



Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

People and Culture Follow-Up Review

Witness: The Chief Minister

Friday, 17th November 2023

Panel:

Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier South (Chair)

Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North (Vice-Chair)

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

Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central (co-opted member)

Witnesses:

Deputy K.L. Moore of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter, The Chief Minister

Dr. A. McLaughlin, Interim Chief Executive Officer

Mr. M. Grimley, Chief People and Transformation Officer

[13:31]

Deputy S.Y. Mézec: (Chair):

Thank you very much. Welcome to this Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel public hearing with the Chief Minister as part of our People and Culture Follow-Up review. Just for the benefit of the tape, we will go around the table introducing ourselves. I am Deputy Sam Mézec, the chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North (Vice-Chair):

Hello, I am Deputy Max Andrews and I am the vice-chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central:

I am Deputy Lindsay Feltham, and I have been co-opted on to the panel for the purposes of this review.

Deputy L.J. Farnham of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

And Deputy Lyndon Farnham, panel member.

The Chief Minister:

Deputy Kristina Moore, Chief Minister.

Interim Chief Executive Officer:

Andrew McLaughlin, interim chief executive officer.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Mark Grimley, chief people and transformation officer.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you very much. Just by way of declarations of interest at the start, it is just worth having on the public record that this is a follow-up review to one that you led when you were on the other side of this table in the role that I am now in. Deputy Feltham contributed to that review in a completely different capacity, and in some of the questions we may make reference to submissions from Unite the Union. I just want to say I am a member of Unite the Union, although I would have had absolutely nothing to do with any submissions or anything like that.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

As am I, and of course I used to chair the civil service branch of Unite the Union, which is how I was involved in the last review giving evidence.

The Chief Minister:

Do they have any financial connections to your roles?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Nothing whatsoever.

The Chief Minister:

And party membership?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

No.

The Chief Minister:

while we are on that, that was just what occurred to us, if there are any other declarations, but if not. Okay. Excellent. Thank you very much. Aso just to confirm that you have read the Scrutiny statement, which of course we know you have.

The Chief Minister:

Yes, thank you.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The first few questions are quick-fire questions. The first question, Chief Minister, is: do you believe that the policies which are in place now for handling complaints of inappropriate behaviour, bullying and harassment are currently effective?

The Chief Minister:

Thank you, all, very much for inviting me today. I am very pleased to be giving evidence, particularly for this review. As you know, I chaired the last Corporate Services Panel and led their review into people and culture. It is really important to see that work being followed up. Its recommendations will, I am sure, be very helpful and help us to grow and improve as a large organisation within the Island because, of course, all of the impacts of the work of the public sector flow through to other aspects of public life and our wider community. Far too often we see that the public ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Chief Minister, I am sorry to interrupt you right at the very start. I did say this was a quick-fire question. It is very specific, and I can see you have notes in front that say "Opening Statement". It was not a question to offer an opening statement. It was a question which I am happy to repeat, if that is helpful.

The Chief Minister:

I fully appreciate that and I am happy to move on to answering that. But I think that my opening comments are quite relevant to your question.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The contents may become relevant if they become relevant to questions we subsequently ask. But it is not the process that we start hearings with an opening statement. We get straight to questions in that. So I will repeat the first question. Do you believe that the policies which are in place now for handling complaints of inappropriate behaviour, bullying and harassment are currently effective?

The Chief Minister:

We are on a journey, and I believe that we are working hard to ensure that our workplace is a better place, in an environment where people do not experience bullying and/or harassment, because of course nobody would want to see that in their workplace, and particularly not in the public service where we have the benefit of many dedicated, good and committed people who go to work every day because they believe passionately in what they do. We want to see them being able to deliver to the very best of their abilities.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

How far along on that journey do you believe you are in, being in a situation eventually where the policies for handling complaints of inappropriate behaviour, bullying and harassment are completely effective?

The Chief Minister:

We are turning around what is decades of culture, and that will be a process. We are seeing positive steps towards that and we champion that, I hope, in our work and I hope that it will lead to the best possible outcomes as quickly as possible. But when we are turning around what is decades of embedded culture, it is never a fully easy process.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

How quick is “as quickly as possible” in your estimation?

The Chief Minister:

We are only 18 months into this period of government, and I would hope that we will be able to demonstrate significant improvement and particularly by the end of our term of office.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. Do you think that the measures that the Government are taking to improve the culture within the workplace are adequate to be in that situation by the end of this term, as you have just explained?

The Chief Minister:

I can look to the director of People and Corporate Services to give you a more detailed approach. But, in the main, this is work that covers many different avenues. We have talked in the past about our adoption of the values of the public service. We have talked about the workshops that have been conducted with the S.E.B. (States Employment Board) firstly, and those are now being rolled out across the public service, so that we can see those values embedded and help to support people in understanding how they contribute to them every day. There are other aspects, of course. It is rather technical and that is why we have the benefit of the chief people and transformation officer. I have got your title right this time, apologies.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Do you regard all of those measures that you have just referred to as being adequate for that journey that you referred to? As I said, and I have not rolled out the variety of them, there are a variety of different measures and they are on a journey. It would be hard to give you an exact answer when we have not had the opportunity of measuring the progress fully. I think that that is something that will be done over time as we are able to measure change and progress.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Does that mean you are in a situation now where you cannot definitively say: "I think the measures that we have begun to implement are adequate"? You are not in a position to say that you think that is the case?

The Chief Minister:

No, that is a slightly different question, if I may. I think we are making really good progress. In fact, reading the submissions that you have received, particularly from the unions, who they acknowledge that although there are still issues and challenges, that there is progress being made. For example, they really appreciate the efforts that the S.E.B. have done, in having regular quarterly meetings with each of the unions, which never happened before. If you recall previously, under the last Government, the unions met more regularly with the Corporate Services panel than they did with the S.E.B., so that is a big step forward. We also have regular reporting on suspensions and health and safety measures in our regular meetings, and I think that is a big step forward. So we are showing that there is a certain rigour and an interest from the States Employment Board so that we can measure our progress as we move through this period of office.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Do you believe that the Government's current strategies are effectively improving employee well-being across the organisation at the moment?

The Chief Minister:

I do, yes.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, thank you. Chief Minister, in an answer you have just given now you mentioned that in the last term you were on the other side of this table. When you took over as Chief Minister, what was your assessment of the situation when you took that role on? Was it as you had predicted it would have been because of what you had observed as your Corporate Services role or were there any things that you were surprised to encounter?

The Chief Minister:

Of course, when one takes the role on you are at day one. I am not quite sure what your question is, but of course I entered day one having recently completed the people and culture review, and so I felt quite well-versed in the situation, and I felt that it was a useful piece of work, and one from which we could progress and move forward to support everybody working within the public service to improve culture.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

But did you find that you had got it all right in your assessment from Corporate Services? You had not missed anything or were things better than you expected them to be, were they worse than you expected them to be, or were they as you had expected them to be?

The Chief Minister:

Over the last 18 months, I have found that there was rather a lot of truth in this report, of course, because it was an evidence-based report. But I feel that we are making good progress in terms of addressing some of the issues and enabling the service to adopt better processes and to improve the culture.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Can you describe how your experience as chair of the Scrutiny Panel for that previous review informed how you then took on the role as Chief Minister and suddenly became responsible for all that you had scrutinised previously?

The Chief Minister:

I believe that culture starts at the top, and I believe that in adopting the role and working with the Constable of St. John as vice chair, we have been able to introduce a new way of working. It is one that is rigorous and evidence-based as well, in terms of assessing at regular intervals our dashboard and where we are progressing and not, and to meet regularly with the unions and build those relationships so that we can hear first-hand about the issues that matter to them and begin a process of making the improvements that are required. For example, looking at terms and conditions with teaching unions and looking at job planning with the doctors. These are all items that have come out of those meetings, things that matter to everybody in their day-to-day work, and items that we are dealing with and progressing with.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

At any point in the early days of your premiership, did you undertake to refer back to that previous report you had put together and put that to officers to begin some kind of incorporation of it into your plans in Government?

The Chief Minister:

One thing I think was very clear was that officers were very aware of the report and had responded to it, so it is often referred to in our work.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

There were obviously recommendations and the previous Government had responded to them. Did you undertake to change any of their responses when you took over with your new mandate, as opposed to the Government you had replaced?

The Chief Minister:

There is one, and forgive me, Andy and Mark will tell me which one it is, but we have changed the approach.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Page 81 in the submission.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Excellent, thank you. What accountability mechanisms do you think you have put in place to ensure that the recommendations from that original review are being effectively implemented? As I think I have outlined, we look at our dashboard at every meeting and we are constantly measuring against that. We meet with people who are on the ground, we meet with others who are involved in running the service. So it is a continual progress.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

What have you found most challenging in taking on a role with those recommendations that have been presented to it and trying to implement them? Has there been anything in that journey of implementation that you found more challenging than you might have thought would have been or more frustrating?

The Chief Minister:

I think the role of implementation is really one for officials, and it might be more appropriate if our official leading that work is able to describe that.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Could I go to Mr. Grimley in a second, but just from your perspective, because you will take advice from officers about how you might want to go about something, and you are the one who ultimately is accountable for all of that.

[13:45]

But is there anything you got the impression from of things that you found more challenging to get on with than you would have hoped, or things that might be taking longer than you might have anticipated or wanted to achieve, that kind of thing?

The Chief Minister:

I think, as I mentioned earlier, we are on a journey, and it is a process and encouraging people to come forward to recognise poor behaviour sometimes and to understand the causes of it, and to encourage people to either address those and take a different approach in their working relationships, is a journey. Progress is sometimes slower than one would anticipate but we keep moving forward. We have recently seen some feedback from the freedom to speak up guardian, which is, of course, a role that we have introduced in the past 18 months. Seeing their work and feedback identifies exactly that really there is work being done, support is being offered to colleagues, but there is a way to travel.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, if you have anything to briefly add to that.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Just in terms of setting the policy agenda, Chair, thank you. The States Employment Board, at the start of their term, undertook an induction which looked at governance, their role, and it also looked at the existing strategies in place and whether they wish to adopt them and how they want to set out their policy agenda. From that came the commitment to the corporate values and the existing people strategy, which was in its early days. But there was a clear direction on policy around performance management, recruitment and retention, and health and safety. So that is how the incoming States Employment Board focused their policy agenda and looked against the last review.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you. I think we kind of touched upon this with the previous question, Chief Minister, but in terms of employee well-being and workplace culture, are there any tangible and measurable changes that you are hoping you will have achieved by the end of this 4-year term?

The Chief Minister:

In terms of tangible, of course when we have talked about measures, what I suppose would be the most effective would be to see further reductions to turnover of staff, greater levels of satisfaction being demonstrated in the Be Heard survey and, of course, the results are a great positive step this year as opposed to the previous. We need to keep making progress along that journey.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Are those things that you have formally set as things that you want to be measured over these 4 years, so that you can track progress on that?

The Chief Minister:

We look at those items because they matter. There is perhaps not a formal setting but, as I have explained to you, we look at measures on a regular basis at every meeting. That is for a purpose of being able to measure.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Have there been any instances in your time in office where you felt that the role of Chief Minister and chair of the States Employment Board have come into conflict at all?

The Chief Minister:

Not particularly. I am aware that it is a moot point and I understand the reasons for that. We have tried to adopt the approach that we are here to set policy, and we have the officials who are there to implement policy, and we try not to get too involved in day-to-day running and operational aspects, which is there for officials. I think respecting our mutual roles and understanding how they complement and contrast each other is a sensible way to approach it.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

On a general basis, how much of the political leadership of the States Employment Board do you leave to the vice-chair to undertake and how much do you personally get involved with?

The Chief Minister:

The vice-chair chairs each of the meetings. I attend the majority of them. He, I would say, would be the person to go to if there were issues to deal with on more of a day-to-day basis in between meetings.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The job of Chief Minister must be extremely busy and you must be involved in all sorts of things, including behind the scenes that most people would not be aware of. Does the nature of the role, being so busy, have an impact on how much you might choose to be personally involved in the

operation of the States Employment Board? Does that affect how much you leave to the vice-chair, so you can get on with other business of Chief Ministerial responsibility?

The Chief Minister:

We all divide our times in different ways, and it is also good when working in a team to play to people's strengths. I believe that the vice-chair has a lot of personal experience and many qualities that make him a very effective chair, and he is extremely well suited to the role.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Any supplementaries on any of these?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

No, thank you.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

No.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

In which case, to Deputy Feltham for the next round of questions.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Thank you. In your previous role, I know that you took great interest in the HR Lounge report and of course HR Lounge will be doing a new report. Can you provide detailed information on the specific areas that HR Lounge will be focusing on in the review this year and what the expected timeline for completion and publication of those findings is?

The Chief Minister:

The terms of reference are just being finalised and they will be shared with you as and when they are ready. I am not aware personally of the timeline. I am looking at this, it says: "Summary report is expected to be produced by the end of 2023."

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

If I can just clarify, we had a conversation with HR Lounge. There have been some capacity issues. They have accepted the terms of reference. It will cover areas from reviewing their previous report, but also looking at the new policy framework to look at the effectiveness of that, how we monitor that, but also to look at relationships. I think the focus of this particular report will move on from the 2018 report, where there was very little in place because they followed up on that, but to look at what comes next. It starts to be forward looking rather than backwards looking.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Thank you. Chief Minister, you mentioned earlier about needing the opportunity to measure change in process. Obviously data and management information are important to enable you to do that. Are you happy with the quality of the current information that you are getting?

The Chief Minister:

Generally, yes. There are always opportunities to provide a greater level of information. But, again, we could look to the official who has the most interface with that information, who might be able to give a more detailed response.

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

In your role as Chief Minister, have you requested any specific enhancements to data?

The Chief Minister:

I do not think we have had to in our particular area of focus, which has been looking at suspensions. Sorry, mind blank.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

With the States Employment Board, the focus of performance management is looking at the role of appraisals, the suspensions, but also how cases are managed. Not just how many cases but also length of time to resolve those key things have been a particular focus.

The Chief Minister:

Also with the change of the I.T. (information technology) system, that has created some interesting issues perhaps with data and information coming through that, but it is and will be a useful management tool. The Constable of St. John often looks at and refers to the number of appraisals that are being conducted, for example, especially when the system came online. He was very interested to look at how those were being completed and what progress is being made.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

He will be interested in the forthcoming performance management review from P.A.C. (Public Accounts Committee).

The Chief Minister:

I am sure he will.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

You mentioned earlier that one of your key targets is to reduce the turnover of staff and keep staff working within the organisation. Do you have the data that you require to enable you to see whether you are doing that?

The Chief Minister:

We were just looking at it earlier today because there is a written answer to a question that is being provided next week. So we can see that data broken down between departments. It is a very useful measure to have.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Then away from the statistics, are you getting management information or do you require more management information with regard to staff engagements?

The Chief Minister:

The Be Heard survey is really the test of staff engagement. In particular, what aspects of staff engagement would you mean?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I am not the Chief Minister; you are. Which aspects of staff engagement are you most interested in?

The Chief Minister:

We get most of our insight through our meetings with the unions and the different groups who are able to feed back to us issues that are particularly relevant to their group and what is troubling them at any particular time.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Obviously it is a very large and diverse organisation, the Government of Jersey, with lots of people with differing skills. How do you approach the challenge as the leader of that organisation, to foster a unified culture across it?

The Chief Minister:

I believe that everybody working in the public service is committed to doing that. We have seen recently with the response to 4 very different major incidents in the space of 11 months where everybody has stepped up and swung into action, responded to a variety of different situations. I think the whole community has been really proud to see that in action. In terms of driving and providing leadership, that is done partly through the objectives that we have set. You have seen with the new interim chief executive demonstrating that leadership and bringing people together.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

How do you bring people together across such a large organisation?

The Chief Minister:

Yes, I was reflecting on that as I said it. Being out meeting people and having opportunities to engage with them is one of the important things. We see that in the “our stars” event every year, which is really heartwarming actually, to see so many people come together in one room. Some of them having connections across different teams but others meeting new people and finding new ways of forming those relationships and working together.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Thank you. In their submissions, the Royal College of Midwives and National Education Union both highlighted concerns about unfair allocation of workloads and uncompensated extra work. Could you discuss the Government’s plans to ensure equitable workload distribution and appropriate compensation?

The Chief Minister:

Terms and conditions are an issue that was raised at an early point, particularly with the teaching unions. It is something that we have started to work on with them, obviously through officials who do that. But the feedback that we have been getting from those union groups is a very positive one, that they are pleased with the process and the progress that is being made. That is a good thing because it will be speaking to those concerns that you have seen in the submissions.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Obviously, those longer working hours and higher workloads carry with it, particularly in some areas, higher levels of risk. What is your risk assessment with regard to that?

The Chief Minister:

I think that is perhaps slightly over ... we receive risk assessments rather than setting them, and I do not think that I am really, as a lay person, able to provide you with my personal risk assessment.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Have you been given a risk assessment?

The Chief Minister:

There are risk assessments of the workforce. That is another measure that we will refer to.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Do you think that the work that is being done on the Ts and Cs that you mentioned will mitigate the risks that may or may not have been highlighted to you?

The Chief Minister:

That is the process, is it not, to hear what people's issues are with terms and conditions and to work with them to find solutions?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Moving on, in a letter to the panel on 24th August, it was informed that you had addressed concerns about turnover, key vacancies, key worker housing and feedback from employees about workload, as well as making good progress in addressing issues such as teacher recruitment, teaching assistants and co-ordinating corporate accommodation.

[14:00]

Can you provide some examples of how these concerns have been addressed, and whether you believe this was and remains an accurate statement?

The Chief Minister:

I do not recall that particular letter but, of course, recruitment and retention is one of our 3 areas of relentless focus. There have been a number of streams of work flowing out of that, mostly through the Delivery Unit. They have particularly gone in and ... they started at Education, providing support to colleagues in improving the recruitment processes, ensuring that we were able to take on and find additional people. We have increased the number of appointments in teaching assistants and teachers themselves as part of our drive to have full-time members of our teams in those important roles, rather than having to fall back on temporary contracts and staff. We have also set up an accommodation service to support colleagues, particularly when they arrive in the Island. This has - I think it is in the submission - saved a considerable amount of money in terms of providing temporary accommodation because now the accommodation service is able to identify units of accommodation that are in States ownership or some of the lease arrangements that we have agreed. That helps to improve people's experience when they arrive in the Island and join our team.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Just as an aside, you used the word "relentless focus", and I have heard you use it and I have heard some of your senior officers use it in other hearings. What does that term mean within the organisation and how does that affect culture?

The Chief Minister:

I think it is really important to identify what our priorities are. We defined our areas of relentless focus after an election period where we had been out meeting people, listening to people. It was very clear that there were some elements that people wanted us to focus on. And I think that those are the elements of Island life that will make the biggest difference and the greatest impact for the future. That is why we are all here. It is what drives us, is elected people to see improvement. We felt that the public wanted change and I think identifying these 3 priorities - cost of living, housing and retention and recruitment - help the whole service to understand what we are about and what we are trying to achieve. It helps us in our decision making because, of course, we cannot do everything on day one. So prioritisation is always something that helps us all to focus our attention and ensure that we are making improvements by achieving things on a step-by-step basis.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I was sorry to hear that the chief people and transformation officer will soon be departing from his role. Can you provide an insight into how his departure might affect ongoing initiatives - it is quite a key role - related to workplace culture and people management within the public service?

The Chief Minister:

It is always a sad moment when people choose to do different things, but I think that the situation that the chief people and transformation officer will leave behind him is a strong team that are well able to step up and support in most areas of that work, while we seek another person to take on the role.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Given the current situation, how does that influence your own perspective on the need for statutory protection for the role, given the concerns raised during a Public Accounts Committee hearing on 27th September?

The Chief Minister:

I am afraid I was not aware of that as a recommendations, statutory protection for the role of the chief people and transformation officer.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Yes.

The Chief Minister:

That is something that I would obviously be ...

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Perhaps we could follow that up in writing.

The Chief Minister:

... interested to be briefed on what the pros and cons were.

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

In relation to the previous question, when we lose a valued staff in very senior positions, such as the chief transformation officer, and in the interests of reducing staff turnover, are attempts made to ameliorate, if that is the right word, the situation? Discussions held to try and retain people in those positions? I know a decision to resign has been made but maybe we look back and see that if there is improvement, people might change their mind. Are attempts often made to keep key staff?

The Chief Minister:

That is not a point of employment policy, as such, as the States Employment Board. I am not an operational leader, but of course, we always want people to stay. But people also often want to leave for their own reasons and their own progress. Of course, we support them in doing that.

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

Okay, thank you.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

We often talk in here about the importance of modelling good behaviours right from the top of an organisation, and I think that is a statement that you agree with, and obviously teamwork. Your recent public expression of disappointment over the Assistant Minister for the Environment's decision on the Les Sablon project, that has led to questions publicly about unity within your political team. What, with hindsight, do you believe that expressing your disappointment publicly ... do you think that was the best approach?

The Chief Minister:

My job as the leader of the team is to ensure that we are focused on delivering on our priorities. We have already talked about our 3 areas of relentless focus, one of which is housing. If you talk to the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development, he will talk about our desire to see growth in our economy, and particularly in the visitor economy, where we have identified that we would benefit from having more hotel beds available for tourism purposes and for business purposes as well. I think it is important to ensure that the team is very clear on those priorities. Some may say that that shows a lack of unity, but anyone working in a team will understand that people do not always agree. Sometimes people do not perform as you would expect them to and they can disappoint you. That

is life. But we did say that we would be open and transparent. Sometimes the side effect of being open and transparent is that people sometimes feel they get too much information. It is always about finding a balance, is it not?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Do you believe that such high-level disagreements and public statements affect the morale both within your team, but also affect the morale within the organisation and the culture as a whole?

The Chief Minister:

What I have to focus on in my role is that we remain committed to our priorities, that we deliver on our priorities. We have 4 years and time runs out very quickly. I want to make sure that we achieve what we have set out to do and that we deliver upon them.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Thank you.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Any supplementaries?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

No, I do not think so.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The next round of questions is around the position of the chief executive officer. In a submission that we received from the union Prospect, they noted that frequent changes in the chief executive officer position have significantly impacted the organisation's culture. Could you discuss the steps you have taken to stabilise the organisational culture amidst such a high turnover at such a senior level?

The Chief Minister:

As an organisation, we focused on communicating and communicating clearly. Of course, change can be difficult, but change also brings opportunities. I think that the selection of the objectives of the interim chief executive officer reflect an acknowledgment of that, and a desire to ensure that change is delivered in a supportive fashion. That demonstration is given of the leadership qualities that we have the good fortune to enjoy with our colleagues.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Did you accept their suggestion that those frequent changes have an impact on the organisation's culture?

The Chief Minister:

I think I just said that change can provide challenges to people at times but it can also provide opportunities.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Unite, in their submission ... so they believe that the circumstances surrounding frequent C.E.O. (chief executive officer) changes are unclear, and in respect of the most recent change there was, of course, lots of commentary at the time and speculation that culture had an issue or had an impact on that change. Are you able to comment on that?

The Chief Minister:

I think that has all been covered quite well in that time, and I think it is really important that we all move forward. What is important are the days ahead of us and how we all put our best foot forward and work well within the time that we have.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Do you reject the suggestion that some have made that cultural issues had an impact on somebody who, from what I could gather, was pretty well-regarded in deciding to leave?

The Chief Minister:

That was not my understanding, and I think that I made it clear at the time.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Again, in their submission, Unite calls for clarity regarding structural and functional changes to the C.E.O. role and the Cabinet Office. Could you give your explanation for those changes and how they have affected services and job descriptions within the organisation?

The Chief Minister:

It is quite a broad question.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

It is, yes.

The Chief Minister:

I had not drawn out that connection to the Cabinet Office that Unite might have made, so forgive me. Any organisation is changing constantly, really, and flexing to best suit the conditions within which it is working. We have discussed in the past the advisory group that was formed to look at the role and help us prepare for the appointment of the interim. I think it was considered that it was best left to bring in a new person who had the ability to support us in looking at the organisation with fresh eyes and proposing some changes, if they were required. You will have seen in the objectives that we are looking forward to receiving those reports in the coming months.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

You will be aware that there has been a lot of structural change in government in recent years, departments changing their composition and names changing, but also lots of roles changing and being moved around; some of which was in the previous term of office and some of which you have already begun changing in this term of office. Do you think the case has been made effectively enough for the changes that you have begun to make so that those who work for Government do not just think: “Oh great, another load of changes just a couple of years after we dealt with a load before” and the impact that that can have on morale.

The Chief Minister:

I think we are very aware of that. It is really clear that particularly the OneGov situation caused a number of issues, and we are extremely mindful of that. However, what we want to do is make sure that we are running the best, most effective service that we can so that all of those brilliant people who turn out every day and deliver for the public and are motivated by their contribution to public service, are able to do so in the best possible environment. That is really where any changes are focused on.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Is there any more that you are planning to do to make the case for those structural changes that you have made and tried to win over people who might, perhaps understandably, feel instinctively sceptical because of their previous experiences?

The Chief Minister:

I refer back again to the objectives of the interim chief executive, and so that will be coming to us. But what we are focused on, and I think people are very aware of, is being effective as a service and delivering the best value for money and service to the public.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

You mentioned those objectives a couple of times now. How confident are you that those that have been set are achievable within the interim’s relatively short term of office?

The Chief Minister:

I believe that we are making great progress and I am very confident that they will be delivered.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

How did you determine those objectives?

The Chief Minister:

Through mutual discussion and agreement.

[14:15]

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

What do you think stands out in them that is different to objectives that were given to previous C.E.O.s?

The Chief Minister:

Sometimes we can want to deliver everything and end up delivering nothing by taking a very broad approach. I think the 5 objectives that have been agreed identify 5 things that can be worked on in a clear, targeted, focused way and delivered within the timeframes that have been set.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Is it the number of objectives that you think differs from previous ones or the content of them?

The Chief Minister:

I think it is the content particularly.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. The current interim C.E.O. has private sector experience, which the previous C.E.O.s that we have had in office have come from other public sector roles into that. How has taking on someone with that kind of experience informed how you have set those objectives?

The Chief Minister:

I think we are really fortunate to benefit from the experience of the interim chief executive. I think that that it is always useful to try a different approach. This is a great opportunity for the Island.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I wondered if I might ask the interim C.E.O. how you have felt that coming into ... well, it may or may not be. You can tell me either way if it is particularly different to how you felt in previous roles you have had and how you think your private sector experience has helped you contribute to the setting of your own objectives in this now public sector setting.

Interim Chief Executive Officer:

Well, first of all, I have loved it because the work is fascinating, but I guess you all know that from all the work that you do. I think the biggest thing probably, to get to the heart of your question, is around this issue of prioritisation. I think I have come into an organisation which in its culture is additive, it literally just keeps adding things, and maybe does not take enough count of the decisions already made and the cumulative impact of those decisions. So in a private sector organisation about 80 per cent of your resource - 70 to 80 per cent of your resource - would be committed to business as usual, literally opening the shop every day, making sure that today's work is done, the services are all running, and you would maybe have about a quarter which was available for change, to change things, either to respond to big events or because you have decided that you have to fundamentally change in one or 2 areas. I think the challenge that we maybe have in this organisation is that probably 90 per cent of its resources are committed to what we would call business as usual but essentially making sure everything works. As Deputy Feltham has said, it is a large, multifaceted, multiservice organisation. Lots of stuff has to happen every day for Islanders to go about their life and that is quite a complex environment. So there is a huge resource commitment to that. People who come into government tend to come into it because they want to change things and I think it can be frustrating when you realise that the actual available resource to really change things is maybe much smaller than you thought. I think when you have that kind of environment it is really fundamental that you are clear around prioritisation, how you are going to prioritise, how you can give clarity, how you can resource accordingly, and I think that is probably the biggest difference. Because it is a very additive organisation, because it is a very, I think, obliging culture, people will ... the spirited public servants, they will do everything they can to help you. Sometimes that is maybe done without thinking all the way through have we really got the resources to do everything we would like to do in the time we have available. So I do not really think it is a money issue; I think it is almost a capacity issue: can we do these things? So that is what the Chief Minister has had me focus on a lot of, in the vernacular: why are we not getting certain things done? What are the fundamental reasons for it? If they are around capacity, we either add capacity or we take things out and we reprioritise. So a lot of the focus has been the Ministerial team would like to get things done - areas of relentless focus being an example - how do we best go about that? What can we learn from other organisations? So I would say that is the main difference. The other areas that are on the agenda today, complaints and so forth, everything looks comparable to what I would expect to see. That is maybe the area where it is not comparable.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

That was going to lead on to my supplementary question there. So from your previous experience for what is a relatively large organisation but nowhere near as large as the public sector in Jersey and how an organisation like that might deal with its people, its strongest resource you might say, and how their morale is kept up, how complaints are dealt with, how employee relations are dealt with, is there anything majorly different that you see in the public sector that you think might benefit from some change or a different kind of experience informing how it is dealt with?

Interim Chief Executive Officer:

Well, it is early days so as long as you do not hold me too much to observations. I think the first thing to say is this is not ... in terms of the number of people in the service it is not larger by a long shot than other things I have looked after, but it is more complicated because it is so multifaceted, the point that you were making. It is everything from a working hospital to policy officers thinking deeply about long-term trends and so forth. It is very multifaceted so the organisation is complex. It is not so much the scale, it is the scope, if that makes sense. I think, and it is just a reflection - and Mark and I and his team are having a lot of discussions about it - quite rightly the Government of Jersey sets high standards, expects high standards. It wants the highest possible standards of service in the interests of the community for the maximum possible value for money. That is essentially a key thing which transcends Governments but is a very important part of this Government's agenda. I think if you set high standards and demand high standards, you have to in your culture have high support. So if you set high standards and you have low levels of support, you are going to get stress. Equally, if you set high levels of support and low levels of standards, it is going to be cosy corner. So you are always trying to find that balance. I think when we reflect on the past year, with all of the incidents that have gone on and have required people to go above and beyond the call of duty so many times, I think we are probably over-treading in resilience and we need to invest a bit more in getting the balance right between support and standards. In the language in here, a lot of that is coming under the language of well-being, but it is essentially making sure that we get the balance right. So we are looking at a specific example, which I cannot take credit for - the work predated me - but I am engaged in it. I think Mark and his team have identified that in the areas of our leadership development we have maybe spent a lot of time helping leaders to manage workflow and process and maybe not as much time helping them to manage people and how they are feeling about the job. So that aspect of leadership development is something that is a pretty active discussion with the team. That would be an area where in other organisations probably there is more invested in that area.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, thank you. Does anyone have any supplementaries on that particular question? Okay. In submissions we have had from Professor Hugo Mascie-Taylor and Unite they have both expressed

concerns about the lack of accountability and support mechanisms within the leadership and during organisational changes. Could you elaborate on the measures being put in place to enhance accountability in leadership roles and support for management, especially during those moments where there is significant organisational restructuring?

The Chief Minister:

Accountability is perhaps the heart of your question there and that goes back to measuring and focusing on what is actually happening and what those measures show us, asking the questions about that and ensuring that if there is an area of weakness that it is tackled, whether that is because it needs more support or whether there are other matters at play. It is that opportunity to dig down and understand it.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I know that the submissions that we have received, of course, have been studied on your side. Could I just, I guess, ask for some reflections that you might have based on the things that you have read? We have had obviously quite a few trade unions make submissions. Professor Mascie-Taylor has made submissions. Do you have any particular reflections on what they have said?

The Chief Minister:

I think, as I said, at one of our previous meetings that we really welcome the submissions, and in that instance I was speaking particularly about Professor Hugo Mascie-Taylor's submission, which shows, I think, the leadership that he is trying to demonstrate to the people he has been working with since he has been in the Island. He is working to change culture alongside us all and demonstrating that it is important to express that when one feels that it is appropriate. So we look forward to progressing on that. I think looking across all of the submissions it is refreshing to see people setting out their thoughts. They are clearly grateful to have been asked and to have the opportunity to do so, so it is important that we read, that we take stock and that we consider the submissions as we move forward and no doubt receive your recommendations in good time and then respond to them.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I wondered if Mr. Grimley had anything he might want to add on that; any reflections from those submissions.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Can I pick up, first of all, on the point of accountability because I think there are a couple of lines of attack on that one? Because accountability assumes it sits at the top and actually accountability ought to be where it is best placed for decisions to be taken and, therefore, to be accountable. I

think one of my reflections from Professor Hugo Mascie-Taylor's letter was also about clinical responsibility and the standards that they have at the local level, not just at the leadership level. I think that goes for all parts of the public service. The Chief Minister has spoken about the chief executive's objectives and the chief executive is cascading and making sure that the objectives and the accountabilities are clear to the leaders of the organisation, including around culture. I was quite pleased about the submissions from the trade unions. I think it has shown a movement over the past 3 to 4 years both in the relationship but also their involvement and also in the changes that we have made to policy. Clearly, the unions will continue to challenge us as an employer and they will continue to seek improvements for their members. That is what they are there for. I was quite pleased about the balanced approach that they had taken, recognising the improvements that we have made but also making suggestions for further changes.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you. Chief Minister, in a letter to this panel on 24th August you wrote that as the dedicated line manager for the C.E.O. there is a specific formal procedure for all matters concerning the C.E.O. in relation to complaints, grievances, conduct and behaviour, and bullying and harassment. Could you just provide us any kind of detail on that formal procedure and how that works?

The Chief Minister:

I would defer, I think, to the chief people and transformation officer, who would have the specifics of that.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Very often for most employees we have different policies for disciplinary, capability, sickness absence, et cetera. It is quite unique to be a chief executive because you do not have a line manager and a second line manager who can then potentially hear appeals. So what the single procedure has put in place is how concerns are raised, whether it is performance concerns or complaints, but also how the chief executive may also raise their concerns and issues and who has the ability to address and redress those. There was no natural justice or due process in addressing any of the concerns of the chief executive or about the chief executive, which, therefore, created a huge liability for the organisation. I think we have seen in previous iterations where people leave that liability has a financial consequence. So by having due process and then having it clearly written down, along with lines of responsibilities and the terms of reference in advance, it means that should you end up in a position where there is a concern on either side there is an established procedure to address that and that every party knows where they are and it is fair, rather than trying to navigate it at that time.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. Have any of those procedures had occasion to be tested in recent years?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

I will not talk about individual employees.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Fair enough. Any supplementaries?

[14:30]

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Yes. Before we move on, because this brings us quite neatly back to the point about statutory protection for the role of the chief people and transformation officer, because, Chief Minister, you had to defer to the chief people and transformation officer in order to answer that question, which quite neatly, I think, kind of describes the issue that we were discussing at the Public Accounts Committee, which is, in fact, that the officer is responsible for a process and procedure that would be in place if the people working at a senior level to themselves were to be disciplined. So I just wondered if you had any reflections on that now.

The Chief Minister:

I am not quite sure that I understand your question. Clearly, we as policy leads deal with policy and so the reason for my deferral to somebody who spends their time writing policies and procedures and dealing with the process elements. I think that is a perfectly appropriate thing to do because that is the structure that we work within. So I am not quite clear what it is you are driving at.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I wonder if the chief people and transformation officer would be prepared to share any further reflections now or we can leave it and discuss it in writing.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

I think I will not share reflections because that is a personal reflection and I am here obviously for the policy. Just to point out from the Comptroller and Auditor General report, this is where the recommendation came up from and it was during a particular period where a chief executive was leaving. I have an obligation to advise the States Employment Board and to protect the employer. I am also in ... or this position, rather, is also in the line of control of that individual at the time and so there are sometimes conflicts and it is how you manage those conflicts but also make sure that whoever is advising has the ability to give full, unfettered advice. That is where that recommendation came from.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Any further supplementaries in this area?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

No, thank you.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, in which case Deputy Andrews for the next round of questions.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

I understand, Chief Minister, obviously you were chair of this panel last term and we recognise that obviously you undertook a review. It was again very profoundly conspicuous that there was a major discrepancy between the evidence that was given between the unions and witnesses and those in terms of ... who were articulating their views and the views of others who were saying that there was a blame ... well, a culture of deflection among the senior leadership team and senior officials. So I would just like you to maybe just expand on have you seen that first-hand and during your tenure as Chief Minister?

The Chief Minister:

I see a workforce who are really committed to public service and delivering their best and many committed people I come into contact with on a daily basis. We are all wanting to make progress, to move forward and to do our very best work together. That is literally what I see on a day-to-day basis. It is a very committed group of positive people.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

That is very good to hear because I know obviously accountability and transparency was something that you mentioned during your election campaign. Do you feel very reassured that this is something that is seen across the public sector and across senior leaders across the organisation as well?

The Chief Minister:

I think we have touched on today some of the areas where we are developing measures and process and also holding people to account for those.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Yes. In terms of the relationship between the unions and the States Employment Board - and, of course, that is a position that you are the Chair of - do you believe that relationship has been strengthened compared to your predecessors on the States Employment Board last term?

The Chief Minister:

I think that is really clear in the submissions that have been written to this panel this time. While they identify that there is work to do and issues that they would like to be addressed, I think they will acknowledge that there is a different approach and that we are deriving many benefits from the regular meetings that are held with union representatives who can speak on behalf of their membership.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Of course, we saw a chief executive officer leave and, of course, now we have an interim chief executive officer, so I was wondering: have there been any ideas that the new chief executive officer has brought to the table that were previously not considered in relation to people and culture?

The Chief Minister:

I think as the interim said himself, there has been new energy and a new focus on prioritisation and a different skillset. So I think that people have responded extremely well to that and it seems to have been a warmly welcomed change of approach.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Yes. Is there anything that has maybe not been achieved as yet in relation to people and culture that you see as a major priority that must be achieved before the end of this term of office?

The Chief Minister:

We cannot read the submissions without acknowledging that there is still a journey to travel, but we are putting in place measures that I hope show the workforce that we are trying to address these issues. We are encouraging a greater level of openness. The freedom to speak up guardian is, I think, being warmly welcomed and receiving views from many people in Health and Social Services, which of course was an area that needed particular work.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Okay. Thank you very much, Chief Minister.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Deputy Andrews in his earlier question there alluded to a quote from yourself in the previous review, which was ... and these were your words, which were on the puzzling mismatch of views expressed by unions and witnesses and that of the senior leadership team, who you said had a practice of deflection. Do you consider that to still be the case or has anything drastically changed since you took over for your perception on that?

The Chief Minister:

I think as we have laid out today, we are on a journey together and I think that is a positive one. I think everybody acknowledges that there is work to be done but we are not shying away from doing that. We are embracing change and trying to approach that in the most constructive and supportive way possible.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Is there a greater alignment of views between those groups today than there was when you took over?

The Chief Minister:

Which, the submission groups or the union groups, sorry?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

In your foreword you said there was a puzzling mismatch of views between unions and witnesses and that of the senior leadership team. Are their views now more aligned today than they were when you took over?

The Chief Minister:

I do not have the benefit of seeing the same submissions from the other side, of course, at this point in time but I would certainly hope so.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Could I just add to that, Chair? I think what has changed over the past couple of years, though, is a greater understanding of commonality. So we have a people strategy. We have a framework. We have codes of practice, but we also share data and there is much more constructive dialogue. I think that has progressed over the past couple of years. So I think where ... and I was obviously sat in this chair as well during that review. Where I think some of those differences of views came from was that there was not a common agenda or a common understanding or even a common language about what we were trying to achieve with the workforce. I think we have been through in the target operating model period quite a combative period at some points where people felt that they were under risk for their jobs and where was the ability to speak about that. So I think we have progressed and that is why the commonality and the structures that we have in place are helping the dialogue.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. Any supplementaries on these?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I just wanted to ... the timing of those, because I can remember sitting around a different table with you. So what leadership, what decisions and what direction have you given, Chief Minister, in relation to this? I say this with the background context of having sat round a table with Mark and knowing that this work was started before this particular term of office. So what are you proud of changing within this term of office so far?

The Chief Minister:

I think as we have demonstrated today already, there is a more collaborative approach and we meet regularly. We listen and we act on the feedback that we receive and are able to demonstrate to our colleagues that there are people who care, there are people who are ready to ensure that efforts are made to improve, as I outlined earlier, items like terms and conditions, the job planning and other issues that make a difference to people's experiences in our workforce.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you. The next round of questions is for Deputy Farnham.

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

Just on some areas of policy development. What specific measures have been implemented to enhance the transparency and co-operation and the overall relationship between the Government and the Scrutiny process?

The Chief Minister:

Between Government and Scrutiny I think that you have seen ... you are talking particularly from the States Employment Board perspective. I think you see a different approach to answering questions, I hope, and sharing information and we are here today to talk to you about that.

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

So do you feel that the measures, whatever measures that have been implemented, you feel that relationship is enhanced now and improved?

The Chief Minister:

I certainly hope so. That would be for both sides of the table to answer, of course, but we meet regularly with the Scrutiny ... well, I do in my role with the Scrutiny Liaison Committee and stand ready to listen to concerns that they have and those of other States Members as well.

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

I suppose do you feel that in return Scrutiny is being objective in its scrutiny?

The Chief Minister:

I have no cause to say the contrary at the moment.

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

Can you cite any key influences or research or benchmarks that have informed the development of the current people and culture strategy?

The Chief Minister:

I did not write it myself but we have very much taken the approach of a values-based organisation and that has been a really important starting point. We also benefit from the experience, as I mentioned earlier, of the vice-chair, who has been on both sides of the table as well, been a union rep himself, and as well as a fellow of the Institute of Directors. So I think that we are a different beast.

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

Okay. Are there any frameworks or models or best practices from any other jurisdictions perhaps that have informed the Government, your current approach to the people and culture?

The Chief Minister:

Not particularly.

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

That will be fine. I mean, in your ... do you want me to continue?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

You can. I am happy to take these last ones unless you want to.

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

Okay. You go ahead.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. In your letter ... again, I referenced this letter previously, but in your letter to the panel on 24th August you informed us that the promotion of occupational health contract services has been offered to staff. Is there any particular evidence that has been considered to inform the current occupational health approach? I would understand if you wanted to defer that question because of the detail that we are looking at.

The Chief Minister:

Thank you. I think that is certainly a technical nature that ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay.

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

There are 2 parts to that question. I think the first is in our response to some of the serious incidents that we have seen over the past 12 to 18 months, because that has required a specific but ongoing response in relation to occupational health around resilience, around therapies. There are some people at the very front line who have seen and participated in and are drawn into those incidents. So we have a very specific ... we call it a cell that responds in those incidents and that has proved highly effective. That has been a multi-agency approach to make sure that the best practice in areas like the police, for example, who have their own methods, and health, who have their own methods during trauma, they come together and we use those across the organisation. So that is something that has been stood up over the past year or so. In terms of the wider occupational health offer, we have taken the broadest possible view because it is not just about a referral to occupational health when you are unwell, which was usual practice. That is normally too late because there is either a crisis moment or there is something that has happened that results in absence. So we have been focusing on personal resilience. We have been focusing on techniques of well-being but also support within the workplace. So we have broadened the occupational health offer. Most of that is done in-house. We have renegotiated part of the occupational health provider contract in order to take money back in-house to do that ourselves, and we are building up a stronger network. If you have access to the intranet you will notice we have a publication called *Breathe*, which comes out every 2 months. That talks about the key issues of personal health. So it is not just about health at work, it is about health at home, so raising key issues around, for example, men's cancer, around the menopause, bringing all the different aspects of life that will impact you in work but are not necessarily work related.

[14:45]

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

How did you develop that offer?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

We have done it through our well-being network. We have asked what is important to people. We have asked people what are the topics. People have been coming forward and we have been using those as stories. So rather than just campaigns and posters saying: "If you ... do this, do that" we have been using stories that resonate with people. People have been coming forward to say: "I would like to tell my story. I would like to raise awareness." We also try and fit in with awareness months where you will get much more from social media and from other campaigns that are going on.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Are there any further improvements to that that you think you would do well to consider?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

I think certainly around the occupational health at work, so the hard end of it, about helping people back into work or where they have ... we have, like most organisations, mental health concerns, stress, anxiety; rather than waiting for therapies, allowing people to have access to those through our occupational health facilities. We are looking at a cash-back scheme for people to access other healthcare services themselves. We are also trying to promote well-being in the workplace but taking that home.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you. Anything on that particular one? Okay. In the previous review there was a conclusion that trade unions had not been involved in the people strategy, so could you elaborate on what steps have been taken to improve stakeholder engagement, particularly with the unions, for future strategies?

The Chief Minister:

I have talked extensively already today about our regular meetings, but I would defer to the chief people and transformation officer on the collaboration to produce the strategy.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, we will certainly let him do that, but just very quickly on those meetings, could you just give us a flavour of how those meetings go? Are you personally attending them frequently? Is it the same attendees every time or is there much fluctuation?

The Chief Minister:

All members of S.E.B. try to attend but, of course, everybody has competing diaries and that is sometimes difficult. But I try to attend as many as I can. I think there was one yesterday or the day before with some nurses' representatives, which was a really constructive meeting. Constable Jehan and I were reflecting earlier on today that the people attending that meeting were really engaged in the topics under discussion.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Do you usually find them collegiate and friendly or do you ever find them more tense?

The Chief Minister:

No, they are generally collegiate and friendly meetings and they are really positive. I think I have outlined during the course of this hearing some examples of the issues that have been raised through those and how we are responding to them.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

How are agendas for those meetings determined?

The Chief Minister:

In advance, generally. There will be a series of bullet points. I think yesterday there were 4 or 5 different bullet points, topics for discussion, and we work through them.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Are they just topics for discussion or do you ever specifically say: "We are conducting this piece of work and we want this to be the forum where you input into it"?

The Chief Minister:

As I think I have outlined during this hearing, that will depend on the topic, of course, but we can identify that with job planning, for example, and the doctors, we have circled back around that on a number of occasions and asked how it is going and received feedback. They are very aware that it is a topic that we have heard from them, understood the issues and we have engaged with other managers to find out what the issues are. We seek regular feedback in terms of how progress is being made.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. Is there anything you wanted to add to that?

Chief People and Transformation Officer:

Just the employee relations team ... and they are a small team, so when we say team - because we have an army - a couple of people. They are the conduit for all relations with trade unions, so if there are concerns they can raise it in there, pointing it in the right direction. But also just to illustrate the development of the new codes of practice, it is an entirely new suite of codes of practice from the States Employment Board. It is their highest policy strategy. Trade unions and employee networks, so wider networks for inclusion, are involved in all of those. They are given an opportunity to join workshops. It is a slower way of policy development but it is a better way of policy development because it means people have an input and the policies work better from the start, rather than a new policy coming out and all of a sudden people saying: "Well, that does not work for me."

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. Another conclusion in that report refers to certain departments within the public sector requiring special attention to improve employee well-being. Are you able to identify which departments that may be and any efforts you are undertaking to put plans together that aim to address the well-being for those specific departments?

The Chief Minister:

I think Health and Social Services has obviously been one area of focus. What we have done there, of course, is to ... well, as I have already said today, we have introduced the freedom to speak up guardian and the senior leadership team there is very focused on encouraging that culture of change and ensuring that work is ... improvements in people's behaviours is a focus of attention and encouragement to change and develop.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Any other departments that you think require special attention?

The Chief Minister:

I am just running back through my filing cabinet. I do not think that there is a particularly difficult issue or area to identify in addition. Obviously, the terms and conditions of teachers and the ongoing situation with regards strike action is something that is a point of concern for us all because it impacts on all Islanders, and we hope that we will be able to resolve it and move forward.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. Any other questions, anyone?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

No, thank you.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. That wraps up everything that we had on our list to ask you, so thank you very much and thank you to these 2 officers for attending as well and providing helpful answers. This review is not a short and sharp review and we are not in a position to report back imminently. It will take more time and we have further plans in the new year to conduct more investigations on this before we report back, so you will be hearing from us again no doubt. Thank you very much. Thank you to our officers who have supported us as well and thank you to anyone who may be online watching it. On that, I call this hearing to a close. Thank you.

The Chief Minister:

Thank you.

[14:52]