

3.7 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the ‘civilianisation’ of tasks currently performed by States of Jersey Police Officers:

What further opportunities, if any, does the Minister see to civilianise tasks currently performed by police officers?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand (The Minister for Home Affairs):

It is the intention of the Acting Chief Officer of Police to civilianise tasks currently performed by police officers as much as is possible consistent with operational efficiency and this policy has my full support, but it can only be done once the necessary civilian staff have been recruited and trained as experts in the relevant field and where statute law so allows. The types of areas which could be involved would include work on crime scenes, logistical support for investigations, prisoner handling, missing persons’ inquiries and many other similar duties.

3.7.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Could the Minister assure the House that in other areas, for example, human resources, I.T., general administration, there is, in his view, no overlap and there is a clear use of civilian staff where such staff are available and uniformed staff are therefore devoted to fighting crime and working on the streets?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

Certainly in relation to human resources, the staff are, in fact, supplied by the Home Affairs Department so they are civilian staff. I cannot say that in all the areas outlined by the Deputy that there may not be police officers currently involved but we are in a process of ensuring that we reduce the unnecessary use of police officers. There are very good cost reasons for this. The approximate cost of a police constable with pensions and everything else is £55,000 a year and the approximate cost of a civilian officer is normally about £35,000 so the service is highly motivated to make changes where it can appropriately.

3.7.2 Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier:

Would the recently announced loss of the force’s youth liaison officer and the reality that the community policing aspect of the force is unable to deliver adequately due to being overstretched, does the Minister concede that this youth liaison post might offer some considerable potential for development in the future?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

I have spoken to the Acting Chief Officer in relation to that particular change. The officer involved, of course, retired from the force and then joined Prison? Me! No Way!, in fact, so he was not made redundant, he just moved job. I am concerned at the difficulties being experienced by the police force in terms of community policing in the form which has been happening in the past. What I am being assured is that a new model of community policing is going to be looked at and the acting leadership is clear that it wants to continue to support community policing but it will likely be done in future in a different format.

3.7.3 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Would the Minister not acknowledge that he has not answered the question with his customary exactitude? Would he define the number of posts he is looking to move to

civilian work as opposed to general reassurances? Secondly, would he not say that the solution often lies in lateral thinking, for example, reducing the paperwork burden on officers and dealing with issues like the fact that only apparently 3 speeding allegations can be processed an hour?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

I entirely agree with the comments about lateral thinking and it is for that reason that I entirely support its reorganisation. The reason I have not given my customary detail is I do not have it. I was provided with detail in the form of the types of post, not in terms of the numbers of posts that might be involved.