

2.6 The Deputy of St. Martin of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the publication of a Performance Improvement Plan for H.M. Prison La Moye:

Following inspection carried out in La Moye Prison in June 2005 by her HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, one of the main recommendations was that a performance improvement plan should be drawn up setting priorities and time targets for action. Will the Minister inform Members when the plan was published, the reasons for any delay in its completion and when will it be made available to States Members?

Senator W. Kinnard (Minister for Home Affairs):

I received the final version of performance improvement plan on 18th August and the plan is a very comprehensive document which, of course, had to be completed by senior managers at the prison without any additional resources. It, therefore, took a little longer than was anticipated to complete. Clearly the inspection report and the plan have identified shortages in resources to undertake the current task of running the prison. So, by implication, the completion of the plan was a considerable extra burden on the prison to complete. The plan runs to some 53 pages. The presentation to the staff of the prison, the prison board and visitors and others closely involved with the prison, is to take place on 19th September. A presentation will also be made to the Council of Ministers on 19th October, followed by a briefing to scrutiny and States' Members later in the month. At that point, Sir, the plan could be made available to the press and wider public.

2.6.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Would the Minister confirm that in fact a team of officials was brought in from the U.K. in order to lay the groundwork for the plan?

Senator W. Kinnard:

We had an officer that we brought over. Originally we wanted him to be seconded, he has replaced the position of the unit manger to assist with the plan and we use our local people to do the plan. We have had advice and so on from colleagues in the United Kingdom but this work has been completed - the hard work of this has been completed - by staff while still trying to run La Moye Prison.

2.6.2 Deputy J.A. Martin:

In a meeting that the Minister had with the Social Affairs Scrutiny Panel she said the plan would be costed in the next few days, and this was 2nd August, but would likely to be in the region of £700,000 to £1 million. Could she confirm these figures and could she also tell the House whether they have been approved by the Council of Ministers? Thank you, Sir.

Senator W. Kinnard:

The plan has been costed and so it is roughly in the region of just over £1 million and the Council of Ministers has not had an opportunity obviously to discuss the details of the plan or the implications of those costs but I believe will do so on 19th October.

2.6.3 The Deputy of St. Martin:

Given the importance of the performance improvement plan, which was really the crucial most central part of the recommendation following a visit made in June last year, is the Minister satisfied that all the right amount of time and consideration was given to it, because it does seem to have taken a long time for such an important document to be made available?

Senator W. Kinnard:

I think it is essential that such an important document is done properly rather than to dash something off because of the impatience of certain members of this House. I will remind Members that in the United Kingdom, in England and Wales, prison governors are given £500,000 and are given someone to lead the drawing up of the performance improvement plan on a consultative basis. It is not the prison governor in England and Wales that has to sit down and compile the plan and cost it, as indeed has been the case here. I think, Sir, that we ought to congratulate the prison governor and the staff of La Moye for their achievement in completing the plan while continuing to run the prison without any of the extra resources I have just described that are available to their colleagues elsewhere. In any case, Sir, I do believe that there are big strategic issues in terms of the funding of the prison and the funding of the performance improvement plan which will take rather longer, I believe, to be sorted out in terms of how the Council of Ministers seeks to deal with it than the next couple of days or weeks.

2.6.4 Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Would the Minister not agree that the performance improvement plan, as recommended following the inspection in June last year, is something that should have been produced by the prison management anyway without having it recommended to them?

Senator W. Kinnard:

No, the performance improvement plan is quite a new thing even in England and Wales. It was a recommendation, as we are aware, of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons. The existence of a performance improvement plan was not something, I believe, that could have been at all drawn up without the independent inspection and

the recommendations thereon for us to act upon. As I mentioned, Sir, the performance improvement plan concept has been something relatively new, even in the prisons of England and Wales.

2.6.5 Deputy I.J. Gorst of St. Clement:

It is an important piece of work and I personally congratulate it happening even if it is somewhat late in the day. The Minister has just said to us today that the initial costings are looking like being just over the £1 million mark. I would like her to confirm that this money is incorporated into the business plan that we are going to be discussing and that the money will follow the plan. Thank you.

Senator W. Kinnard:

The money is not incorporated in the business plan. There is no funding identified in the business plan as drafted for the performance improvement plan and that is why a special meeting is to take place with the Council of Ministers to talk through the implications of the funding shortfall. Not just in terms of the performance improvement plan for the prison but the shortfall that generally is apparent in the Home Affairs budget.

2.6.6 Deputy J.A. Martin:

Just to press the Minister slightly, Sir. The £1 million, or just over £1 million, that it will cost, would that be a one off payment or will this be continual because it is quite a lot of money and we are discussing the annual business plan and into the future today? Thank you, Sir.

Senator W. Kinnard:

The performance improvement plan, that is an ongoing revenue cost. There are, of course, as we know, capital implications but most of those I believe, or a huge part, is already in the capital programme. Many of the issues have been absorbed or will be absorbed within existing resources but there is still the outstanding of around £1 million ongoing revenue costs to implement the performance improvement plan which, at this stage, I have to say, Sir, is not in the business plan we are discussing today.

2.6.7 Deputy S.C. Ferguson of St. Brelade:

The Minister has been complaining about the lack of resources. Does the Minister not feel that perhaps the allocation of resources between all the departments that comprise

her fief ought to be reviewed? There is evidence with the Fire Department, the activity has dropped but the budget stays the same. There is evidence of spending of remaining budgets being spent in December so that the budget is used up for the year. Perhaps the Minister should undertake a much closer financial review of the finance in the department?

Senator W. Kinnard:

I have to say that the budgets of Home Affairs across the departments has been gone through with a fine tooth comb, not only by myself and my officers but also by officers of Treasury. In fact, I was complimented just recently on the efforts that we have made to stay within budget and, indeed, leaving aside the performance improvement plan, it looks as if Home Affairs will be able to just about stay in budget this year. But we will have severe deficits from next year onwards. As to anecdotal bits of information and evidence, I prefer if the Deputy was to give me firm indications of any concerns or evidence she has because we are absolutely committed to driving out inefficiencies in our department and keeping our costs to a minimum. I believe, indeed, Sir, that we have done far better than just about any other department that you can think of.

Deputy S.C. Ferguson:

May I just assure the Minister that we will be in touch with her about this?

2.6.8 The Deputy of St. Martin:

I think the general public, and certainly States' Members, myself included, find it very difficult to know that it always seems difficult finding money for the prison yet it is quite simple to find £27,000 plus to bring police officers over from U.K. for events which really do not require it. Has the Minister really got a grasp of the priorities within her own ministry?

Senator W. Kinnard:

I really am rather tired of this sort of sniping which really is inappropriate because clearly if we had not policed the event properly and there had been a problem with getting people away from the event I would be standing here being pilloried by the same Deputy for not doing what we did. We assessed risks, we act to protect this community to the best of our ability and to be frank, Sir, the gaping hole in the prison budget is not going to be fixed by the £27,000 that we have spent in order to protect this community. I really think, Sir, that it is about time that some of these Members really, if they do have issues, come to me, explain what they are, give me the evidence and I am quite happy to go through it in detail with them, and with my officers. But

to stand here week after week with sniping at my heels over little nit-picking, frankly, bits of questions, I am really rather tired of it.