paying attention to is we are very aware that it is difficult to onboard to Jersey, particularly if you do not have a residency nexus, particularly with people who are coming in. It is a difficult place to onboard to. People think they are coming from the U.K. to the U.K., and they most emphatically are not in every aspect of life. We want to look at it to just understand, as well, what more we can do and learn if we do go to the expense of recruiting someone, particularly who does not have a residency nexus, what more do we need to do to improve onboarding? That, I think, is going to become a rising challenge - and is a rising challenge - across the Island because of labour pools from which we are drawing, public and private sector are changing quite fundamentally because of Brexit and other things. There are a number of reasons for looking at it. We do check this for various reasons. The data that we have got - and Lesley will correct me - is that we have seen a year-on-year improvement in the rate of turnover from people leaving within one year, so I think the only department where it has crept up is Treasury, from memory. Everyone else year on year is better, C.Y.P.E.S. included, and when we have looked into that we split down between those who have left of their own accord and those who we felt following the probation period were not quite right for us. Those who have left of their own accord, there was no real pattern other than, I think, to say that probably compared to the past people come to Jersey and leaving again quite quickly is an issue. That goes back to we need

to learn more about how people onboard into Jersey because I think we have seen a similar trend in the private sector of finding it difficult to get people to stick on the Island when they are recruited.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

It is felt that there is not much of a pattern except ...

Chief Executive Officer:

Not from the data.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

.. the prevailing reason beyond the noises is perhaps those coming to Jersey and this being their first job and ultimately it being a cause for them to ... ultimately adoption of Jersey being ...

[12:15]

Chief Executive Officer:

The main pattern we are seeing is a year-on-year reduction, so it is an improvement, if you like, but within that we are just concerned ... not just about the cost but we are concerned about what else we need to do. We have got examples in Health, obviously, of people coming from countries in Africa, for example, and how well we are onboarding them to the Island, I guess, beyond paying rations and shelter.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Okay. Looking to Health, we note that the level of highly disengaged respondents in the Be Heard survey remained at the same level in 2023 and 2024. Given that non-movement, can you describe the steps being taken to address staff engagement, especially, as I say, within H.C.S. but to an extent the workforce more generally?

Chief People Officer:

In terms of Health, they have their own Engagement Team that work within Health, and they do lots of work in terms of how they are engaging with the workforce. From that point of view, the Be Heard survey did show a steady improvement in the survey performance. They have hard to reach to areas, specifically with those who do not have access to devices so what we have been doing is a lot of work in terms of making sure they are included in how we engage with staff. That is within I. & E. as well in terms of they have got manual workers and do not necessarily have access to all of the information. We make sure that they do via payslips for instance. We put notification on payslips if we are doing anything new. We have got newsletters, so they do a lot of work outside of our normal processes in terms of OurGov.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Okay, and when you are collecting data - in particular, for example, Be Heard - how are you using that information beyond just analysis? Can you give any examples of where the data collected through these large organisational surveys delivers a change?

Chief People Officer:

I can give you an example within Children's Services. The team who work for the engagements, they are working within our residential areas to engage with all the staff there because we did recognise that further work did need to be done in those areas. The Chief Social Worker has been really key in terms of asking for that work to happen so we have had teams go in and work with all of our residential areas including residential childcare officers where we have seen some changes in recruitment, so we are just progressing within those areas.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Given the scale of data collected through Be Heard, how does the S.E.B. (States Employment Board) then track a decision made on the back of evidence and then calibrate or measure its success? Is it clear? Have you got the right procedures in place so that when the next Be Heard is done you can measure the efficacy of a decision taken from the last Be Heard or does it get lost somewhat within the mix of corporate changes?

Chief People Officer:

All departments have a plan in terms of the feedback that they receive from the Be Heard Survey. Every single department has to have a plan about how they engage further and work in identifying what the issues and concerns are and then having plans in place so that they can go out further and engage with those particular areas. Every single department has a plan from the Be Heard Survey. Then what they will do is produce a report in terms of how they are developing that feedback in terms of that plan.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Okay. It is fair to say that the feedback from one survey informs the next survey and that is how we make continual improvements.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Okay. But there is a link back to subsequent repeat surveys of the same nature to measure the efficacy, not just from we have done another survey which is slightly different time and time.

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, and departments.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Yes, okay, great.

Chief Executive Officer:

Some teams if reporting a particular issue can also be a pollster, what is called a pollster. Between the major surveys they can do a smaller survey.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Okay, great. Yes. Could you provide an update on the Government's approach to workplace bullying and harassment?

Chief People Officer:

As a result of the review that was done by H.R. Lounge, they made some further recommendations. We have an action plan in terms of implementing those recommendations or the recommendations that we accepted. We have done significant work in terms of our policies and procedures in terms of those recommendations and that remains ongoing. We have introduced more investigators but our priority is restorative practice. The recommendations are we do not want people to have to go through a process in terms of bullying and harassment. It is much better for the departments and the individuals if it is restorative practice, in terms of mediation, facilitating meetings. We have put more emphasis in terms of restorative practice.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Okay.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. David, can I move you on to your questions, please?

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Yes. This relates to exit interviews for the same theme in a way. The panel's 2024 People and Culture Follow-up Review to decline in exit interviews orchestration since 2021. Can you please update the panel on the steps being taken to encourage greater participation in that process?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes. What we did was we launched a new exit survey in February of 2025 and I think traditionally in the past the way exit interviews were conducted was they tended to be one-to-one with the line manager. What we have introduced is an online portal where people can go on to that. There is

the ability to have free text and it is more anonymous, if you like. They can do it completely anonymously if they wish or they can sign up to it and then further investigation is taken off the back of those. Equally, of course sometimes when staff leave the organisation they still want to speak to people after that event. I, myself, have had interviews with people who have left the organisation because they wanted a discussion about what had happened during the time that they worked for us.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Thanks. You may well say you update us and my next question but the C. & A.G. Staff Recruitment and Retention report highlighted that exit interviews are not undertaken consistently and the reasons for staff leaving are not well documented in the public service. However, the recent response stated that: "A standard policy of exit interviews was agreed in place with no actions required." In view of your last comment, can you explain where you are on that?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes. We do understand the value and the importance of exit interviews. Obviously we can get a lot of information from them, whether people are leaving for good reasons or bad. We are determined to make sure that more people undertake them. Obviously it is down to the individual, some people are leaving and they do not want to give their feedback and that is entirely their choice. But we have got plenty of departments that have got 100 per cent success rate in their exit interviews that they conducted last year. It is a mixed picture; to be fair some departments are better than others.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Okay. How are you ensuring that the reasons for staff leaving the public service are properly recorded and monitored?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Particularly with the online portal we can get really good data from that. But also when they are conducted face-to-face we make sure that we bring all that data together from the individual line managers and we look at that data and see what themes are arising and what issues can be resolved.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Okay. My next question again follows a trend, again, the 2024 People and Culture Follow-up Review highlighted those reasons of non-participation in exit interviews and they are clearly concerned about future employment prospects within the organisation. You have mentioned earlier on about the desire to keep people within the organisation, so that is a clear prevalent concern.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes. But that is why we have given people the ability to contribute anonymously if they have that fear that it is going to affect their future career progression. If they have got any concerns like that they can still have their say but they do not have to attribute their name to it. It gives them complete anonymity. We would hope that we have got a culture of openness and transparency and that people would not feel like that. Like I say, I am happy to speak to people who have experienced something not so good in the workplace that we can talk through.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

The sounding of the concerns of what were former employees, how can you impress upon them the safeguards you have got in place to ensure that their anonymity or their concerns are not aligned to them.

Assistant Chief Minister:

I think we can continue to operate, advise that it is better if they sign up to it and if they do it will be completely confidential. But if they have those concerns and they can complete anonymously and we will still take that feedback on board.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Is there anything more you can do to allay those concerns, which are real I think?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes, if they are real I just think that we need to continue to press the point that no one will be given a bad reference for anything that they say in an exit interview. It is their opportunity to tell us how we can make improvements and also to celebrate our successes. Because not everyone is leaving for bad reasons. Sometimes they are going on to further jobs outside of Government and they have taken some really good skills with them.

The Chief Minister:

It is worth impressing as well that the Data Analytics team removing all identifying data and the information gathered and we have just got to build confidence with our people because that is where there is a lack of confidence and the anonymity is a big issue.

Deputy J. Renouf:

Realistically, the ones we are interested in here are the ones where people have got a problem and anonymity can be a very hard thing for people to believe in, given that their complaints are likely to be at a fairly individual level. How do you get to that problem?

Assistant Chief Minister:

All we can do is keep impressing on people that they can speak to us openly and honestly. If they want to speak on a one-to-one basis we can offer that. If they want to do it through an online portal we can do that. If they want to do it with their manager or another manager within that section they can do that. All we can do is keep offering as many ways to receive their feedback and give them that assurance that it will be anonymous if they want it to be. Equally, if there is things that they want to action then we will do that as well because that is all part of the process.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Yes, and the Chief Minister just mentioned the various data analysis schemes, can you elaborate on what data is collected, please?

Chief People Officer:

Can you just repeat the question, please?

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Yes, sorry, the Chief Minister just referred to a data analysis scheme ...

The Chief Minister:

No, it was a Data Analytics team.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Analytics team.

The Chief Minister:

The analytics team that compile the data on the exit interviews. They remove all the identifying ...

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Again, the same question stands, what data is collected?

Chief People Officer:

The questions that we ask on the online form, all of the data from the responses is collected. They are anonymous, unless the individual wants to put their name in and have contact from somebody afterwards, from that point of view that happens. The team also look to see if there is anything there that could make somebody identifiable and they would redact that information in terms of looking at that. What I do have is all of the heads of service within People Services and the business partners from the department; they look at that exit interview to see if there are any themes in their departments. I am sure that people will be able to see that we have gone in where we have identified

themes to see exactly what is happening and make sure that we put measures in place to resolve any issues. Individuals also can raise any issues or concerns they have got through our NAVEX system and, again, that is completely anonymous. There are a number of different options available to individuals if they have got any concerns that we have in place.

The Chief Minister:

I think it is also worth pointing out quickly, at the point of completion there is a link direct for a staff member to grievance and whistleblowing policies and they are signposted in the right way after the completion of the survey. They can follow that route as well to express any concerns.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

A more general question, are you able to provide more information about the main reasons for staff leaving the organisation? Is there a trend?

Chief People Officer:

There are lots of different reasons; leaving Jersey, other alternative employment, it could be moving to a different department within Government because our transferees also get the option to do the exit interviews, so we have got somebody leaving Health, for instance, moving to C.Y.P.E.S. Various reasons, no specific one identified.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Okay. The final question, are there any further increments you can make to the system to encourage ... it is voluntary, so ...

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes, it is voluntary.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

In the original context of employment, not a vague reference but it is a reference being made to the fact that they were encouraged to take part and have some confirmation there that anonymity will be respected, would that help?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes. I think anyone needs to have that assurance that it is a voluntary thing but I think it is the way that we frame it. Why do we do exit interviews? We do exit interviews to improve the service. If they are playing a small part in that then, yes, it just needs to be reiterated at every point where people realise they are going to leave and move on.

[12:30]

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Okay, thank you.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I am going to hand over to Deputy Gardiner.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you. I will pick up on Early in Careers. I am completely aware that during the last 2 years, 2023 and 2024, the Government has done a lot to develop Early in Careers and we did have 70 interns. Most struggled with apprenticeships because from fifth opportunities we only had 17 apprentices during the last year. How are potential barriers that were highlighted in the C. & A.G. report, including staffing, budget, research and supervision and I understand this is a reluctance from the department because they are not sure how they will be funded to take apprentices, is mitigated?

Chief People Officer:

I think departments should be identifying any traineeships in terms of when we have people coming into Early in Careers, they should be developed. Ideally what you would want to see is departments setting aside budgets for apprenticeships; that would be how you would normally do that.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

But who is helping with the budget? We know that Health and C.Y.P.E.S. where we need people and infrastructure, they overspent last year, they overspent particularly from their budget. How are they managing to allocate the budget to train in Early in Careers? Should the responsibility be on the department to fund the apprenticeship or responsibility should help centrally with People Services?

Chief People Officer:

Ideally you would want it centrally.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

What are you doing about it?

Chief People Officer

We do have a paper going to the States Employment Board in terms of changing it from apprenticeships to traineeships, moving forward and suggesting that there is a central budget for

these areas. Specifically we have been thinking about teaching assistants and we have got the progression now to teachers. While they have budget for that, ideally you would want to see a central area of budget. In terms of engineers, one of the issues that we have is engineers, so you have got your Health and Community Service, you have got your I. & E. One of the issues is the support that they receive in terms of those apprenticeships, the mentoring, coaching, progression. There is a lot to consider and we are in the process of reviewing that in its totality.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Okay, thank you, no, it is helpful. The recommendation 14 was accepted and can you please confirm when the timeframe for the presentation of strategy for development in Early in Careers initiative will be finalised?

Chief People Officer:

Hoping for that to go to the States Employment Board in August.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

In August, so we could see this finalised by 25th September.

Chief People Officer:

Yes.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Okay, thank you.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. Deputy Andrews.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Okay, thank you very much, Chair. Chief Minister, I want to ask, firstly, about the identified skill shortages in the areas of project management and digital skills. I want to know, what actions are being taken to mitigate those effects? Are you confident that progress can still be made across the public sector in those particular areas?

The Chief Minister:

Which sectors, sorry?

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

It is in particular with project management and digital skills.

The Chief Minister:

I am sorry, could you ...

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

There are skills shortages in those areas.

The Chief Minister:

Yes, right.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

What is the impact of that?

Chief Executive Officer:

You mean identified by the C. & A.G. or identified by someone else?

The Chief Minister:

I am not immediately aware of skill shortages in project management.

Chief Executive Officer:

No.

The Chief Minister:

In fact the opposite but ...

Chief People Officer:

Yes, we have job families, we have created job families for those roles and we are not seeing numbers in terms of not being able to recruit for those roles at the moment.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Okay. I just want to ask the Chief Minister, when you have got positions where there is a great deal of responsibility and if an individual was to leave the public sector, what impact does that have if that individual or individuals happen to be the only individuals within the public sector with the skillset to, for instance, develop strategies or to do certain jobs?

The Chief Minister:

Generally speaking, right across the board with the odd exception. I think we have got a broad depth of skills. We have got large structures. Going back to the beginning, if anything, I think we

are overstaffed in certain areas. But of course you will always get, I think, the odd person that is not indispensable but important. That is why the Chief Executive has the ability to flex a policy on recruitment. But, generally speaking, in actual fact I think we have been getting more productive by looking at consolidation of roles, especially in policy and project management and so forth.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Do you think technology potentially has a role moving forward to maybe circumvent ...

The Chief Minister:

We are still in the very early days of that. But I think technology, especially with as we learn more about artificial intelligence and how that can be incorporated, those are areas we are looking at and planning carefully. We do not want to go wading into something we do not fully understand but, yes. In actual fact there is some evidence in some departments of technology making us more productive and you have seen that. When we look at figures of the grade inflation, the lower grades are reducing because in some instances technology has reduced the requirement.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Okay, thank you very much for that, Chief Minister. I just want to move on, the panel is aware that in terms of succession planning for key roles across the wider public sector, following on from the removal of the Group Director role and there is a large gap between middle management and Chief Officer roles, how do you navigate this situation moving forward?

The Chief Minister:

Again, I do not really recognise there are significant gaps in management. Could you be a bit more specific perhaps?

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Yes. For instance, if we are looking at the Chief Officers of, say, Social Security and Children, Young People, Education and Skills, those particular areas themselves have obviously seen changes and I want to know what is the impact?

The Chief Minister:

If we look at C.Y.P.E.S. the impact, I think, has been very positive and the same with Social Security where we have seen key positions go. We have seen succession planning, people have moved up. We have not needed to backfill the positions. In relation to C.Y.P.E.S., they are one of the 2 departments, indeed the most significant increase in staff numbers. I am confident we are well covered.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Sorry, I think the point of the question is the succession planning for the next Chief Officers.

The Chief Minister:

Right, okay, fine.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

If the Group Director role has been, if you have removed the senior leadership role, there is a very big gap between, for example, your Grade 11 and your Grade 12s and then your A Grades for your Chief Officers, which I think the panel are concerned that that then might mean you are going to have to look off-Island recruitment again because there is nobody at that 13 to 15 level serving a traineeship or an apprenticeship or what have you in the way that has happened. What we have seen has been, arguably, successful at Social Security and C.Y.P.E.S.

The Chief Minister:

Yes, sure. We know in relation to the C.E.O. (Chief Executive Officer) currently here remains in post until at least December 2026 and we extended the contract to ensure stability and continuity to support delivery of the C.S.P.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

It is the tier 3 to tier 2.

The Chief Minister:

Yes, I am coming on to that, okay. The succession planning we have got at the moment sits inside a much broader remit of resourcing and development initiatives and workforce planning. That is a bit of work being led by the Chief Executive. Mindful of that time, mindful of December 2026 and what we will do is for the new Government there will be a clear succession plan on the desk. I do not know if you want to just talk about tier 3 and 4.

Chief Executive Officer:

I am not worried at all about the relationship between a Group Director role not being there and succession for the Chief Officer role; I want to make that clear. We are doing a fairly rigorous succession planning exercise, Lesley and I. We have said to look at succession for the E.L.T. roles and E.L.T. minus one roles. My own view is there is a lot of talent in the organisation at appropriate grades who can come through in a reasonable timetable and give us really good succession. Doing that exercise, if anything, I think has increased our confidence that we will not be at the mercy of the market going forward. I do think - and I say it gently from looking at the recent history of the organisation - you appear to have got very senior very quickly with no obvious benefit in terms of

productivity or governance from my perspective. I have forgotten what these roles are called. Are they called Assistant Director or ...

Chief People Officer:

Associate Director.

Chief Executive Officer:

Associate Director roles in fashion in recent years and so forth. I think, as we have been very clear all along, we need to prune at the top and then we need to feed the talent and that needs opportunity. We also need a development plan and the exercise we are doing with the S.E.B. is to understand what is underneath us and where we should be making indents into bringing people through it. My concerns about succession are so close to zero I am going to call them zero.

Deputy J. Renouf:

This is a question about centralisation of H.R. functions. Evidence gathered during the 2024 People and Culture Follow-up Review indicates: "There is a need for the Target Operating Model where H.R. and other functions are held centrally to be subject to review and revision." Can you provide an update on the extent to which Government functions, including H.R., continue to be managed centrally and what the overarching strategy is there?

The Chief Minister:

Do you want that, Malcolm or Lesley?

Assistant Chief Minister:

We have got a hub and spoke model and that obviously feeds out from the centre. Basically we have got our H.R. team have realigned our resources to prioritise performance and delivery. That is part of an ongoing process to improve the H.R. function.

Deputy J. Renouf:

But we have seen Health, for example, grab back the H.R. function or want to grab back the H.R. function. To what extent is that going to happen generally or is it a specific thing to Health? Is there a strategy here?

Assistant Chief Minister:

It is recognised that Health have got particular concerns and issues. They still are, ultimately, accountable to the centre but they have got more flex within their own team to be able to deal with issues swiftly. They are slightly different issues that they tend to encounter in Health.

Chief People Officer:

Yes, just to clarify, Health, for instance, have always had their H.R. team sat within Health, including medical staffing. What we have done is allocated the recruiters that are designated to Health to be supporting more within Health, so that has not changed. We have got the same model within C.Y.P.E.S. We have designated business-partnering teams for C.Y.P.E.S. and all of the departments. Where we have centralised is where we have got, I would say, centres of expertise, your case management, your organisational development, your learning and development. We have still got that model in place; that has not changed. What we have done is put more resources in to be able to deliver the business plans.

Deputy J. Renouf:

I am a bit more confused now. What has changed as a result of Health wanting to have more autonomy? What has changed?

The Chief Minister:

Can I just provide one clear point? There has been no grab by Health. A bit more context and if you just provide some correct context around that relationship, please, Lesley.

Chief People Officer:

They have always had their own Health H.R. operational team. They still call on us in terms of case management, L. & D. (learning and development), employment relations, rewards, so that all remains the same. The only difference is the recruitment team in terms of people operations allocated to Health, so they can specifically work on nursing and consultant recruitment, so those areas.

Deputy J. Renouf:

Are they sat in Health or are they sat centrally?

Chief People Officer:

They are centrally at the moment but they will sit between Health and us continuously. They have the option to work flexibly but the idea is that they will sit within Health to be able to support in those recruitment areas.

Deputy J. Renouf:

Okay, and that is a one-off just for Health.

Chief People Officer:

At the moment because of the significant changes in terms of nurse recruitment, consultant recruitment. We do not have any vacancies within nursing but our priority is to do consultants.

Chief Executive Officer:

It is fair to say, Lesley, this thing you are zeroing in on predates the current Minister in thinking about the strategy for Health. We arrived at a situation under the last Government where we had a recruitment crisis in the health service. We had a lot of people saying that one of the potential factors in the recruitment crisis was the way that people at that time was operating in terms of this ability to focus on health. Before we get into any new health strategies we resolved that we had to strip out all the vacancies and take the pressure off the people hub full stop. We also resolved in Health and you could make the case in some areas as well that it is so functionally-specialist that it does not lend itself as well to the people hub model, certainly for some roles.

[12:45]

We took the decision that even though the functional line is still with Lesley, that we should try and get that bespoke resource closer to the service to see if it made a difference in recruitment and particularly when you are dealing with specialist agencies, specialist head-hunters, contacts in the U.K. (United Kingdom). That is the kind of road we have been on. That maybe has given people some comfort that there might be merit in that being hardwired into a future model, I do not know. But one thing predates the other and it is important to remember that.

Deputy J. Renouf:

It was not a question about politics, it was just trying to understand ...

Chief Executive Officer:

I know and just to be clear that ...

Deputy J. Renouf:

... the direction of travel and, in particular, how specific this is to Health and whether there is a strategy to devolve more H.R. services to departments.

Chief Executive Officer:

I think that is a bigger organisational design question which I do not think we will be tackling this year but always Jersey has at least 2 polar things going on between departmentalism and pluralism and the culture of that versus the One.gov thing and maybe we should go sense of excellence more. It is kind of oscillating between the 2. Maybe that is where it will always be, maybe that is where it will always be but we need to explore that in a bit more detail.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That is good to hear, that there is that flexibility because one size has not fit all at all, has it? We have seen some significant issues with that and just driving down that road, we are going to do it this way, we are going to do it this way.

The Chief Minister:

To our detriment in the past, yes.

Chief Executive Officer:

Precisely, it is not pragmatic if you go one way or the other.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

I have got 2 operational questions and I will be brief, given we are talking about what is organisational design, looking at departmental business plans and delivery models, given there is inherent change occurring, what are you doing to ensure that departmental workforce plans contain the correct data about staffing levels, including numbers types and that they are up to date and easy to share, for example?

The Chief Minister:

The workforce plans are developed by the central Organisational Development Team to provide that continuity. Lesley, do you want to add?

Chief People Officer:

Yes. The departments are responsible for having them in place. The Organisational Development Team support them on a regular basis in terms of making sure that they are up to date and relevant and that they have the correct data. There should be no reason why they could not be shared.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Are tools and processes decided such that if we were to ask we would get a snapshot in time and it is not a laborious process on your side to collate, update and that you, equally, at a central function can say this is the state of the public service, ultimately, with regards to its operating plan for staffing levels and departments?

Chief People Officer:

In terms of staffing levels, yes, absolutely we can do the snapshot in time of where that is. What I would say is in terms of the business plans and how they would fit, they are reviewed on a regular basis. There may be a lapse in time from a staffing review model point of view, yes, we could get that information.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Very quickly, the Our People Strategy states that: "Work to develop and deliver a digital training development programme will take place in 2025." What is the status of this work stream?

Chief People Officer:

Sorry, could you just repeat that question?

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

The Our People Strategy states that: "Work to develop and deliver a digital training development programme will take place in 2025." We are halfway through the year, what is the status?

Chief People Officer:

The status is that the L. and D. team are working with Digital Services in terms of developing that moving forward. I think we recognise that we need more skills in terms of S.A.P. That is all being progressed with the Chief Officer for Digital Services and the L. and D. team.

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, and I think it will feature in their strategy discussion that he has promised to have midyear. I cannot remember if it is here or at one of the other Scrutiny Panels.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, thank you. It will probably be ours. I have some questions about leadership development but we can pick that up with the Chief Minister at our next quarterly hearing because I am just conscious that we have got 10 minutes left. If I can hand you over to Deputy Gardiner who is going to ask ...

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Something else, yes. One of the questions and this is, Chief Minister, to yourself, in the C. & A.G. report defined in 8: "A key barrier to developing and finalising strategic workforce plans in a number of core service delivery areas is the lack of strategies and vision for the operational delivery models for those services, acute clinical services, adult social care at the time of the fieldwork." What the C. & A.G. is saying you do not have a strategy and vision for operational delivery models and this is the reason that these areas cannot deliver a strategic workforce plan. What are you doing about it?

The Chief Minister:

We have just talked about the departmental workforce plans and ...

Deputy I. Gardiner:

But it cannot deliver because we do not have a strategic vision for operational delivery models.

The Chief Minister:

I am not sure I really recognise that. Andrew, can you help me out there?

Chief Executive Officer:

This is in relation to Health and Children's Services, did you say?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

The C. & A.G. as in acute clinical services, adult social care.

Chief Executive Officer:

I think in the 2 years that we mentioned, I think those were fair observations when they were made. In respect to Children's Services a strategy has been developed and taken through governance. With respect to Health obviously we discussed this before in another place, it does not seem to make sense to try and progress a strategic workforce plan ahead of the strategy, which Deputy Binet is bringing to the Assembly later this year.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

When do we expect to see a strategic workforce for the Health?

Chief Executive Officer:

I think you can expect to see it following this strategy and as a compendium to this strategy. But I think, as we have discussed before, the strategy is being worked up under consultation. It has got to pass through the Council of Ministers on its way to the Assembly and the timetable is the one that I set out previously and I think the Minister has as well.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Okay. I understand that until then we will see the locums. In relation to compulsory and voluntary redundancy payments to departing staff, please can you advise how net recurring savings are calculated? We are talking about the Annual Report and Accounts.

The Chief Minister:

Yes, Lesley, yes.

Chief People Officer:

Yes. In terms of the savings we look at whole rewards, so in terms of what the salary is, what the pension contributions are, what Social Security and so that is how we identify what those savings are.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

How is this recurring savings?

Chief People Officer:

Because it is taken out of the departmental budgets. The actual saving is taken from the departmental budgets, so it is recurring.

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, once the role is removed ...

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Departments will have less budget.

Chief Executive Officer:

... the cost of the role and their budgets are adjusted downwards, exactly, and that gives you the recurring calculation of the ...

Deputy I. Gardiner:

What is it in relation to your point in renew and replacement staff?

Chief People Officer:

If it is a V.R. (voluntary release) scheme in terms of there should not be any replacement because you are taking a post away, so there should not be.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But that has not happened, has it? If you think about Chief Officer shift for Social Security and Chief Officer shift for C.Y.P.E.S., both of those posts were part of redundancy.

The Chief Minister:

They were not backfilled.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Yes. If someone stepped up but the post they came from was not backfilled, so there was still a saving.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

But it is still under consideration if you still need, for example, if you are talking about C.Y.P.E.S. Director for Education because we are not sure if you need or not. When will the decision be made about the structure person? What was the indication that C.Y.P.E.S. are reviewing their structure?

Chief Executive Officer:

Director of Education role, I do not ...

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Is there an example?

Chief People Officer:

The individual resigned in terms of the Director of Education.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Will we have a Director for Education or not or when will the decision be made if the Director for Education would be a post or this post will be redundant?

Chief People Officer:

In terms of the structure, that is currently being reviewed.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

That is what I am asking, it is reviewed. When will we know ...

The Chief Minister:

What we stop doing it is automatically replacing people because that is one of the reasons why the organisation has just kept growing and growing.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

No, I understand but this means that it is staying within ...

The Chief Minister:

The policy is to bring people forward.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I completely understand, the person resigned, you are reviewing.

The Chief Minister:

Yes.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Currently it is still within the department budget, you did not take it out from the department. You might not have paid this year but it is not recurring. When will the decisions be made? By the end of 2024, by the end of 2025, what will be the structure?

Chief People Officer:

I think by the end of 2025.

The Chief Minister:

Yes, by the end of ...

Chief Executive Officer:

You are talking about the Chief Education Officer role, Director of Education.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Yes, about the same because there are several things there.

Chief Executive Officer:

The 7 roles that we identified for you before out of the structure, they are not going to be replaced.

The Chief Minister:

Yes, yes.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Okay.

Deputy J. Renouf:

This involves the position of Chief Executive Officer. Are we comfortable in a way but ...

Chief Executive Officer:

Do not forget, Jonathan.

Deputy J. Renouf:

What I wanted to ask is, Chief Minister, can you confirm whether there is a strategy for the permanent position of permanent Chief Executive Officer, the appointment of a permanent Chief Executive Officer?

The Chief Minister:

Shortly, I think, Andrew will become our longest-serving Chief Officer for the last 3 or 4 and we are very keen to get some stability and continuity in the role. That is at the heart of the work on succession planning that the Chief Executive is currently leading on at the moment. That is after a good study of the internal talent. Because one thing I think we have omitted to do in the past is look closely at who we have got in the system and bring them through. To reiterate the Chief Exec's point earlier, we are working on that now, on the Chief Executive's succession planning scheme. We will leave for the next Government a succession plan in place for them to decide upon.

Deputy J. Renouf:

Recommendation 9 of the C. & A.G. report said: "Ensure that a robust strategy is documented and actioned sufficiently early to mitigate risk to the successful appointment of a permanent Chief Executive." Documented and actioned sufficiently early, will you be documenting and actioning during this term of Government?

The Chief Minister:

The documentation will be there. The actioning, I think that might transition the 2. But we are in that position of whether we ... I do not know whether Andrew sent ...

Chief Executive Officer:

I think the answer to your question is yes, so it is part of my objectives to make sure that we have rigorous succession planning in place for E.L.T., including C.E.O. obviously. I am doing that in points with the Vice-Chair of S.E.B. and with Lesley. We are going through a rigorous process because the whole point of me and the contract with stability and continuity, particularly for this term of Government and the C.S.P. Of course one of the objectives within that was to make sure that there was a rigorous succession plan in place, whether that is activated by this Chief Minister or whoever it is next summer remains to be seen. But the timetable is to make sure that we do not find ourselves in the position that maybe previous Chief Ministers have found themselves in in this regard. That action will absolutely be there, no question.

Deputy J. Renouf:

I think the point that sits behind this is that the current C.E.O. has obviously been appointed on a fixed-term basis and we could be looking at a permanent appointment and those 2 things are

different, you appoint people differently into those 2 things. You ask different questions about long-term strategy and so on.

The Chief Minister:

I think everybody is different, are they not, really? I think the focus with the current Chief Executive has been on long-term strategy and that is the majority of what we are doing now. But, for example, we think that it is important internally to compete against external candidates. The previous, I think 2 of the 4 in front of me now, cannot think of the names, were permanent appointments. But the one for the current one we did not foresee what happened, it was a resignation for whatever reason. The same and sometimes they just do not work out. When that happens it is a very expensive process. While we are thinking about how we are reorganising things with the succession planning in place, I think it is absolutely sensible to have the current format where there is an end date with an option to continue if that is deemed appropriate.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Chief Minister, I would like to pick up a statement about strategic vision. Answering my question in February, the Chief Executive plans for 2025, the voluntary structure and changes within a civil servant, what is your vision of the civil servant? I completely respect the answer because I think the answer was correct. They said: "There is no current plan ahead. I do not really have a mandate for significant reorganisation restructure of the civil service. I think when I was last here I explained the mandate from the Council of Ministers I had for 2 years of the Government, this is what we have got. I completely respect they are contracted to you until December 2026 and the Chief Executive needs to support the Government to deliver Government objectives for the next 2 years." But it is different about permanent when you have strategic vision for the next 5 or 10 years. This is, I think, what Deputy Renouf was trying to check with yourself.

The Chief Minister:

Yes. I think the important thing is that the organisation needs to be robust enough to ensure that the future does not rely on the departure of the current Chief Executive and that is what we are aiming to do. We are putting some depth into it.

[13:00]

Deputy J. Renouf:

Can you confirm whether any work is underway to review the board to clarify the role of the Jersey Appointments Commission and the appointment of a permanent C.E.O., which was again a C. & A.G. ...

The Chief Minister:

Yes, can you give an update on that?

Chief People Officer:

There are plans to review in terms of the appointment of the Auditor General, so that is in process.

Deputy J. Renouf:

With what kind of timetable?

Chief People Officer:

The timetable is that we will be going out to look to recruit June, July time.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

For appointment for December 2026. Why are we not looking at a similar time for the appointment of Chief Executive that also the contract is expiring in December 2026, a C. & A.G. contract, it is a total strategic appointment?

The Chief Minister:

The reason just previously explained by the Chief Exec.

Chief People Officer:

We have got succession planning in place.

The Chief Minister:

Yes, it is a completely ...

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Is it succession or recruitment?

Chief People Officer:

Sorry, no, in terms of the Auditor General, that will be recruitment.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

For your Chief Executive?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Likely to be succession; that is what it sounds like.

Chief People Officer:

Succession planning.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. I am just conscious it is 1 o'clock; that is the 90 minutes. Thank you very much. Thank you for attending today and addressing questions. We did not get through the question plan, so we will pick up those with you either at the quarterly hearing or a couple of them probably we will put into writing for you. Thank you everybody who has contributed today, the meeting is closed.

The Chief Minister:

Thank you very much.

[13:01]