

4.13 The Deputy of St. Martin of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the funding of the historic child abuse investigations:

Will the Minister inform Members whether additional funding has been required in relation to the historic child abuse investigations and, if so, why; how much have the investigations cost to date and who is monitoring the expenditure?

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

The position is that for 2008 and 2009 additional funding of £6,827,514 was required. Additional costs of £190,100 have been incurred to date in 2010 making the total additional cost £7,017,614. In addition to this costs of £1,182,291 have been met from within the States of Jersey budget to date bringing the total cost in police terms to £8,200,535.

4.13.1 The Deputy of St. Martin:

It has been alleged that there has been a lot of mismanagement of fees, *et cetera*... of monies: has the Minister to date found any evidence to support that allegation that monies were misused and really wastefully expended during the course of the investigations?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

This question of course brings me directly into one of the issues in relation to the disciplinary matters which I am currently involved with and so I cannot really answer that question definitively because I am conducting disciplinary proceedings. But it is no secret that there are allegations of financial mismanagement.

4.13.2 The Deputy of St. Martin:

I am grateful for the fact they are just allegations but nothing has been substantiated and I am sure that they will not be substantiated. Can I ask the Minister who has oversight from the Ministerial side, does the Minister have that close Ministerial oversight of the expenditure or is it just primarily left down to the accounting officer?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

I did omit to answer the last part of the question, which I will now do so. Financial management of the inquiry is currently overseen by a multiple-agency Gold Strategic Co-ordinating Group. The Chief Officer of the Home Affairs Department is the accounting officer but the management system is now run through a Gold Strategic Group. These are essentially operational matters and not a matter for the Minister to get involved in.

4.13.3 Senator A. Breckon:

I wonder if the Minister could confirm that he has commissioned an independent inquiry into the financial probity of the Haut de la Garenne inquiry and has received the results and is not yet able to release them?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

That is correct. In addition to the disciplinary investigations I commissioned an auditor's report in relation to financial management. I have seen a draft of this but I do not believe that the final report is yet available.

4.13.4 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Could the Minister tell the House what the monies expended this year have indeed been expended on? Secondly, could he confirm that one of the financial reports came from the Wiltshire Constabulary and could he confirm the dates at which this report is likely to be put in the public domain?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

Matters in relation to the historical abuse inquiry in terms of prosecution are still live and it is correct that one of the disciplinary reports which I received related to financial management issues. It is unlikely that I will be able to put matters relating to the disciplinary report into the public domain until after the date of resignation of the current Chief Officer of Police which is 20th July this year.

4.13.5 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Follow up. I wonder then could the Minister outline what the purpose of that report is and what he will be doing with the information contained therein?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

I assume by the words “that report” Deputy Le Hérissier is referring to the Wiltshire Report. That is a disciplinary report, which I have considered and will shortly be meeting with Mr. Power as part of this disciplinary process, following which meeting I will determine what, if any, disciplinary charges he faces in that area.

4.13.6 The Deputy of St. Mary:

Can the Minister confirm therefore that Members are going to be faced with the debate and vote on the appointment of the Acting Chief Officer as Chief Officer without seeing, apparently, any of the Wiltshire Reports, even though selected extracts have been on the front page of the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)*?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

Selected extracts have not been on the front page of the *J.E.P.* The *J.E.P.* have not seen the contents of any of the Wiltshire Reports. What they have done is seen outside of the document, but they are most certainly not selected extracts. Now I have forgotten what the first part of the question was because I felt it necessary to repudiate the second part.

[11:30]

The Deputy of St. Mary:

The first part of the question was it appears from the answer the Minister gave to Deputy Le Hérissier that Members will be faced with debating and voting on the appointment of the current Acting Chief Officer as Chief Officer without seeing the Wiltshire Reports.

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

I have made it clear that I will continue to put back the date of the debate on the appointment of the next Chief Officer until such time as I am in a position to put substantial information before Members of the House. In written questions I have declined to be penned-down as to precisely what I could put out in what form because I do not know that as yet and I am taking advice on that.

4.13.7 The Deputy of St. Mary:

May I ask a supplementary? The Minister claimed that the front page of the *J.E.P.* was not based on the Wiltshire Report but I thought, and my memory serves me correct, it definitely said, both the headline and the text, referred quite clearly to the Wiltshire investigations and that Power had been found to be “at fault”.

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

The question that I was asked, and the allegations put by the Deputy of St. Mary was that there were extracts from the Wiltshire Report contained in the *J.E.P.* article. There were not, and that is what I said previously. The Deputy has now changed the wording of what he is saying happened and, frankly, I cannot now remember what the change of wording was, but it was changed.

4.13.8 Deputy M. Tadier:

As a Member of the Council of Ministers, would the Minister agree that the scenario for Haut de le Garenne is a salutary reminder of how a lack of investment, financial or otherwise, can come back to haunt us many years later at great cost in human and monetary terms and does he agree that it is also a warning of the dangers of short-term balanced budgets?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

I think that what it does tell us is that we must do much better in the future and that means that I hope that I will be receiving support from Members for the financial aspects of the Sex Offenders Law, and also the vetting and barring schemes because these, frankly, together with improved work in a children’s service and in the police force in the Public Protection Unit are key to improved level of service and safeguard of young people and vulnerable adults.

4.13.9 Deputy M. Tadier:

Does the Minister agree that we effectively reap what we sow? If we allow neglect of our vulnerable children we can only expect many years later that this is an inevitable consequence with tragic human consequences and perhaps, more importantly, for certain States Members, a financial cost?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

If there are failures in the system to protect young people or failures in the system of care for young people, then there will undoubtedly not just be personal tragedies in individual lives but also significant financial costs later to society.

4.13.10 Deputy T.A. Vallois:

Could the Minister advise at what stage or specifically the date in the investigations that the management group that he mentioned was set up and how much the management group has spent with regards to the investigation since the setting up of this group?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

I cannot give a precise date in relation to the setting up of the financial management group. I think, from memory, it was in autumn 2008, but I am not precisely clear on that. I do not have a precise breakdown of dates. What I can say is that the figures for expenditure for 2009 was £2,305,515 plus £379,000 of police time within budget and I have given the 2000 figure already. But I cannot give a breakdown precisely. I would need to have a written question so I could give precise figures on precise dates.

4.13.11 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

In fairness to the suspended police chief officer, is the Minister happy with the length of time this process has been drawn out, or would he in fact say the length of time it has taken is a scandal?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

I am not happy with the length of time that matters have taken. As I have said repeatedly, I have now been for some time in a position where with the complexity of the disciplinary matter it is clear that the procedure could not be completed prior to 20th July. That is a regrettable state of affairs but the investigations were very thorough and took a great deal of time and there were other reasons for delays at different times.

4.13.12 The Deputy of St. Martin:

I can understand him saying he has difficulty answering some of the questions because they are operational matters, but if indeed the Minister for Home Affairs has difficulty answering operational matters, can I ask the Minister then who has political oversight for Home Affairs?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

The Minister has responsibility for political oversight of the police, there is no question about that, but this Minister will not intervene in operational matters while they are taking place. That is a fundamental constitutional principle to which I hold.