



Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

Whistleblowing and Grievances

Witness: The Chief Minister

Wednesday, 4th March 2026

Panel:

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

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter (Vice-Chair)

Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central

Witnesses:

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

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

Mr. P. Wylie, Chief Officer, Cabinet Office

Ms. L. Darwin, Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office

Ms. L. Zambon, Business Partner, Case Management, People Services

[12:29]

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

Good afternoon, everybody, welcome to the public hearing of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel about whistleblowing and grievance. Today is 4th March and we have got about an hour and a half set aside for this hearing. Can I just remind everybody that the hearing is being streamed live and a recording will be put on to the States website. Could everybody please make sure that they have turned off any electronic devices? So I will start with introductions. I am Deputy Helen Miles, I am Chair of the panel.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter (Vice-Chair):

Deputy Lucy Stephenson, Vice-Chair.

Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:

Deputy Alex Curtis, panel member.

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central:

Deputy Catherine Curtis. I chair Children, Education and Home Affairs; I am just joining for this hearing.

The Chief Minister:

Welcome. Deputy Lyndon Farnham, Chief Minister.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Deputy Malcom Ferey, Assistant Chief Minister.

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

Paul Wylie, Chief Officer of the Cabinet Office.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Lesley Darwin, Chief People Officer.

Business Partner, Case Management, People Services:

Lara Zambon, Business Partner, Case Management.

[12:30]

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Hello, thank you very much. I just wanted to mention why we are having this hearing. I am sure, Chief Minister, you will remember because you were part of the Corporate Services Panel in 2022 and you provided a report on the People and Culture Review. Due to the timing of the change of government, there were no findings and recommendations from that review and this panel did not feel it was appropriate that we made findings and recommendations about somebody else's review. So what we did was have a look at your review, and one of the areas that we picked out for follow-up and to make sure that we focused on, was the whistleblowing and grievance. We have been picking up in our quarterly hearings with you throughout the last couple of years, but what we wanted to do was just make sure that we kind of boxed off the whistleblowing and grievance issues so that we can then put that into our legacy report. So that is the reason for doing this hearing.

The Chief Minister:

I understand.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

As you will be aware, our focus on the topic of whistleblowing and grievances has been a continuous theme since 2021. Could you start, Chief Minister, by providing your views about the current arrangements and an update on the position of the Government regarding whistleblowing and the management of civil servant grievances?

The Chief Minister:

Okay. Well I think significant progress has been made in strengthening whistleblowing and grievance policies, processes. Capacity updates are focused on working to improve clarity and ensuring independence and enhancing protections for employees raising concerns. High-profile cases in Jersey and insight from external reviews continue to inform the approach that is being followed by the team. In particular, changes have included increasing the pool of designated officers from 2 to 4 in dealing with these issues - addition of the Chief People Officer and the Chief Officer of the Cabinet Office, Paul - increasing the pool of trained investigators from 10 to 20 and reviewed lessons learnt while implementing and updating the policy in recent years. So a significant increase in resource there for dealing with it. We fully reviewed and updated the whistleblowing policy, and feedback indicates that employees value clearer signposting. We think what has happened with the progress is it has built more confidence into the staffing.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. So what are you doing to give whistleblowers more confidence in the policy's ability to address their concerns impartially and effectively?

The Chief Minister:

I wonder if Lesley would talk about it.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

We have our NAVEX system, so we have the speak-up line where individuals can raise concerns anonymously. We can communicate with individuals on that feedback line that we have. We can find updates, ask for further information, so if they feel as though they want to remain anonymous, they can do. In terms of protection, we ensure that they are fully supported. We provide well-being support. There are officers they have access to in terms of providing any information that they may need; we have a number of designated officers at the moment. It is the Chief Internal Auditor, the Assistant Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Officer, Cabinet Office and myself in terms of keeping in contact. We will have regular meetings with those individuals who raise concerns.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So quite a high level. How do you communicate that across the organisation?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

We are just about to go out with our revised whistleblowing policy this week. We have got a communication strategy that will go out this week and that is advising all employees of the whistleblowing policy, and that includes manager updates. We are also providing training. When employees join the organisation, it is part of my welcome as well in terms of how to raise concerns.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

We wrote to you on 9th February to ask about whistleblowing grievances and we particularly asked about indicators that quantify the time taken to resolve cases. You told us that you did not have any, so can you advise us why you do not have indicators about the time or the level of resources it takes to resolve cases?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

We do have times and indicators. If a concern comes in, whoever the designated officer is, within 2 days they are meant to contact the individual. Then within 10 days of that it is further contact to say how the matter is going to be dealt with. But within those 10 days, the officer will ask for further information or clarification. What we are better at doing at the moment is triaging. So if a concern comes in, it is identifying what elements are whistleblowing and what elements may be grievances or a different process that needs to be followed. So from that point of view we do have indicators. The difficulty of whistleblowing in terms of investigation is sometimes they can be quite complex, so it is difficult to put a timeline in terms of investigations.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I think you have been clear about what should happen in terms of timescales. How do you know that it is happening?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

We have limited whistleblowing complaints, so from a designated officer point of view, it is easy to establish.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You also responded to that letter that grievance cases were overseen by a case management team within People Services who have responsibility to ensure cases are handled within a timely manner. Is there a formal agreement in place with your external contractors to make sure that they are handled in a timely manner?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

In terms of when we are going out for external investigators?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes, that is one of the requirements. So when we draft the terms of reference to go out to those investigators, it is one of the requirements. Ideally, we would say we would want an investigation to conclude within 4 to 6 weeks, but it does depend on the complexity.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Four to 6, not 46?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

No, 4 to 6.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. I think you said, Chief Minister, that you have recently increased the team, the pool of investigators, from 10 to 20. Are those from internal of the public service or external?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

It is a mixture of the both.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

A mixture of the both.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

So we went out recently to recruit zero-hour investigators because they also add a level of independence in terms of the investigation process. Where, as well as having zero-hour investigators, we go externally, and we have got a procurement process in terms of contract services, so individuals or companies that we will use, depending on the complexity of the investigations.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. I am going to hand you over to Catherine.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I have a few questions firstly about a recent whistleblowing grievance case. As you will be aware, the topic of whistleblowing was reported on publicly in a higher-profile dispute between government and the Association of Educational Psychologists in relation to the treatment of educational psychologists within the Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department. Please can you explain why Jersey has seen such high-profile cases in relation to government staff raising concerns?

The Chief Minister:

I think Paul or Lesley will need to deal with that.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes. In terms of this actual concern, it was quite complex, so again this was a mixture of whistleblowing and grievance. It was determined at the time that we would, quite rightly, separate the whistleblowing from the grievance. For whatever reason, it was determined that the whistleblowing would take precedence over the grievance, which added delays and complexity in the process. We have changed our process in terms of having feedback about the impact that that had on all of the individuals concerned. So from that point of view, we have taken that into consideration and, again, we changed our grievance process because we used to have a resolution panel, and that added more complexity and timeframes to that. We have reviewed our grievance policy and rewritten the grievance policy as a result of that. The initial whistleblowing investigation took some considerable time to conclude, so again that just added more complexity and further aggrieved the individuals involved, quite rightly.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you. The union representative at the time stated that she had not seen this level of incompetence in her 30-year career. I wondered if you had anything to say about that, Chief Minister.

The Chief Minister:

Well I think we look back and we learn from instances like that. That is why we have put more resource and more effort into making progress with the procedures.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I was going to ask what has the Government done to mitigate the impact, but you have mentioned changes already, and that was one about the resolution ...

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

We had a resolution panel. From a HR Lounge report previously in terms of grievances and bullying/harassment, that was a recommendation, so we amended our policies at the time. But it did not work in the way that it was envisaged to work because what was happening is, from a resolution process, a resolution panel was sitting. When individuals went forward, instead of it being resolved by the resolution panel it mostly went to investigation, so it added more delays. It just did not work in the way that it was initially envisaged, that it would be resolved at that resolution panel.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Was the resolution panel then intended to be the one-stop restorative approach and it did not?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

No.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I think you have answered some of my next questions, but how will whistleblowers' concerns be channelled appropriately going forward? You have said there is going to be a new report out on this as well.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

We have got a new whistleblowing policy that is due to go live and that is as a result of all the feedback that we have had from the unions, associations, the case management team and H.R. (Human Resources) business partners and E.L.T. (Executive Leadership Team), so that is due to go live. What we have done there is we have included, like I say, triage so that we have got documents and toolkits to identify what is whistleblowing, what is grievance, so it goes down the right actual track. Sorry, could you just repeat?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, it is about how will people know how to go forward, really, with any concerns. It explains it properly, does it?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes. Then in terms of the communication that is due to go out this week, it is to all staff highlighting where our policies are. We are in the process of renewing our MyStates and making that really accessible to individuals so they will know exactly where to go.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you. The whistleblowing policy states: "The Chief Internal Auditor must be notified of all serious concerns raised." Please can you describe the role of the Chief Internal Auditor in receiving or considering potential cases of whistleblowing?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Would you like me to respond? In terms of the Chief Internal Auditor, it is predominantly around fraud and health and safety, so the Chief Internal Auditor will be notified of those. But we have also put extra measures in so we have a fraud line that individuals can go to directly as well, so it does not necessarily need to come through that NAVEX process. What the Chief Internal Auditor will do then is review that to see if it is a whistleblowing and then it will follow the whistleblowing policy as a result, if that is the case.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

For example, in a case where educational psychologists might say that record-keeping was not being done properly, would the Chief Internal Auditor look at that?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Not necessarily now, no.

The Chief Minister:

As a rule of thumb, the Chief Internal Auditor would undertake investigations that were relevant to our role as internal auditor.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So you have explained the role there. In relation to Health and Community Services, the panel highlighted in its previous People and Culture Follow-up Review the observations made by Professor Hugo Mascie-Taylor about the lack of reporting of incidents by staff. Do you believe lessons learnt from recent cases have been addressed in relation to the Health Service?

Assistant Chief Minister:

I can speak to that. You will be aware that a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian was put in place to hear those concerns primarily about patient safety, of course. That process is really working well and has come off and been improved from the back of that report. It is possible that that type of model could work in an educational setting where if people have concerns about pupils, they could raise those concerns to a single point of contact who could then take those concerns forward.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Were there any other considerations made in response to this, apart from the speak-up guardian?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Was there nothing else on that, Lesley?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

In terms of the speak-up guardian, all employees, including health, have access to the speak-up line. In terms of designated people they can go to if they have got concerns, or for any reason they felt as though they did not want to go to the speak-up guardian, it is documented who they can go to, so it is very clear.

The Chief Minister:

We wanted to develop a more transparent and open culture, which I think the policy is trying to encourage, keep clearer escalation routes for staff involved, improve governance and improve documentation and audit trails of what has happened, stronger leadership, visibility, accountability, general organisational improvements.

[12:45]

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I was just going to ask if there are any specific challenges relating to addressing whistleblowing, in the health service specifically. You have mentioned things around transparency, documentation, leadership. Is that a particular concern in the health service, these issues?

The Chief Minister:

It is hard to say. Paul, do you want to tell them?

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

I line-managed the Freedom to Speak Up champion because in the initial stages we needed to have that person separate from the health service, our Health and Care Jersey Department, in order to promote that degree of independence and be able to speak without fear or favour to their own particular employee rights in their career. What I have seen through that process is real engagement by the leadership team, by the advisory board, the Chief Nurse. The new Chief Nurse, in particular, comes from a strong background of this issue and she is driving through those reforms as well. Taking the best of what other jurisdictions have done and learning lessons, the Freedom to Speak Up champion has made those connections with similar-sized N.H.S. (National Health Service) foundations. But crucially, it is about driving that message at all levels through the Health Department, and so I have not seen anything that concerns me in that management capacity.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Can I just ask a couple of clarification questions? You talk about NAVEX and you talk about the fraud line, is that a telephone line?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

NAVEX is both a telephone line and go in and raise your concerns in the system. In terms of NAVEX, you can call and you speak to somebody in the U.K. (United Kingdom) and they help triage your complaint and put it into the right in terms of whistleblowing, et cetera.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I am still confused about why the Chief Internal Auditor is the go-to person for whistleblowing.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

They no longer necessarily are in the new policy, so that is as a result of the Comptroller and Auditor General's feedback. We took that on board and we amended the policy. So while the Chief Internal Auditor is still there in terms of fraud, not necessarily anything else.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So if you had a teaching assistant who wants to blow the whistle about a safeguarding issue, they would not be expected to somehow engage with the Chief Internal Auditor?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

No. In terms of the new policy, what we have put in is whistleblowing protection officers. So every department has to have a whistleblowing protection officer. They are a named person where individuals can also raise concerns, so it takes out the need to go to the Chief Internal Auditor.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But there is an escalation if the person does not want to go for whatever reason?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

My questions are about the application of policies and procedures. I think you have made it very clear, Lesley, that whistleblowing and grievance are 2 separate things and you talked about

separating them in investigations. There are 2 key policies there: I think whistleblowing policy for public servants and grievance policy for public servants. Do you believe that there is clarity about what is considered whistleblowing and what is considered a grievance?

The Chief Minister:

Well I think that Lesley would have to answer on behalf of the public service employees, but it is clearly set out in the policies and procedures manual. If you want me to run through it, I can do, but if you want to just ...

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

I think it is more - I appreciate the people around this table may understand it - what about the employees and when they are coming forward with things, is there an understanding across the organisation, and perhaps even in management levels?

Assistant Chief Minister:

I think that is the importance of that triage, to filter out at the earliest possible opportunity what is grievance and what is a whistleblowing concern. I think that is what did not happen quite so well in the old policy, so cases went on for perhaps longer than they should have done or went down the wrong route. The whole point of having that triage system right at the front end is to clearly mark out which path it goes down. Of course, the other thing is it might be neither grievance nor whistleblowing, it might be something else of concern which does not fit under those 2 items, that is why it is a triage system.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Can you give us an example of what would not fit either whistleblowing or grievance?

Assistant Chief Minister:

It just might be something which is not an employment matter, it might just be something which is not a public-interest thing, it is not an employment matter, it is just something which can far more easily be resolved. It could just be a small dispute, it could just be a change in work practice or whatever, something, but most will fall under one of those 2 banners. But there is also the opportunity to capture something that does not fall under either of them.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Could I check about those alternatives? Because the first thing an employee sees when they go to raise a grievance and work out what is the correct approach is a red line saying: "Do not use this form for dignity and respect at work concerns. Please refer to dignity and respect at work policy." Again, is it - back to Deputy Stephenson's first question - then clear for all involved at the highest

level where perhaps even these 3 policies interplay? Because we are looking for examples and all of a sudden the first thing someone sees is: "Do not use this form" potentially.

The Chief Minister:

I have not got what you have in front of you in front of me, but it is made clear to employees - Lesley can correct me if it is not the case - that grievance concerns, personal employment matters such as workload or work environment, fairness of decisions directly affecting an individual, terms and conditions, duties, behaviour towards a person, so what you said there, clearly sit outside that. Lesley, did you want to add to that? I think that is clear. If you scroll down or something, I am sure you will come across that at some stage.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

So that goes back to the question in terms of what would sit outside. So a bullying/harassment, for instance, would sit separately because that is the dignity and respect at work. In terms of what you are seeing there is, if it is a grievance, though, terms and conditions that somebody is not happy with, that would sit under a grievance policy. But you need to go into the policies to look to see which policy that is.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

That is clear to everyone?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Thank you. How do you ensure that the policies and procedures for the policies are applied consistently?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

So what we do is we do case reviews. We have got the case management team and they have regular meetings to make sure that when we are managing cases that they are being managed consistently and within timeframes. The team also do checks and check-ins with individuals and are available if employees want to ask questions from a case management point of view or if they have got concerns that an investigation is taking too long. So from a consistency point of view, myself and the Head of Employment Reward and Relations meet with the case management team on a weekly basis, and more often if needed. We go through the cases to make sure they are progressing as they should and that we have got some consistency.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

That is across all departments? All departments come under the same banner and all levels of employees and everything?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Great, thank you. I think you touched on communication with regards to the new policy and how you will be communicating it to staff. Is it something that is regularly re-sent out to staff, not just when there is a new policy? Or what communication is done to remind people it is there?

Assistant Chief Minister:

It is done as part of training and it is done on an ongoing basis. Particularly because we have a new policy in place, that will be cascaded down.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Does that go out in the form of an email, is it something ...

Assistant Chief Minister:

So it is cascaded through team meetings and through management meetings and all the way through to emails to staff.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

So a number of different ways?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Staff who perhaps are not office-based and on computers, how does that work?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes, so they will still have bulletin boards or other places where they can see a paper copy or get notified that way. Because there are still some staff that do not have access to computers.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Thank you. When meetings with employees take place in relation to potential grievances or cases of whistleblowing, how do you ensure that all information provided by the employee is accurately collected and recorded?

Business Partner, Case Management, People Services:

So in first meeting with employees about their concerns, we would obviously listen to them, see what their concern is, make a note of that. Then, in most cases, you would summarise that back to them in writing to ensure that it is accurate and correct. You would also supply them with a copy of the relevant policy because when discussing it with them it could be, for example, that something they have mentioned does fall within the whistleblowing element policy and something else might be more behavioural-related or treatment, which would be dignity and respect at work, or something else that related to a grievance like a dispute about terms and conditions. That meeting is always helpful to identify those issues and ensure that they are supplied with the right copies of policies.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

So there are consistent procedures in place that everyone follows?

Business Partner, Case Management, People Services:

Yes.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Similarly, are there guidelines and procedures in place with how meetings with employees are conducted, including the tone and how responses are provided to employees as well?

Business Partner, Case Management, People Services:

Yes. Well we must all comply with our values and behaviours and that is embedded in our various different policies: dignity and respect at work; disciplinary, so everybody is aware that they must conduct themselves in a respectful way to one another.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Can you give us an insight into how a first meeting might run with somebody? Is it always face to face, who is in the room with them, how does it work?

Business Partner, Case Management, People Services:

It would be face to face ordinarily, unless they feel uncomfortable attending in person. It may be that they would prefer to attend remotely, so they are given that option. They are permitted to attend with either a workplace colleague or their trade union representative. If there was someone else

perhaps they felt may be appropriate to bring with them, they may ask that question; we would consider it.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Are the meetings ever audio-recorded or video-recorded?

Business Partner, Case Management, People Services:

Perhaps there have been instances of that but only where the employee would consent to it.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Or requested it themselves, say.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is it something that you would consider in order to protect the integrity of the process?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Potentially, yes. It would depend on the circumstances. I think what I would like to emphasize is that, we would always want to try and resolve matters informally in the first instance. Going to a very formal process takes away the ability to do that sometimes, so from that point of view. When we have hearings, if everybody gives permission, then we have in the past recorded those so that is a true and accurate reflection.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I am just thinking, because if things do get escalated to tribunal, or particularly with whistleblowing, capture of accurate evidence is really important. It is very difficult - I know you have a notetaker in the room - for that notetaker to record verbatim what is being said when we have very good technological solutions to that so that they could be transcribed. I was wondering whether that has been considered.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

No, the previous advice is because it is an employment matter, then that is not necessarily the best way to progress. All individuals have the opportunity to review any notes that are taken at those meetings and make amendments. If those amendments cannot be agreed, the 2 copies of the notes are included. So from that point of view, I think that is an accurate reflection of those meetings.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But recording would ensure that it is a totally accurate reflection?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes. I think the individuals would need to be very comfortable in terms of that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. The other thing I just wanted to ask as well about the application of policies and procedures is about gender balance. Do you make sure that for an investigative procedure if you have, for example, a female making a complaint, the investigator is female?

Business Partner, Case Management, People Services:

In certain cases, for example, a case of alleged sexual harassment, we would have potentially 2 investigators, one male and one female, to ensure that there is a balanced view from the investigation perspective. On panels, if that case should progress to some form of hearing, we would look to appoint a male and female panel so that any views are balanced.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

To what extent is government monitoring the use of the whistleblowing policy by staff and, if so, how is that information being used?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

The Chief Internal Auditor as previously - and it is my responsibility now as well - is to provide an annual report. That is also provided to the Risk and Audit Committee. From that point of view, there are quite a few processes in place. The report also goes to E.L.T. and the States Employment Board. Last year's report is due to go to E.L.T. next week or the week after, and then S.E.B. (States Employment Board) on 23rd March, but it has already gone to the Risk and Audit Committee, so there is a level of independence there.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Does it go to Ministers?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Only those sat on States Employment Board. I am not aware of any others.

Assistant Chief Minister:

No. But it could do.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

It could go to the Council of Ministers, for instance.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Thank you.

[13:00]

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I know we have already spoken a bit about the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian but I just have a few more questions on that. Chief Minister, the panel's previous People and Culture Follow-up Review highlighted that between February 2023 and November 2023, 63 individuals had contacted the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian. Please can you provide an update in relation to the numbers of individuals who have contacted the guardian within Health and Community Services in each year from 2023 to 2025?

The Chief Minister:

Paul, I do not know if you have those figures with you?

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

I do not have those figures with me but I am very happy to write to you on that item, yes,

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you. What is your view about the success of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian initiative to date? What do you hear back from employees? Is there an official way that feedback is collected from employees or about speaking and raising concerns?

Assistant Chief Minister:

I remember when the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian was brought in and speaking to Hugo Mascie-Taylor at the time. He said in other jurisdictions this is just commonplace and he felt that it was something which is just a natural fit for Jersey, so I think the fact that a number of people are contacting the speak-up guardian in itself shows that it is having success. People feel able to freely and openly speak about their concerns, that they are acted upon, and things are changing as a result. I think it has been a really good appointment. I think it is good for the service and it is good for patient safety and surety.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Apart from looking at the numbers, how is feedback collected?

Assistant Chief Minister:

You might be able to speak to how the feedback goes.

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes. The way the Freedom to Speak Up champion operates is through engagement at the leadership level. I have been to the board with her and seen her engage each of the department heads. The Chief Officer, Tom Walker, is very, very strong on this, and I have already mentioned the Chief Nurse, in terms of taking top-down pressure. In terms of deploying collateral and material around the building, if you go to the hospital in particular, it is constantly referred to and lanyards are introduced on that front. The role, the reason why we have a person doing this, is because she is actively going to each individual team and physically being present, has open-door surgeries when people can approach her directly, as well as the more anonymised routes that we have already discussed. She plays back that informally to the Health Executive leadership team and where it is an individual case, she will be the advocate for that and take that up with the relevant department. Again, as the Chief People Officer was describing, this is all about heading things off before they become a more serious issue, and if there is a way for the department to change that issue or change that culture at an earlier stage, that is the point of it.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That explains quite a lot about her role and how she feeds back to the board and so on. Is there anything collected from staff about how they think this is working?

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

I am writing to you anyway, so I am happy to add to that aspect. The Be Heard surveys are well documented. The whole reason for this we have already discussed in terms of Hugo Mascie-Taylor's view on this, so yes, there is no reason to think it is not working.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Was there any analysis done of particular themes that keep coming up?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes, by the Health Board. The Freedom to Speak Up Guardian provides a monthly report to the Health Board, so where they discuss any concerns that are being raised and themes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Is any of that made public, not about the individuals, but about the themes?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

I believe so.

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

Most of the papers that go to the Health Board are public for that reason.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

All right. I was going to ask if this was being considered for other government departments. I know that, Deputy Ferey, you have already mentioned the possibility of that.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes, I do not think it would necessarily work across the board because they are different settings, but it could work in an educational environment. There are so many synergies with health and education that that is a distinct possibility.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I was going to ask how you are enhancing employee trust and confidence in the process. Is that about ensuring people know about it and ...

Assistant Chief Minister:

Part of it is about communicating and we do that through all sorts of levels. There are posters around, as was explained earlier, but it is becoming part of the culture. I think that is the important thing, that once people know ... she was really active on making sure that she got round everywhere to tell people the work that she does and why. We are seeing that cultural shift where there is an automatic recognition of where people need to go with concerns.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So when we get that written response, we should see that in the feedback from staff as well? Okay, thank you.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Chief Minister, we have had quite a late submission to the panel. We have published it but I am not sure you have seen it, it is from the Jersey Care Commission. They highlighted concerns about a lack of clarity around external reporting routes, including no comprehensive list of external bodies to whom concerns may be reported, clear regulatory oversight body contact information or explanation of when external disclosure is lawful and protected. I just wondered if you had any comments about that.

Assistant Chief Minister:

My understanding is a lot of what was addressed in the Jersey Care Commission's paper is being resolved, particularly through the new policy. But I am sure Lesley would want to expand on that.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

It is. We have also looked at the Jersey Employment Forum report as well in terms of who they are suggesting is independent external as well.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. Again, they talk about insufficient detail on what qualifies as a protected disclosure. Can you just give us an example of what a protected disclosure might be?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

In terms of the actual new policy, we do have a significant list in terms of what they are: clinical and professional managerial malpractice, concerns about safeguarding practices, criminal activity, failure to comply with legal duty or requirement. There is a significant list in terms of what they are.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That sounds really promising because, just harking back to the decisions that were made around the educational psychology, that clarification would have been really helpful, would it not, to direct through that process? That is really, really good to hear. The other thing that the Jersey Care Commission have highlighted was that the whistleblowing policing does not clearly address protections for contractors, agency workers, volunteers or former employees. Has that been addressed in the new policy as well?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Anybody can raise a complaint or concern within NAVEX anyway; they can do that anonymously, so I would just like to highlight that. It has not specifically but we received the feedback from the care commission yesterday, so we are going to update as a result of that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I must admit, it was something that had not crossed my mind. But obviously you do have lots of people that are not technically public servants and yet are interacting with public servants, so there may be a grievance. That is quite an interesting area, is it not?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

If they did raise a concern we would go through the same process in any event.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Same process but they would need to know that they could. Thank you.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Does information or a policy exist about the timeframes for acknowledging a whistleblower, the frequency or method of progress updates or the circumstances under which cases may be closed perhaps with limited feedback? I think you spoke loosely at the beginning about some of the timeframes. If you could give us a bit more detail about some of those, please.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes, so in the actual policy it says that we will give regular updates. It does not specifically say: "We will give you a weekly or monthly" it is "regular" update, because it would depend on the length of investigation. What we do ask is for the investigators to provide us with regular updates so if there is anything that we can confirm or update the individual on at that point, we would do. In terms of when a whistleblowing complaint is being closed down, we would share as much information as we can, but we would have to protect confidentiality in terms of individuals' personal data. It does set out in the policy what we will do and what we will not do and the reasons for that.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Is it consistent across everything or is there different for different cases?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

It is different. So with whistleblowing in terms of a bullying/harassment, for instance, or a grievance, we are able to give more information on that because individuals will have been informed. It is simpler in terms of if somebody has made a complaint against somebody and somebody is responding, that information will be made available if it goes to a hearing, for instance, or the outcome of an investigation, whereas, your whistleblowing may be slightly different.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

When it comes to closing cases, what is the ...

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

We would inform. We would inform somebody of the outcome of the actual concern, that it has been investigated. We confirm the outcome and then we would confirm the closure of the case. Again, this goes back to having external bodies. In the whistleblowing, so if somebody is not satisfied, they have got an option to go externally at that point.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

So that is like an appeals process?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Not an appeal process. That is not an appeal process, but if they are not happy with the response that we give, then the care commission or children's commission or the Commissioner for Standards, for instance, they would have the option to go there.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Would they be signposted to them or is it up to them to go and do the legwork to ...

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

So we would signpost.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

You would signpost? But there is not a formal appeals process?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

No.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

When it is closed, it is closed?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Closed.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Thank you. How are concerns about retaliation addressed in the whistleblowing policy? Is it something that is monitored? Are there any procedures for anti-retaliation?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

We would take it seriously if there was retaliation as a result of a whistleblowing or any kind of concern being raised, to be perfectly honest. If that was then investigated, it could be that that is investigated under a disciplinary process - sorry, it is quite a few policies/procedures here - but it would be investigated under that. If it was seen to be found, it will go to a hearing. We would take it seriously.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Is there anything in place to stop it happening in the first place? Or is it more a case if it happens, how it is dealt with?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

We would have regular meetings. If somebody raised a concern to say that they felt as though they were being victimised as a result of raising a concern, we take it seriously at that point and put measures in place.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Are there processes in place for providing ongoing support to whistleblowers?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes, and we also have counselling. We appreciate that it is really difficult sometimes for people to raise these kinds of concerns in any matter. In those circumstances, we have an E.A.P. (Employee Assistance Programme). We also have counsellors that we can refer to, so they have counselling services. We can provide them a mentor or a support person if they are going through a difficult time as a result of making a concern.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Thank you. Can I ask you about a scenario where perhaps somebody has raised a whistleblowing concern, it has been investigated, perhaps the outcome, maybe it is to their liking, maybe it is not, but everybody is still in their same positions working together, what happens then? Are they just expected to get on with the job? Is there support if the person who maybe blew the whistle wants to move somewhere? Do they get support with redeployment? How does that work?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

If it was difficult for the individuals to be in the same area, what we would do is we would mediate; we would offer mediation. We would bring in mediators to do that mediation process. Worst-case scenario, if somebody felt as though they could not work in that department again and they wanted to be redeployed, we would make every attempt to redeploy. But we would want them to stay within that department, they may be specialists in that area, so we would do our very best to ensure that mediation worked.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Thank you. Do you have a view about publishing anonymised data or lessons learnt following resolved cases of whistleblowing, as well as reporting aggregated statistics demonstrating openness and continual improvement?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

No objections whatsoever; I think that would be helpful. What we are doing is, in terms of line managers, the case management team do anonymous cases as well. For case management and H.R., what we are thinking about is doing that more across the board in terms of learning but especially in terms of disability discrimination cases.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

That is providing an example of cases that happen so people can see what a case looks like and they have learnt from it?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Maybe scenarios.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Scenarios?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Thank you. Do you ...

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Turning to grievances, I will pick up with the same question as Deputy Stephenson on whistleblowing, which is around publication and understanding the form and function of where they would be. Do you consider that the same applies when it comes to publication of either - you used the word "scenarios" - to grievances as it would to whistleblowing?

[13:15]

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

I do not see that we would have any objections to that, as long as we did not make any individual identifiable or ...

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Has any of that happened yet?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

We supply a report to the States Employment Board on a monthly basis in terms of all of our cases. We do that within case management and H.R., not effectively across the organisation, but it is something that we can do.

Assistant Chief Minister:

My only slight reservation is because of the very small numbers of people involved, it is quite hard to redact the data to a high-enough degree that people are unidentified. But other than that, yes, I support the concept of producing lessons learnt and themes.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

They could be something perhaps you found that could be accessible by staff who could then use that as - again, back to earlier questions about triage - a frame of reference for what fits where?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

We also have training. In terms of our line managers where we do scenarios, so it will be examples of cases that we have had before.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Looking to the policy itself, it has gone through a range of updates, minor and perhaps also somewhat substantive - 8 over the last 4 years - what have been the different drivers behind amending the grievances policy since 2022?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

I would say the feedback as a result in 2022, HR Lounge. We would have amended our policies at that point but any feedback in terms of what works and what does not work, we take that into consideration, and we go through a process in terms of updating our policies as a result of that. In terms of union feedback, if unions feed back and say something is not working, we reconsider that and have meetings. Then we would update policies as a result of that. Legal changes: if there are legal changes that are required, we would update our policies as a result of that as well.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Have some of the changes that we have seen been from, in particular, union feedback? Was that in those cases reactive to their contacting you or was that proactive from discussions that you tried to have with unions?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Both, if I am being transparent. In terms of, some of it is because case managers will say something is not working and something is envisaged, or it will be that unions contact us. Now we do have regular meetings with the unions where they can raise these concerns. As a result of that we will look to make changes to policies. As an example, the 5-day fact find in the grievance policy is no longer because, again, it added complexity in terms of timeframes. That was a result of union feedback as well.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

This might be a detailed one, but as one goes through a grievance process and gets to grievance outcomes and a decision, it sounds like perhaps some of the changes to policy have come through those who have gone through the grievance process themselves. Is it currently a formal part of the grievance outcome to notify those who were part of the reason for a change, that they have driven change in the policy? It is a small element but it is about those feeling recognised that their experience through a process has delivered improvement within the organisation.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

I would say not necessarily in all circumstances, no.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

I dare suggest we have a 9th amendment soon. Looking to some of those amendments and the clarity, September 2025, policy was changed to say: "Amendments to clarify certain parts of policy." For those who might be employed and aware of the policies, how do they navigate, knowing what has changed? Do they have access to old copies? How would somebody know what has changed between one version and the next?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Normally in terms of the policies, there is a tab at the top of the policy that you can go on and it should show you what has changed in the policy. So when we have made a change in terms of ... you can see a date change; it should say. What we have done in terms of the new whistleblowing policy, the communication that is going out to all staff, we are saying what the major changes are as well because we have taken on board the feedback from our line managers, unions and colleagues. As a result of that we need to better communicate, we need to better train.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

The phrase I used was from that heading table. I presume if it does not specify much, the employee should read that that is a minor change, perhaps it is not ...

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

So back to your point, Lesley, about better communication, have there been changes that have been so substantial that it has been worthwhile to communicate more broadly than S.E.B. and, if so, have those communications taken place?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Without specific examples, it would be difficult for me to say ...

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

The policy has not changed so broadly since 2022 that there has been a need for an internal ...

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

The grievance policy has.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

It has?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes, absolutely.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

You feel the changes have been substantial enough to communicate?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Were those communicated broadly at the time?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

I do not know, is my answer. I can confirm and come back.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Okay.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

They were to unions.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

They were to unions?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

But not necessarily to all members of staff.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

That is part of, as you were saying, your learning?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

As part of the learning, yes.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Your learning, okay. Looking back to the panel's People and Culture Follow-up Review, it highlighted some feedback from trade union members that, this is a quote: "Certain individuals were exploiting the process' extending investigations beyond the allocated 5 days." That is in relation to the 5-day fact-finding window for the Government grievance policy. What is your view on the existence of any systemic problems within that? Are they being dealt with or do you see a different thing on the ground to the feedback we received when ...

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

No, the feedback is ... I do not agree with the exploiting but I would agree that they are not 5 days, they tend to take longer. I think when we are in a clinical environment, it is difficult to do it within 5 days, especially when we have got a shift. Again, it is people being accessible as well and participating. So I think there are a number of reasons for that but I do think that we need to be re-emphasising that the 5-day fact find was there for a purpose. That was to deal with matters very quickly, and to identify if there were actual concerns that needed to be progressed formally or close it down really quickly. The experience from a case management point of view is that the 5-day fact finds are not necessarily 5 days, they can take some time.

Business Partner, Case Management, People Services:

I would agree with that. For the reasons that Lesley outlined, it can be because people are not available, particularly in a clinical setting or due to annual leave or parental leave or things like that. In an ideal world, the 5-day fact-find exercise is to assess whether something should be progressed to a formal stage or a formal investigation - that is the purpose of it - or whether it can be resolved

informally. I suppose within the grievance process, removing it from that just removes that additional layer with an emphasis on a 14-day informal resolution without having to undertake that 5-day fact find. If that cannot be achieved, then it progresses to a formal investigation process, so it removes that stage.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

The reason it was initially put in though was we were doing quite a bit of work in terms of a just culture, so restorative practice. Again, the emphasis was dealing with these matters informally, so if something had happened, it was not about punishment. In a clinical environment, we want to encourage people to come forward. That was the purpose of our being a just culture in that: "Please do come forward" it is not going to mean that we are going to go to a disciplinary process at every single point. So from that point of view, that is why the actual 5-day fact find was put in. That was to close things as quickly as possible. It may be that somebody has not understood a policy or a policy needs changing or we need to provide more training. There were different matters there rather than always going to a formal process, and that is what we wanted to change.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

But that 5 day is still in the policy?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

For the disciplinary policy, yes, not for the grievance policy.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

It is not for the grievance? Okay, great. Then just looking more broadly to the grievance policy - we are still on lessons learnt - but to what extent are you satisfied that grievance policy and grievance handling more generally is in the state we want it as an organisation? To what extent can it still improve?

Business Partner, Case Management, People Services:

I think from experience so far of implementing the policy, we have certainly seen a more fluid and streamlined process in following this compared to the policy in place before, so removing the resolution panels. The 5-day fact-find element just means that the case progresses much more quickly. I think if asked, employees would be quite satisfied with that in terms of the speed in which things have been progressing compared to people who may have experienced it before.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Just to pick up on that last line "if asked", are we asking at the moment a lot? Is the feedback we are getting reflective of that?

Business Partner, Case Management, People Services:

This policy is fairly new, so we are still working with people currently who have not concluded in those processes, so it probably would not be fair to ask them at this stage for feedback. Perhaps in the coming weeks and months, it would be appropriate to.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

But under previous iterations of the policy, you were collecting that data, you will continue to collect it in a semi-formal fashion, and then that reports to S.E.B. Is that the process?

Business Partner, Case Management, People Services:

Well we receive feedback from unions and through line managers and others. We would continue to receive that feedback presumably and ...

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

As a result of that feedback, policy does change. Or if there is information that would have been helpful to individuals, then that is what we include in terms of our toolkits as well. So they are not just based on the employer, it is about the employee as well.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Thank you.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I have just got some questions about the Jersey Employment Forum report and specifically around the introduction of the public interest disclosure regime. They published 24 recommendations relating to the introduction of whistleblowing legislation in June 2025. Could you just give us an update about government's progress in relation to that particular workstream?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes. The Minister for Social Security will be producing a report to the States on 16th March off the back of that Employment Forum recommendation and consultation. Of course, any further developments will be for the next political term.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

What generally was government's view on the report and recommendations?

Assistant Chief Minister:

We would not want to open the presents before Christmas Day and allow you access to that. The report made for interesting reading. What I would say is the feedback from the survey results were a very small cohort of people. While the representative groups were the usual people who have got a keen interest in this, I think the consultation perhaps could have been a bit wider. But, yes, the Minister for Social Security will be bringing that report.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Do you think the recommendations in your view went - obviously with your involvement with the States Employment Board as well - far enough in terms of addressing the challenges?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes. I think if we look wider for businesses in the community, we have got to see how that would fit, having an Island-wide policy. I do not want to steal the Minister for Social Security's thunder, I am not sure if that would work in the wider community. As ever, we are leading the way on this and we are showing how it should be done properly. It will be for the next Assembly to make those decisions.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

The report said that the majority of respondents of the consultation suggested that having a policy should not be mandatory and the forum agreed with that.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

They considered that whistleblowing policy should be maintained on a voluntary basis. You have already said about the limited number of consultees - I cannot obviously second-guess what the Minister for Social Security is going to say - but do you think maybe the consultation should be revisited?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Having served 11 years on the forum, it could be quite difficult to get good quality in-depth responses. For me, that was a particularly small number. It may be just purely that it did not hit people's buttons, it was not something that they felt to be important. So, yes, I guess with any of these things, there is always a possibility of re-running that survey.

The Chief Minister:

I think the report will lead to more consultation; I think that is necessary.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes, it is interesting to hear. The reason that we raised it, the next set of questions we were going to ask you, what your views were on elements of the Jersey Employment Forum report, particularly around question 9.

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

That is the size of the business where it would apply to?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes, because we went back to the Jersey Employment Forum, as a panel, in preparation for this hearing. We asked them what the split was for the number of respondents that supported the introduction of mandatory whistleblowing and those against and they declined to answer. They said: "We published the report." We were trying to understand, so it is helpful that you tell us that there was a very small number of consultees.

[13:30]

Assistant Chief Minister:

There was.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

The questions that we were going to ask you were about the context how the Employment Forum had concluded that whistleblowing policy should not be mandatory. From what you are saying, I think obviously we have got to wait for the report.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Wait for the report. I think more work will need to be done, to be fair.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That is very, very helpful.

The Chief Minister:

I think the report is about promoting best employment practice, really, at the end of it all. Then the debate of whether it is mandatory or otherwise, we need much broader consultation on that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes. Do you think that the recommendations and proposals will improve employee confidence or do you think they need a bit more work?

Assistant Chief Minister:

The driver behind this is to improve employee confidence, that is what it is all about. It is just how that is put in place, does it have the weight of legislation, does it just have a voluntary signup? There are still lots of questions, to be honest with that, Chair.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So basically we will wait until 16th March and then ... well it will not be for us, it will be for a new panel to have a look at those.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Yes, exactly.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But that has answered some of our questions, thank you.

The Chief Minister:

I think it is fair to say that the report will signal the start of the process rather than ... yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes, that is very helpful. In that case, we have come to the end of our questions, so we have not done bad, just over an hour. Did any of the panel have any other things that they wanted to follow up on?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Was there that one?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Sorry, we do have a last question. Thank you, Deputy Curtis. Finally, Chief Minister, can you explain how the cross-departmental collaboration is encouraged and decision making co-ordinated in relation to whistleblowing and grievances?

The Chief Minister:

Well part of the new policy is significantly-improved communication now. Do you want to explain how that is done, Lesley? That is pretty much at the heart of everything, including the grievance policy, all of that, is we need to improve communication.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

It is the cross-cutting element, is it not?

The Chief Minister:

Yes.

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

It is also in terms of having the whistleblowing protection officers. If somebody does not feel as though they can raise something within their department, they can go to a different department to raise those concerns.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

With one of their whistleblowing protection officers?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

How are those whistleblowing protection officers going to be recruited? I know it is not a separate post, it is something that somebody would do as part of their day-to-day employment. Are you picking on people or are you asking for volunteers?

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

No. So each Chief Officer has to nominate somebody who they think would have the time and the experience and capability of being those whistleblowing protection officers. We are also organising training for those whistleblowing protection officers as well to make sure that we have got consistency in practice and approach.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

What makes them different to a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian on a smaller level? Why have you chosen a different ... are they the same thing but with a different name or ...

Chief People Officer, Cabinet Office:

The Freedom to Speak Up Guardians are predominantly known in a health environment, in terms of the U.K. and it being brought in Jersey. It may not be recognised across the whole of the Government, so that is why ... and it was about protection. So if people are raising concerns, we want them to be known to have protection.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Thank you.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Can you see any crossover with the introduction of a Public Services Ombudsperson in improving employee confidence in terms of whistleblowing?

The Chief Minister:

I think the role of the Ombudsperson would be slightly different because the Ombudsperson would investigate the failure, I presume, of the process rather than being involved in the process, so I think the answer is probably not.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. In that case, I shall close the meeting. Thank you very much.

[13:34]