

APPOINTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT FORUM MEMBERS

Background

The Employment (Jersey) Law 2003 (the 'Employment Law')¹ provides that the Employment Forum (the 'Forum') consists of eight members and a Chair, who must be appointed by the Minister for Social Security (the 'Minister'). Provisions for appointment are set out in Schedule 2 to the Employment Law.

Members must be appointed having regard to the desirability of securing an appropriate balance between members with experience as employers, members with experience as employees and members with other relevant experience.

It is vital to provide a balance between introducing new perspectives and skills to the Forum, as well as providing continuity amongst the membership with the retention of knowledge and experience. Forum members are usually appointed for an initial three-year term and may request to be re-appointed. Although not falling under the remit of the Jersey Appointments Commission, the Forum operates in accordance with the Commission's guidance² which states that "members of independent bodies should not normally be appointed for terms in excess of nine years".

Background to the Employment Forum

The Employment (Jersey) Law 2003 (the 'Employment Law') provides for the establishment of the Employment Forum. The Law states that the Minister shall refer matters relating to the Employment Law, as the Minister thinks fit, to the Employment Forum for their consideration.

The Employment Forum shall, after considering those matters, make a report to the Minister which shall contain the Forum's recommendations about each of those matters. Before arriving at the recommendations to be included in their report, the Employment Forum shall consult –

- (a) such organisations representative of employers as they think fit;
- (b) such organisations representative of employees as they think fit; and
- (c) if they think fit, any other body or person.

Vacancy

There is currently a vacancy on the Forum for an employee representative member. Appointment of an employee representative member will bring the Forum up to full strength, as provided for in the Employment Law. The Forum is keen that a successful candidate in this round should have experience in particular of trade union activity and representation of union members.

¹ Paragraph 1, Schedule 2 www.jerseylaw.je/laws/revised/Pages/05.255.aspx

²

www.gov.je/SiteCollectionDocuments/Government%20and%20administration/P%20JAC%20recruiting%20guidelines%20160706%20JP.pdf

Recruitment campaign

An advertisement was placed in the Jersey Evening Post, on the gov.je website and on social media platforms. It was also notified to a range of bodies, including Citizen's Advice Jersey, the Chamber of Commerce, the Law Society and trade union representatives. As a result of the recruitment exercise, one application was received. This candidate was invited to interview.

The interview was conducted by the Chair of the Forum, Carla Benest (an independent representative), Claire Kingham (an employer representative) and Mark Richardson (an employee representative).

The Forum's main priority in its selection of members is to maintain diversity within the group; the Forum must ensure that its membership covers the widest range of skills, expertise and industry types possible. The Forum also seeks to ensure that members have recent knowledge and relevant experience of employment relations issues, as well as an interest in employment policy and legislation. The interview panel is satisfied that the successful candidate has a broad range of appropriate skills and experience to bring to the Forum.

Mrs Maureen Byron (Employee representative)

Mrs Byron's career in the public service began as a manual worker at Fort Regent, where she also worked as an employee representative for Unite the Union. In that capacity she dealt with a wide range of employee issues on behalf of the union membership, including the mediation and successful resolution of employment complaints.

Mrs Byron moved within the public service, taking up a variety of positions, principally in the field of Human Resources, case management, advice to employees and significant work in the field of occupational pensions. She is currently working on a part-time basis as an HR Business Partner in the public service.

Mrs Byron also has experience in the private sector, including in GP practice management.

Mrs Byron describes her strengths as working well with a diverse range of people and issues, developing strong relations with teams and involvement in a range of specialist subject matters, including working with pension boards, academic contacts, legal advisers, law drafting and taxation experts.

The panel is of the unanimous view that Mrs Byron's experience and expertise make her well-qualified to join the Employment Forum as an employee representative member.

Mrs Byron has indicated she would be pleased to accept appointment, should it be offered, and has been invited by the Chair to join the Employment Forum, subject to Ministerial approval, for an initial three-year term, to begin on 1 July 2024.

Recommendation

That the Minister for Social Security appoints Mrs Maureen Byron as an employee representative member of the Employment Forum for an initial three-year term from 1 July 2024.