



Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Home Affairs

WEDNESDAY, 9th DECEMBER 2015

Panel:

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour (Chairman)

Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier

Witnesses:

The Minister for Home Affairs

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs

[13:34]

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour (Chairman):

Good afternoon, everybody. Welcome to members of the public and media in the gallery; nice to see you all there. There are some notices here: basically, switch off your phones, please, is the main message there. We are the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel and this is the quarterly public hearing with the Minister for Home Affairs today. Welcome, Minister and welcome, Assistant Minister and your officer. My name is Deputy Louise Doublet, I am Deputy for St. Saviour District 2, and I am the Chair of this panel. Unfortunately, I have to give apologies for my vice-chair, Deputy Maçon, who cannot be with us today, and also our officer, Mick Robbins is not here today, but we are very lucky ... perhaps you could introduce yourself?

Scrutiny Officer:

Sammy McKee, Scrutiny Officer for the Environment Panel.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you, Sammy, for joining us.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier:

Deputy Sam Mézec, St. Helier No. 2.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Deputy Christina Moore, Minister for Home Affairs.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

Constable Deirdre Mezbourian, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Tom Walker, Chief Officer with responsibility for Home Affairs.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

So we have got a few questions to get through today. We will aim for a 3.00 p.m. finish but we have got a bit of flexibility, I think. What time would you need to be away by at the latest?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

That would suit us perfectly fine, thank you.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Shall we say 4.00 p.m. at the absolute latest; I am sure we will not need that long. Minister, have you read and understood the statement in front of you?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I have, yes, thank you.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I am going to just pass over to Deputy Mézec for the first question, which is question number 12. I think that is the only change we have made.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Simply because it seems sensible to just get it done and out the way. It is about the Prison Board of Visitors Review, which we have done and handed you the report. We have an indication of what your response is now. Could you just state what that is for the record?

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, as we discussed on the radio together some weeks ago now, it seems, we accept the recommendation of the panel, we are very grateful to the panel for their report; it is an extremely useful piece of work and we have made the necessary steps to introduce a fully independent Board of Visitors.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

What do you envisage the timeline being?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

We hope that should happen over the course of the next year, really, with perhaps a shadow board at some point so that there is an element of crossover, with the new board being fully operational hopefully by January 2017.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Excellent. Do you foresee anything that could potentially complicate things along the way that might delay it, or does it look like it will be a reasonably clear path?

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

I think we would say at this stage it looks like a reasonably clear path.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The only hurdle I can imagine would be if people do not come forward and want to take part, but I think we have a very strong voluntary ethic in the Island and I am sure we have other similar boards and groups that are well-populated with an interesting balance of people and I am sure we will have an equally good and solid cross-section of people coming forward to take part in this.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Will this come to the States Assembly for a vote and do you have any idea when that would be?

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

I believe that the current Prison Board of Visitors exists by virtue of both secondary regulations and also in the primary Prison Law and so the change can only happen with a change in the law which

the Assembly would need to vote on. So the intention is that at the start of 2016 we will start the process of law drafting as to what those provisions would look like with a view to getting them lodged during 2016 and then seeing what the Assembly's decision is, and then we will take it from there. So, yes, the Assembly will get to vote on the legislation that brings about the change.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, that is it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you. Just to thank you all again for your participation with the review and we are pleased that it has been a success, so thank you for that. So question 1 on your sheets. How is the new Police Headquarters coming on, please?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, we are looking forward to attending the topping out ceremony, which I think is 7th January next year, so you will gather from that date that things are running very well; they are running to time and on budget also. At the moment I think we have not been able to physically visit the site, which is a great shame, just due to time, really, but the cells and the ground and basement levels are generally in place and working on building up from the ground at the moment.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

On the last public hearing we had you were aiming for March 2017 for the date that the police would move in. Is that still on track?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Brilliant. Any further questions on that? I did want to ask about the parking, which we discussed at the last hearing, and I think you were still in discussion about the parking. I think you said there was some parking that was allocated, but it was unclear whether it would be still that the public would have to use paycards to go and visit the police or whether there was somewhere they could go and park for free to just pop into the police station. Are you able to have those free parking spaces for people visiting the police station?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I am not aware that we have reached a decision on that yet at this point, I am afraid, but the Chief Officer has just suggested, which I think is a very fine suggestion, that you might wish to attend the topping out ceremony on 7th January.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

That would be very nice.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I am sure that you will get an invitation.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Then you could examine the parking facilities at the same time.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

We will examine it closely. Yes, I think we would be pleased to attend that, at least some of us. Thank you. So could you keep us updated on the discussions with the parking spaces? I think that would serve some public interest, so we would like to hear about that, please.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

That is all I have got on that one. So now we are on to question 2 on your sheets. Deputy Mézec?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, I think this is one that we inevitably have to ask given events over the past weeks. After what happened in Paris with the horrific attacks there what, if anything, has been done in terms of our own border and security services, just to be on the safe side?

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, well, I am happy to answer that. Clearly the Jersey Customs and Immigration Service work very closely with our States of Jersey Police officers and both agencies are in regular contact with the French authorities, even without the terrorism attacks in Paris, so that is part of their day-to-day working. There is obviously an exchange of information and intelligence-led plans are implemented, but following specifically the incident in Paris, the initial response really involved all flights and sailings from the continent being closely monitored by the Customs officers and States of Jersey Police Special Branch officers. Stop-checks were conducted on all passengers and vehicles arriving

from France and also unaccompanied freight. What was also introduced was 100 per cent swiping of passports of travellers arriving from outside the C.T.A., which is the common travel area. The 100 per cent swiping of passports is the same as is being effected in the U.K. (United Kingdom) with all arrivals from outside of the common travel area. There are routine patrols of the ports and the airport being undertaken by Special Branch and Customs officers, and they are supported by a very noticeable uniformed presence of Customs and States Police, and that is continuing and will continue.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

We spoke about Customs and Immigration service in January at the last hearing and you mentioned that a new rent arrangement had been agreed with the Ports of Jersey, which had given you leeway in terms of allocating budgets. Because of what has had to be done recently, has that added extra pressures in terms of what resources you are able to allocate?

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

I think it added extra pressure, but it is being managed within the resources that are available and, may I say, managed well within those resources.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

In future then when further reviews are done in terms of how services are being managed and funded, where do you see that going for the Customs and Immigration service? Is it going to continue to be funded at the current level or are you going to have to continue to make savings, bearing in mind last time I think you spoke about the difficulty in how staff-cost-heavy the budget currently is?

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes. That applies to all sections of the Home Affairs Department. My concern has always been with Customs that they have been underfunded. In fact, this is where Scrutiny plays a very interesting role, because some years ago, when I chaired your panel, we undertook a review into Customs and our recommendation was to increase the staffing levels, and that was taken up by the Minister at the time, and levels were increased. Now, it is really my intention to not see those levels reduced. That is one of my aims as Assistant Minister with delegated responsibility to ensure that we do not reduce down. But we are managing vacancies and things like that, and we will have to review because there will be funding pressures, but I will do my best to ensure that physical ...

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

I was going to add that one of the things that the post-Paris attack has really shown us has been the strength of the multi-functionality model, both within Customs, the fact that the Passport officer is also a Customs officer is also a Borders officer, has really come into its own post-Paris.

[13:45]

With introducing, for example, 100% passport checks, that is just a lot more officers at ports and harbours clearing people. So the ability to pause work in, say, the Passport office and for those officers to join a frontline Border team to deal with that. The same with the police, who have also made a lot of progress on multi-functionality and every officer having more than one role and the secondary role again means that if you have got to up your Border force and you have got to deploy on standby more armed officers, and those sorts of things, well, you have got a lot more multi-functional officers to call upon to do that, to respond. So I think it has been quite good to see that investment over the years in multi-functionality in Customs, and more recently in Police, has started to really pay dividends.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes. I think it is important to emphasise that obviously there needs to be, and there is, a very close working relationship between the Customs service and the States of Jersey Police, and they are exploring areas of potential closer working which we are waiting to have some updates on.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

That sounds interesting. We would be grateful to be updated on that.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

In terms of finding efficiencies as well, Customs and Immigration are one of the leading departments in the States of Jersey in terms of Lean management and, really using that skill base that they have within that department, they have been able to find efficiencies and are constantly working on finding newer ones that continue to innovate and evolve the service.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

You mentioned 100 per cent passport swiping for people coming from outside the C.T.A. Has that resulted in extra detections of people who are known by authorities to potentially be at risk of committing a crime, or anything like that?

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

Can you rephrase that? I am not quite sure that ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Presumably, when you swipe a passport, if somebody who should not really be coming into the Island, the screen will flash up red or notes come up that this is someone who maybe an eye needs to be kept on, have you detected any more people as a result of 100 per cent swiping, then? Sorry, I should have phrased it better.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, I understand; as a result of passport swiping. I am not aware of that but it is something that we can make enquiries about and get back to you on. It has not been reported to us that that is operational, but we will check. I do not know.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

I was just thinking the same as the Assistant Minister. We have had no reports that any numbers have gone up that we are picking up people who would otherwise ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Which is good news.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

It is. It confirms what we thought about the degree of threat and hopefully it also transmits to people coming into our borders that the standard is very high and that we are not a soft option; that it is a very hard option to try and come through borders that are so well screened.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I think that will be very reassuring to the public to hear that. Thank you, good question. Carry on.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

No, I have not got anything I want to ask.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Nothing else, okay. So you said they are checking passports from people outside the common travel area. Are there any plans to require identification for people going to and from the mainland? Because I do not think you have to have a passport, do you, to go, say, on the ferry to the U.K. and back? Is that something that you think should be introduced?

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

That is all part of the common travel area which at the moment does not require any form of identification or checking for us to pass within that. I do not know if the U.K. authorities are looking to make changes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I think in the Isle of Man they are starting to do that, so ...

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

Okay.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

There are 2 separate things: the travel providers themselves sometimes require I.D. (identification) so, as we know, some of the airlines require I.D. because they wish to check that the person who has bought the ticket is the same as the person who is travelling, for their own reasons. So different travel providers take slightly different policies, but that is different to having the authorities introduce, essentially, fixed border controls and implementing checks. At the moment the common travel area is enshrined in law across the Republic of Ireland, U.K., Scotland and all 3 of the Crown dependencies, and that guarantees freedom of travel. As you know, that builds upon the ancient constitutional right of the Islanders to travel unhindered between here and England, which is one of the oldest constitutional rights that Islanders have. So, at this stage, we are not picking up any firm plans from others to change the common travel area law, which would need to be changed across all the jurisdictions.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

So the ferries and planes can ask people for passports but you cannot request them to?

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Yes. But what I would say is that that does not mean that there is not necessarily, therefore, information on people who are travelling, which is something slightly different. So you might not have your passport checked if you are travelling via a certain airline to Gatwick, but that is different to not knowing who is travelling.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

We have recently passed an order in the States Assembly which will require - I think it is from March next year, from memory, and this is under the C.T.A. - that all passengers will be required to provide their advanced passenger information to the relevant airline or travel carrier. I am sure you will be

familiar with providing that information through airlines already, and that will come into force for us at some point next year.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

But it is not a border check.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No, it is not a border check.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

No, okay. What is your view on that situation? Do you think more needs to be done there to tighten up security?

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

More than we are doing?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yes.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, I think everything that we are doing is reflective of what has been done by the U.K. border control agency. I am not aware that we need to be doing anything more, but we are in regular contact, as I say, with the French authorities and the U.K. authorities, discussions are going on all the time at an operational level, so if anything was suggested from the other countries that we needed to consider, then that would be considered.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

You will not be surprised to learn that the Police and Customs here are quite well connected in with U.K. agencies, including counterterrorism agencies, and others, and I think that if we were to receive intelligence that travel within the common travel area was causing risk to anyone, either in the islands or in the Republic of Ireland or the United Kingdom, then that would most certainly be acted on.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Do you have access to the level that you are happy with for people that are coming in? Can you access criminal records and things like that?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

We would not but the relevant departments share information.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

There is an exchange of information between the agencies at the very highest level and intelligence-led plans are implemented as and when they are recognised as being necessary.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

As you will know from cases where people are either stopped or where prosecutions occur, a lot of that is intelligence-led, be it people trying to move illegal drugs around or be it people trying to move around the common travel area who the authorities are looking to either track or apprehend. So the intelligence-led systems seems to work quite effectively at the moment and Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle and Man all form part of that British system to combat organised crime, serious crime and counterterrorism. So, yes, where there are people who are put on watch lists or stop lists, then we are able to implement those locally.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you for that. Anything to add?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

No, that is it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Let us go to question 3, please, the money question. Minister, how will you deal with further cuts, should they be asked of you, in the second part of the M.T.F.P. (medium-term financial plan)?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, as we have outlined previously, we are constantly working on improving efficiencies within the department and officers, and I think we are going to talk later about the new model of policing which, as well as being a response to modern life and ensuring that the police are responding to demand as it currently is within our community, that also will hopefully form some efficiencies in terms of improving working practices. The Assistant Minister has mentioned that there is an element of protection required in some areas of the department and so we will be looking at other areas to ensure greater efficiencies and to find those savings. But a lot of work has been done. We can go on and describe the model later or we can talk about that now, as you prefer, but generally there is a great feeling among staff and in the department that people are rising to the challenge of providing best value for money to the public and best possible level of service as well.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Let us keep it quite general at the moment. There was something that I think we were quite concerned about that came up from the M.T.F.P. hearing and when we were talking about the budget generally. The quote from your Deputy Chief Officer of the Police was that if further savings were required then ultimately they would have to make savings from their staff budget. While we are on the police, I was going to say this when we were talking about the new operating system, I just wanted to declare for the record that I am living with a serving police officer and if you would like me to withdraw and for Deputy Mézec to take all of these questions, please say, otherwise ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

We are grateful for your declaration and, I think, content to continue. As I mentioned, across the department we are very staff-rich; the vast majority of our budget is composed of staff cost, particularly high in the Fire service but, equally, I think about 85 per cent of the Police budget involves staff cost. So ultimately that is an area where efficiency drives may have some impact. However, we also have a need, because if there is a crisis we cannot call upon a force from next door, they simply are not there, we have to ensure that we can deal with all emergencies and keep the public safe at every possible opportunity. So within that there are currently initiatives elsewhere whereby the Police and Fire service are assisting each other and there is some crossover in training, so it is worth looking at systems like that. At the moment it is very much at an early stage and almost keeping an eye out of pure interest on what is going on and what is good practice and what trends are being followed by other services in other parts of the world. Also, we have the opportunity to use modern technology to our best advantage because at the moment the police officer still goes out to work with his notebook and pen and that is very much out of date. A bid has ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Or her.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Quite right; thank you for your correction. So there is a bid currently in for money to introduce a mobile technology element to policing, which would enhance what the police do, keep them out on the street as a visible presence rather than being called back into the office to complete the necessary paperwork that is part of the job as well. Also that should cause some efficiencies as well in terms of the time it takes to process work.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Just to be clear, is it iPads or similar kind of tablets that the police will get?

[14:00]

I think that might be something that the public would look at and think: "Well, we are in difficult times financially and the police are getting iPads" but you are saying it would create efficiencies and in the long run they will save money for the department and for the taxpayer?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

If it is accepted, and it has not yet been so, it would very much be an invest-to-save opportunity. Because if you consider the time it takes to handwrite a witness statement, for example, and then to duplicate those statements when you could automatically put that into a hand-held device and send it back to the office electronically, it is a no-brainer, really, in terms of the time it would take to process simple parts of work.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Did that come from the Lean process? Where did that idea come from?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

This has been something that officers have been working on for some time. They have been out and looked at other examples elsewhere. I guess it would follow Lean principles but it is purely part of a modernisation process.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Can you give us a rough figure on how much you would be asking for for that growth, basically?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I do not have that figure to hand, I am afraid ...

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

I am racking my memory; I think it is around a million pounds. I will find out.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yes. Maybe we could have that by email. We would appreciate that. Thank you. Do you want to follow up on ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Not at this time, no.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

No, okay. I am losing where we are now ... that was question 3, so we have kind of gone into question 6, really, have we not, as well?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

We have a little.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

That is fine. We will stay on that a bit more. Sorry, let me just get my train of thought back.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I was going to ask something a bit more general.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Go on, then. I am sure it will come back.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Within the entirety of the Home Affairs Department, are there any areas or levels where you would be prepared to categorically rule out any redundancies on the basis that that service, despite any different styles of management, or whatever, simply could not be done with fewer people in post? Are there any areas you are prepared to do that?

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Could I just clarify, do you mean making people redundant or do you mean just reducing staff numbers? Because obviously staff numbers tend to get reduced through natural wastage not through making people redundant. I just was not sure whether it was redundancy or reduced staff.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Specifically redundancy, and I do not include in that moving somebody from one sub-department to another sub-department of people. Are there any areas where you are prepared to say: "This service needs this amount of people and in any cost-cutting exercise we will not be prepared to reduce those numbers in that area"?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think the key part of Home Affairs, about keeping the public safe, and it is very much their frontline services, so I would say that we could not give you a definitive answer to that question because it is not a question that we have considered as yet. But our primary objective is to maintain frontline services and to protect the public, and so our very best endeavours are always being made to ensure

that we have the people there. We have already described the high percentage of each budget that is composed of staff cost and it is absolutely understood that those staff, that have dangerous and difficult jobs sometimes, are there to do the work.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Could you identify specific places then where you are confident that the level of service simply could not be maintained with fewer people in those posts and you would be prepared to say that the staffing numbers there will most likely stay as they are?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No. I think I just said that we have not completely considered it in those terms but what I did describe earlier was the fact that, out of pure interest at the moment, we are looking to other services and other places where new roles are being created and new synergies are being created between services. We already have it here to an extent where the Fire service have trained to undertake some paramedic duties so they can be first responders and assist people, if they need, with first aid. So that, perhaps, is something that we might be seeing more of in the future across different services, but it is not a question that we have fully answered as yet but there are many things to consider at the moment.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Can I ask you on this: the Deputy Chief Officer of Police informed us that there were 213 police officers at the moment and through natural wastage the number may drop below 200. He went on to say he would be concerned if it got to that 200 point. Do you know what the numbers are now? Are they reducing and will you try to keep that floor of 200 officers or are you recruiting or increasing them?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The current figure remains as it was at that point, I think; 214.5.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay. That is one more then ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

213.5 I think is what we have.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I am pretty sure this week it was 214.5, so I do not know where the extra one has come from.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay. We found an extra one somewhere.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Or maybe 2 halves.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I am trying to remember, it might be... It is a difficult figure to give a precise answer to. There are different ways of looking at it and different people will always have a different approach. As we described, there are alternative ways of making efficiencies in terms of saving officer hours, in harnessing mobile technology and so I think it is too early to say how that could impact on the number of officers required to fulfil duties. As we are also going to describe potential work in terms of the new model of policing in responding to what current demands are in modern society, it is a constantly evolving process.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay. Could we have updates as we go along? Obviously we are coming to the second part of the M.T.F.P., we are really keen to see things as they go along so we would really appreciate updates as they happen.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Only yesterday we received our briefing about the new model of policing, but one of the questions we asked at the time was whether at a relevant point you could be briefed and I think it would be helpful for you if you could receive that.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

I was going to say that that is the important context because I think the Deputy Chief Officer has a view that it starts to get difficult to run the current model on any less than those numbers but not the new model, and so it all depends on the model that is adopted. So the work on the new model really becomes important when you start to look at numbers and the balance between different sorts of officers as well.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay, thank you. We would be interested to hear that. Just on money again, on funding, I was wondering about ... obviously there has been extraordinary circumstances over the weekend and

this week where your resources are being heavily used to search for a missing person. How has this affected your budget and will you have any help perhaps from contingency funding given it is maybe an extraordinary event?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, sadly every year there are some circumstances that arise that do put pressure on the force at times like this and so there is an element within the budget that it does allow for these extraordinary circumstances that do unfortunately occur from time to time.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Is that sufficient for this particular operation?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think it would be too early to say at the moment and the emphasis at the moment is very much all hands on deck and making sure that the circumstances are dealt with and everybody is out getting involved in the search. For example, you will note there were a lot of questions today about the police force in particular, but we do not have any members of the police force here with us for that very reason.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Anything you wanted to add on that particular operation for the public record?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, it is a very concerning case and we are watching it with great interest but thoughts go out, obviously, to the family and relatives of the young man. It must be a very troubling time.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

How are the agencies working together?

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

I have got some information on the Fire and Rescue service who have been assisting with obviously the States of Jersey Police with this, and they have cancelled all non-urgent work and called in off-duty fire fighters to provide the maximum amount of assistance that they could do. What I have been told is that a total of 25 fire fighters, including whole-time retained and fire safety personnel, have been out searching and working alongside the other agencies and volunteer teams. They have deployed their drone, 2 water rescue teams under the guidance of the police search advisers, so collaborative working. Today they have deployed 2 water rescue teams, a fire fighter search team and their drone, so ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

All hands on deck then.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

It has been all hands on deck and, of course, from the Fire Service point of view, the fire at Gallichan Marine, their fire fighting operations began early morning on Monday and they ended at 6.00 p.m. on Monday, and subsequently they have had fire investigators undertaking the investigation work again working alongside the States of Jersey Police, C.S.I. (Crime Scene Investigation) teams and the insurance loss adjustors. So I have been told that I will be kept updated with any further developments; I hope there are not too many this week, but that is what they are there for, is it not? That is why we have them. That is all part and parcel of what they do and they are trained to be able to deliver these services.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yes, it sounds like they are working very hard to respond. Minister, you mentioned that in Jersey we have a very strong volunteering ethic and I think some of the public felt they really wanted to help with the search and I am sure there are reasons why; could you explain the reasons behind why perhaps volunteers were not able to take part in the search and if there is anything that people who wanted to help could do if they wanted to help?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

That, I am afraid, is an operational question that I would not be able to answer.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

I mean the police are taking advice from the National Crime Agency on the very best way to conduct a search as quickly as possible so they took that advice early on. They followed that advice because that was the way in which they stood the best chance of being able to find the lad within the 72-hour period. They have now moved on to the next stage and again they are taking advice from national agencies on the very best way of following the search. So they have had to approach it following national best practice and in accordance with the advice they are getting and that is designed to maximise the chance of being able to find the individual that they are looking for. So my sense is that they have done what they are supposed to do but I think they have been really grateful for the work that Islanders have done particularly around the area and checking there and buildings, in checking their own land and property. I think that is really important and has been really helpful. Also I just think a lot of the searchers have been lucky to benefit from people providing them with sustenance and refreshments. There are a lot of Honorary Officers out there as well who are working as part of the team and keeping them going. It has been important.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

That might be the way people can help. If they want to join the Honorary Police maybe we will see a surge in volunteers now, because they obviously are called on for things like this. We are very grateful as an Island to have ...

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Yes, really just highlight the importance of those honorary roles in the system; incredibly valuable. Also the Jersey Search and Rescue team again which is a voluntary thing. A lot of the people from the services volunteer to do that and they have all turned out day after day as well, which has been fantastic.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay, thank you. With that we will move on to question 4. What is the progress of the strategy on ending violence against women and girls, please?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, this is a strategy that is being worked on very closely and I think it was fantastic over the last 2 weeks to see so many members of the public and States Members wear a white ribbon, which was a great symbol of the support that there is publicly for tackling violence against women within our community and reaching the principles of the Istanbul Convention. So there is legislative work going on behind the scenes. The Bill Team is working on the sexual offences law and those updates as well as domestic abuse legislation and there is policy work going on as well. Monitoring and review as well of current services and provisions in that area and our timeline remains sort of end of 2016 moving into early 2017 for adoption of the convention.

[14:15]

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I think in the last hearing we had, I think it was the June one, we touched on this strategy and I think it was in conjunction with the cybercrime legislation, and we were asking whether you would be consulting with States Members, because I think we know there are lots of States Members that are interested in these issues; some of them with particular regards to the cybercrime thing and crimes against women that go online. Have you consulted with other States Members on that or will there be an opportunity for States Members to talk to you about it?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Once the work has developed and at a stage I think that would be a very valuable thing to do, yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

So kind of next year, middle of next year, or ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, hopefully we should be at a good stage by then.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

The white ribbon campaign that you did, what lessons have been learnt from that or what things have been highlighted and is there any follow on that you will be doing from that campaign?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think the campaign itself is really a call to people to enhance awareness of the issue. I think I have still got one of the cards in my pocket, a reminder to ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Remember to commit.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes. Well, exactly. Your memory is much better than mine. But I think it was a very powerful message and I was really impressed to see so many people wearing white ribbons wherever I went. So I think it will definitely be repeated. It is an annual event internationally and I would imagine given the success of this first event that it will be continued.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay, thank you. Deputy Mézec, question 5, please.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes. So C.C.T.V. (closed-circuit television) which is something that has obviously come up a little bit. Just for the record, what are your proposed extensions of the town C.C.T.V. systems?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Do you want me to run through individually because it is available online, I think, as part of the consultation that the police has ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I am obviously conscious of time. If you think it is helpful to do that then please do. If you think it is better to just be a bit more general. then ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes. I think if I can talk in general terms it might be more helpful because there is a long list but there is a webpage that is dedicated and you can see the map of the town and the locations are defined on that. We can also arrange for a briefing for you as well if you would like. Unfortunately Chief Inspector Beechey could not be here today. So, in general this is to bring this C.C.T.V. system up to date. It was first introduced in 1995 and people's movements around town change because different venues have become popular and different areas of town therefore have a greater footfall at different times of the day or night. So the consultation is really to respond to those changes in public habit and also to look at other areas. So Gorey and St. Aubin are also included in the consultation.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

This obviously came up in the States last week and we have got the *Hansard* in front of us here. There were questions about appropriate signage.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Was it facial analysis features? Was there something about that?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I think also number plate recognition or something like that on cars. Yes, what is the position with that?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Okay. So I think a lot of the questions were based on the previous scrutiny panel's recommendations in their report, which is extremely helpful, and there was some particular questioning about a couple of those recommendations. So the facial recognition is in some places, in the U.K. for example, that have very sophisticated systems of C.C.T.V. usage which allows the cameras to identify visual features of members of the public and to pinpoint whether the movements of those people, whether they are making unusual movements, whether they are going backwards and forwards or whether there is something suspicious about their presence. Those features will not be used here, and that was really the point that I was making in the States Assembly last week. The only sophisticated level of technical ability, for want of a better phrase, is the A.N.P.R. (automated number plate recognition) which is the number plate recognition. That, of course, is being used in Jersey but purely for number plate recognition which is quite a simple process.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

So you said the facial recognition aspect of it is not being used. So do the cameras have that capability and you are just not using it or are they different cameras that do not have that capability?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I would expect that there would be different cameras that would require a greater level of investment.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Yes, the advanced video content analysis, apparently it is called, and our cameras do not have that.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

So you could not just switch it on?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

It is not a great happening, is it? I wanted to ask, you were not able to answer one of Deputy Southern's questions about the use of these. I suspect the question may be redundant given what you said but the question he asked was: would you be required to bring a proposition to the States allowing cameras to use facial recognition and number plates? Given what you have just said, I suspect you would not in any event, but ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is not an issue.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

It is not an issue but if you did want to would you be required to do that or could you do that by ministerial order?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Even if you were not required to would you, as the Minister, bring it, or ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Hypothetical, but it is useful to know just in case.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, it does seem like a reasonable thing to do. I am not sure what the ... I would have to look at the legislation around that. I have not yet.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

I mean it is possibly more of a political question than a legal one. I guess it might depend upon the Minister at the time and the prevailing public mood at the time and the degree of public concern that there might be. I guess if the rest of the world had gone to advanced facial recognition 10 years previously and everyone else was using it and the public were not at all concerned then it might have become a non-issue by the time it is introduced in Jersey. Equally, if we are a pathfinder then you can imagine the public would be much more interested and therefore they might want their elected representatives to take a view on it. I think it is going to depend on the timing more than anything else.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes. Previously Ministers for Home Affairs have brought things to the States that they have not needed to do but they have done it because they considered it the right thing to do. That is something that, given the topic and the feelings it might stir up among the public, you would be prepared to do that if it seemed politically the right thing to do.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It would be sensible to look at what is done elsewhere and whether that process has been followed.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

I suppose my only note of caution, if in 10 years' time it is so routine and accepted and no one is particularly interested amongst the public, then it is all about time with technology, is it not, and how much public concern and interest there is?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Any more?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

No, that is it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay, thank you. I think we have covered number 6 and 7.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes. Well, we will just say what they were in case there is anything subsequently that rises. Number 6 was about the States of Jersey Police moving towards a new operating model and the question we have got written is: what does that mean, exactly? We have spoken about it a little bit before

but is there anything you want to add to that? Any points that we have missed out on that report for us and for the public record?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Just really that a great deal of work and thought has gone into developing this new model of operating and looking at levels of public demand and understanding exactly what calls police receive and what is the greatest focus of their work so that they can best provide their own resources in terms of people and ability and training to respond to the public need.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Can I ask you; if there are members of the public with mental health issues, is that something that the police come across and need to deal with? Are there sufficient agencies and provision for the police to pass on to?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, a lot of work has been done recently with the Mental Health Strategy and the police have fed into that, but they do on a regular basis deal with people who have mental health issues and the police custody cells are currently used sometimes as a place of safety for people who might be having a particularly difficult episode where they need to be in a place where they cannot cause themselves any harm. This does require a significant amount of resource in terms of a police officer being there to ensure that that person is safe from harm.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

I think one of the interesting things with the police looking at their new operating model is that they have noted that, while recorded crime is going down, the demands on the police are getting broader. What they are finding is an increasing amount of their work is very resource-intensive from a policing point of view but does not result in a crime or recorded crime and includes safeguarding vulnerable adults, children cases, people concerned about not having heard from a neighbour, people worried about a relative and wanting the police to check on them. There is a whole range of new demands on modern-day policing which are not about combatting crime but have become part of the police role. I think the new operating model is very much about how the police respond to that change in demand and they have started looking at what their new operating model should be by looking first at how the nature and type of demand has changed over time. Gone are the days where people will be ringing them up all the time about having their car broken into and instead they have got to deal with this broader range of kind of safeguarding activities that they are asked to do and, of course, the cyber world and the criminality moving online and being done via a new media. I think that changing pattern of policing demand and the demands made upon them has very much been their starting point, and then trying to work out how many officers of what type, organised in what

way do they need to respond to that, because I think in the last 10 years the world has changed a lot for the police.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

So how does that interact with other departments, then? Maybe you can update us on any parts of the Mental Health Strategy that you think will help with these issues and do you think anything needs to change with the place of safety and the safeguarding things.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

We will start with a place of safety and ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Sorry, that was a lot of questions.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

If I can just excuse myself ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

That is fine.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is well-known that we need to find a much better solution than we currently have but all credit to the police for doing their very best to make the current situation work really. So it is anticipated that the new place of safety will be in the new hospital. However, of course, that is perhaps 8 to 10 years away, so work is being carried out to see whether we can find an interim solution. I would very much like to find one. Of course the new Police Headquarters will provide somewhat a better facility.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

But the Mental Health Strategy itself has a paragraph in it which commits to setting up a new standing grouping of the health professionals with the Home Affairs professionals so it establishes a new kind of grouping and committee that will meet on a regular basis bringing together the police and prison with officers from Health and Social Services to make sure that these issues are taken forward, perhaps more proactively and in a more joined up way than they have been and we thought that was a very positive development and a new strategy.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

When would that group be formed?

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

It has just had its first meeting, I understand. Yes, one of our officers from the executive sits on that along with people from Prison and Police and from Mental Health, and I think they have just held their first setup meeting. So it is early days but I think that should be a forum through which all of these things can be agreed between the agencies in a way that perhaps has not happened before.

[14:30]

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Could we possibly be updated on that one, have a briefing or just some feedback on how that is going? Because we are aware that is of great public interest.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

There is also a lot of cross working. You look through M.A.R.A.C., the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference, which brings together all of these agencies at very regular intervals and so there is a lot of cross agency support and sharing of information. Obviously the M.A.S.H. (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) has been a great step forward.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

So many acronyms.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

There are, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I just want to enquire further about ... you said the place of safety at the moment is the police cells and the police do their best with providing that and it might be slightly improved in the new police station. I wanted to ask firstly what will the improvements be in the police station and then I would really like to know what happens when people who have mental health issues in that place of safety, who are they then referred on to? Where do they go and what facilities are there for the police to refer them on to if they need further help?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

That is quite a detailed question ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yes, and it might be slightly outside your ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is slightly operational I am afraid but in terms of the new Police Headquarters offering better facilities it is very simple really, that the cells will be modern and meet modern requirements and standards in terms of light and ... yes so ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

So some improvement but obviously when the hospital is built it will be ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Have you been to the police station and been shown the custody ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yes, the current one.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, you had to be there at some point so ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I saw the cells. Yes, where we got to see the cells.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Slightly unnerving being in there though.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

At the moment in the Island there are really not many options and so using the police custody suite as a place of safety should only ever been seen as a stopgap, and I think generally now best practice across the British Isles is encouraging everyone to move away from using police cells as a place of safety. Our colleagues in Health and Social Services are fully aware of that and it is really just how quickly a better facility can be provided hopefully as part of the new hospital project.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

This new group hopefully will be looking at that.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Yes, and the new group are looking to see whether there is a better interim solution and there is not an obvious one but whether we can make that work a little better in the new police station.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is an area where there has been learning from other places as well and perhaps about a year ago now, West Midlands Police came over to speak to the States of Jersey Police and other interested groups. I know that that was about how they have been dealing with mental health cases and I think there had been an incredible reduction in the number of instances where they have used places of safety within West Midlands Police. It had reduced from 1,000 to 5 within the space of 2 years, I think, of just changing the way that they deal with people and approach the situation. Yes, so there are lots of lessons to be learned and lots of ideas shared well.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

We will, hopefully, be able to get an update on that group. I think we better move on from that. Sorry, I went slightly on a tangent there.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, it is a very interesting area. It is a topic which is a very important.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Crept in a little bit to number 10, possibly.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yes, slightly. So we have covered 6 and 7, do we think? I think we have.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Sure. Number 8 is reasonably specific.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yes, go on.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes. This one is about something we touched upon at the June hearing which, as was explained to us, is not the simplest of things, just in terms of practicalities and law drafting, but we were asking about the Police Force (Jersey) Law updates and associated areas, in particular Chief Officer disciplinary. We were told that you would be very surprised if, by the next hearing, you were in a position to be launching whatever changes you want to make. So are we going to be surprised or ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

It was general performance and discipline provisions.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

It is. I think to be fair to the Minister I should probably take this one because the Minister signed the drafting instructions a long time ago, or her predecessor did, and it is very much with officers to complete the drafting at this stage for the Minister to review and approve.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, it is reasonably technical.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Yes. Where are we up to? The short answer is that most of it has gone very well and we would anticipate being in a position to provide that for the Minister to review towards the start of next year after which, if the Minister is content with the work that we have done, then that should get lodged during the first half of 2016, hopefully. But you are right, there are a number of pieces of work which is why it is a reasonably large project. So there are regulations which are to do with the Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer, so that is appointment, discipline, suspension, dismissal; you know, a whole legal regime for appointing and dealing with the discipline of the Chief Officer and the Deputy Chief Officer and that flowed out of some instances in our history where ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I think we may have heard of them, yes.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Yes, where that needed to be improved. So there will be regulations for the Assembly to consider. There are also some regulations coming forward which formalise the arrangements for other people to perform essentially police functions. For example, that would be civilian staff in the Joint Financial Crimes Unit who are expert financial crimes investigators, perhaps with a background in accountancy and similar backgrounds, who are really conducting investigations alongside police officers. So that needs to be formalised in some very specific areas like the financial crime investigation, through regulations. Then there will be some orders for the Minister to make which are to do with the performance of police officers. So at the moment if a police officer underperforms in their role then that is only dealt with through the disciplinary provisions, but what you are trying to deal with is underperformance, not a lack of discipline, and so there will be a whole new set of rules that are do with the performance of a police officer so that that can just be dealt with separately and so that that is clear. Most of these things are fairly straightforward in that we, as officers, just need to draft them and then the Minister needs to review them and the order to do with the performance of police officers would also need to be run past the Police Association to make sure that the officers themselves are content with the arrangements which are being proposed. So that might take a little

bit of time as well because the Police Association is bound to want to have a think about it and come back with comments as well. So that is all going well.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Could I ask if the idea of performance-related pay comes in at all to this?

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

No. This is just to do with underperformance.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, sure. So neither surprised nor concerned and you will keep us up to date, presumably.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Yes. No, it is on track and we have not hit any really difficult problems. We have only hit ones of the difficulty we anticipated.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, just technical difficulty which requires time, sure. Okay. I do not have anything else on that.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

You can move on.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay. Again, I think we have slightly touched on this before. We were asking if the Minister could provide the panel with the law drafting instructions for the cyber bullying legislation, which we spoke about in June. Should we be slightly concerned in that it is possible to go into areas that we possibly should not be speaking about in public?

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

It depends whether you want to talk in general or whether you want to deal with specific provisions. If you want to deal with specific provisions then you might be better off ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I do not think we do want to do that. I think we would rather keep it general for now because we need to go through it with a fine tooth comb and see things that have been drawn to our attention, unless there is something you want to draw to our attention that is not appropriate to do with the public. That is your call.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No. I think I would just like to expect that the law drafting instructions that we have shared with you are the cybercrime law drafting instructions and the cyber bullying, per se, comes under the telecommunications law which is with the Economic Development Department. So it is quite easy to confuse the 2 but it is a quite complex document, that. So I can appreciate that you will need a little time but we can arrange a briefing for you; that could be easier to do.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I think that would be ...

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

For the public record I think it is possible to know the drafting instructions have been provided to you, you have got those in confidence so that you can see all of the law officers' advice on how the law should be refined. It is worth noting perhaps that the changes themselves were driven by the Financial Crime Strategy Group, which is a group of senior officers, including myself, who primarily advise the Chief Minister who has responsibility for financial crime, but in this instance the specific kind of computer misuse law has always been a responsibility of the Home Affairs portfolio although back in history it would have been the Home Affairs Committee, and then the Defence Committee before that, which is why this particular provision will be a matter for the Minister for Home Affairs to decide whether she is content. The law itself, as you will see from the law drafting instructions, is designed to bring us into compliance with the Council of Europe Convention on cybercrime which is a convention which is recommended by MONEYVAL and the Financial Action Task Force. So it is not mandatory but it is recommended and our view was that now that our compliance with the Financial Action Task Force is reviewed by the Council of Europe's MONEYVAL then they might be a little bit keener for us to become a party to that particular convention. In terms of progress, it is perhaps also worth mentioning that the law itself has been drafted now following those instructions and it is a relatively straightforward piece of drafting because the instructions were quite specific. Again, if it would be helpful to you, outside of the public forum, for us to share the actual draft law with you then we can arrange for that as well and then you can see how the instructions have been transposed into law. Then if you have any concerns prior to lodging you can perhaps let us know and we can meet separately to discuss them. Otherwise the law will be reviewed by ... the next step is for the draft law to be reviewed by the Law Officers' Department to ensure human rights compliance and after we know that it is human rights compliant then it will be submitted to the Minister for review after which it will be lodged. Then, of course, once it is lodged it is in the public domain and of course obviously you may or may not wish to scrutinise it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Well, we can discuss as a panel, can we not, and we will let you know, and I appreciate that.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

But we would be very happy to share the draft law with you as well and that would be helpful in determining whether you want to do anything prior to lodging in terms of discussions, then. We would be quite happy to do that.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Sure. That briefing would be helpful if we could do that, sure.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

That is it for me on that.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I think have asked you this before, about the communication and the interaction between E.D.D. (Economic Development Department) and your department given that there are 2 pieces of work that do interact. How is that going?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Very well. There is an officer who I meet when an issue arises I wish to discuss, and also obviously I see my ministerial colleagues on a regular basis and am happy always to discuss matters with them.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay, thank you. Let us move on to question 10 now, please; this is on victim support. Can you advise what the situation is with witness and victim support in Jersey please?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Absolutely. Well, there are a number of different bodies providing different kinds of support from different perspectives in the Island at the moment. There is a witness charter, which I am not sure whether you have seen. I can share my copy with you if you wish.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

You have got almost as much paperwork as we have today.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is amazing, all of the background information.

[14:45]

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yours is very neatly filed though.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

That is not down to my own good organisation; I have to give somebody else the compliment there. At the moment that is the case. You have got, for example, Victim Support Jersey which is grant aided by charity. Jersey Women's Refuge, another grant-aided charity and there are Independent Domestic Violence Advocates who are known as I.D.V.A.s, another acronym that you will enjoy. They have been, until recently, based within the Public Protection Unit. They have just, in the last week or so, moved to Probation to enhance their independence. They are funded by the States of Jersey Police and I think you will remember their funding came to the States a while ago.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

What was the name again?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I.D.V.A.s, Independent Domestic Violence Advocates. They started off as 2 part-time members of staff and each of those 2 people now work fulltime so that gives you an idea of the level of work.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I think we may have even met them.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

We did on our tour.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

You have met an I.D.V.A. if not both I.D.V.A.s.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

They do really important work but their move to Probation is quite symbolic because it enhances their independence but also, as part of what we are trying to do in terms of providing more of a unified victim support service, it completes it. That is something that the Probation Board particularly have been working on. They do not come under Home Affairs but they keep me briefed on their

work and it is something that I support because I think it is estimated that about £210,000 worth of public money is spent on various victim support services from different departments.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

200-and ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

£210,000 annually. That is what we think is spent on victim support services.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

So across the charities that you have mentioned and some of the department ...

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

And the police.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I have not mentioned everybody, of course. That was the variety of different groups and bodies who all do really good positive work.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay. You said, was it, witness support, I think was the first body that you mentioned and you said it was grant ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Victim Support, sorry.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Victim Support, sorry.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I mentioned the Witness Charter and ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

That is it. I am getting my acronyms ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

... Victim Support Jersey.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

You said that was granted-aided, did I hear that correctly?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, it is a grant-aided charity so part funded.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Where does that come from?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The grant will be from the States of Jersey. Victim Support Jersey, I do not think it is from our budget. I am not sure which ... it must be Health and Social Services Department maybe. Jersey Women's Refuge also receive some grant aided funding.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Do you know if those grants will be maintained for the rest of the M.T.F.P.?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

That is not something that ... I think for 2016 I would presume that would be yes but they are not within our budget.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

It depends on the source of the grant. I mean it might be that they are funded through Channel Islands Lottery. It might not be directly from a department; it might be via lottery funds.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yes, okay. How do we find out which department? Is that something you could readily find out for us?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I am sure somebody in our Policy unit would know.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

If there is money coming from departments just so we can follow that up.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Sure.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you. So these organisations and together with some departmental staff were moving towards a more unified service. What do you think that will look like?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, it is very early days and I would not want any charities to be concerned about what I am saying here because it is very much an internal piece of work, but it is essentially just to simplify and make sure that there is not any duplication within the system because, given the level of funding that is being dedicated and the importance of the work as well, it is absolutely important that victims receive good support. But what we need to understand is whether there is any duplication in the current system or any gaps, because it would be much better to fill gaps rather than duplicate some elements of service and so that is the aim for what is being done at the moment.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you. Anything you want to add? Okay, thank you for that. Can we move on to question 11, please? This is 1001 Days and, Minister, you have assumed special responsibility for this area. Could you update us on how that is going forward?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, the 1001 Days strategy, it is not a strategy, it is a manifesto that is being relaunched next week and it is a cross-party initiative. Unfortunately I am unable to go because it is ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Maybe we can go.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes. It is the first day of the budget debate.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

We would much rather be here for the budget debate than have a sandwich.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Fair enough.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

So officers will be going but, yes, sadly not ... but there has been good progress during the year. As you know, the Chief Minister announced his intention to support the 1001 Critical Days manifesto in January, at the Brighter Futures conference and, since that time, a taskforce director has been

appointed who has ... again, it has been a learning piece of work about looking at services that are available in this area and analysing them and finding out whether there are any gaps.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Is this Dr. Helen Miles? Yes, we had a very good briefing from her. She has given us lots of information.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Excellent. So that work has been done and the director has identified there is a lot of good practice in this area, particularly the N.S.P.C.C. (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children). Their Baby Steps Programme recently won a national award, which is fantastic. So it is really good to know but in order to properly fulfil the 1001 Critical Days and our commitment to ensuring that every child has the best possible start in life, there is still work to be done. So the next year will be about putting into place that work to fulfil those gaps, so we will be looking at a perinatal pathway, which is a pathway of care that will ensure that mothers are given proper thought, and we hope to introduce a parent-infant psychotherapy programme which is the key part of that work. Also improvements in antenatal support for both parents and the development of parent champions.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

That sounds very interesting and please keep us updated on those new things. Could I ask about health visitors, please? How many health visitors are there working in this framework or working towards the aims?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Health visitors are very much on the frontline in this area because they are that key person that a mother would come into contact with. Obviously it is not part of our department, so awkward; well, not awkward but I do not have the exact numbers of people within that service. But what I understand is the work that is being done with them is purely in ensuring that hard-to-reach mothers receive the support and the referrals on to services that they might need.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

From what you have seen working on the 1001 Days, does Jersey have enough health visitors at the moment?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I do not feel that I am particularly well placed to answer that question but I think that what we do need to ensure is that everybody, every parent, from conception to the age of 2 receives the best

possible support that they can for themselves and their child in order to give the best possible chances in life.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Would we be able to maybe speak to Dr. Miles about this issue, if she could maybe update us?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, of course.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

I will mention to Dr. Miles that you are interested in the number of health visitors and she can find the answer for you.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yes, and if there will be any increase given the focus on 1001 Days. Thank you.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

Yes, I will mention that to Dr. Miles and then when you next meet with her hopefully she will be fully equipped.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I have got quite a list of supplementaries for this one. I will see which ones you can answer because the 1001 Days initiative is so broad, is it not, so part of it is obviously about health. Is there anything being done to tackle obesity in young children through the 1001 Days initiative?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

There is a separate piece of work going on within Health and Social Services about obesity. I completely agree with you that it is a very important area, but 1001 Days is more about the developmental side of an infant's life, to ensure that the synapses in the brain are properly developed. Yes, it is about that bond, the attachment with the parent and the stimulation that baby receives in that critical period of their life to give them the best start. So it is predominantly focused on that area rather than sort of wider health implications. But it all flows from it though, does it not, because there are so many elements; a happy, healthy person is less likely to have obesity problems and less likely, perhaps, to be involved in crime at a later stage, is more likely to achieve in school and be developmentally ready for school when they arrive at the gates for their first day as well.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I have got quite a few questions on this. So would we help another panel then with drafting the questions in this area? I am just trying to work out how Scrutiny would hold Ministers to account in this area and I know you are the Minister that has responsibility but ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

As the political lead I think you are welcome to organise briefings and to channel any questions, but obviously it does have implications in both health and education particularly, so I am happy to work with ... we could perhaps organise a joint meeting if you wish, or ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay. Well, perhaps we will talk to Dr. Miles about our specific questions and maybe one or 2 other panels so we can get some detailed answers on that then.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

This might sound like a vague question but I hope it is not. With this 1001 Days manifesto how will you measure success? So you are in office as Minister for Home Affairs for at least 2 and a bit years, or whatever it is now, at the end of that how will you measure if your actions regarding 1001 Days have been a success? Do you have benchmarks that you are setting?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, that is a very good question and I do not think it is at all vague. I described the action points that we hope to see over the next year so I guess success will be measured in whether we start to deliver those and the hope is that we most certainly will. It is a very much a long-term project I think and it is something that transcends political terms because I see that the benefits will be in those first days at school. They will follow a person through their lives really because, if they have a good start in life and a good attachment with their parents, then they should succeed and be a well-rounded person in the future.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The Income Distribution Survey showed that a third of children were living in relative low income. There was no breakdown in terms of how old the child is there. Do they stop at 18 or what breakdown is specifically for kids who are in that 1001 Days? Will that be something that will be taken into account then in terms of what measures you seek to implement to have a focus on putting forward policies? How much the Home Affairs Department itself can do might be limited. But in terms of what pressure you might put on to other departments to make sure that there is a focus, not just that children in families who may have parents who can dedicate time to them but families

who are having to work more than one job and do not have resources and are struggling to pay rent and are stressed or whatever, will there be a particular focus on those people?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I mentioned hard-to-reach families who perhaps might, for some reasons, be in that group as well.

[15:00]

I think the emphasis is very much on ensuring that they receive assistance and attention, absolutely. It is something that affects all people. So strong attachment and proper development can happen in any family with any background but particularly there should be a focus on the hard to reach families and there will be.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I think the charities at the Bridge work to reach those families. Will the funding be increased to the Bridge so that it can reach more families?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

That is part of the next steps to figure out where we can find the funds to move forward. There are some philanthropic groups in the Island who have a particular interest in this area and so we are hoping to collaborate with them and we are extremely grateful for the commitments that we can see from the community at large which is fantastic.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

So you can envisage then some expansion of those services, either through these philanthropic groups and is there a possibility that more government funding might go towards those charities at the Bridge?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, as you know the M.T.F.P. 2 edition, the second part ...

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

M.T.F.P. 2 edition, apparently.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

... is underway but we are trying within our own area to see if there are some efficiencies that could be made or some changes that could be made in order to release some funding also, because it is

very difficult to make a commitment without bringing some funding online. But that is right, because they will be underway at the moment.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay, and perhaps we could get updates on that as we go along.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Would be very happy to. Singing it from the rooftops.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

We are just over 3.00 p.m. now so ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

There is only one question left.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yes, I will move on from that but we will maybe have to come back maybe via a briefing for some further information on 1001 Days.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Sure.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay, final question then. This is number 13 on my sheet. We did talk about the prison during the M.T.F.P. and you mentioned some regime changes, I think. One that you mentioned was prisoners would be in their cells for an extra hour a day. Has that happened? Have any other regime changes happened and how is it going?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

That is due to start at the beginning of January; that change. It has been a process that has been developed with the Prison Officers Association and everybody has made great efforts to work together to bring that about and I am very grateful to them for their support and understanding.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

How do the prisoners feel about it?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, we have not received any negative feedback.

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

No. I mean one of the concerns expressed was around access to the telephone system because it is traditionally that time in the evening where prisoners have to wait in turn in order to use the phones that are available, but there is some new investment going into a new prison phone system and the intention is that, before the new regime is introduced, then additional phones will be installed to increase the total number of phones available so that prisoners do not have to queue for such a long period to get access to a phone. They will be able to get access to a phone more quickly, and the new infrastructure to enable that is just about to be installed. Then there will be a second phase which will provide all of the detainees with in-cell access to P.I.N. (personal identification number) operated phone systems so they will not have to queue at all. We are hoping that that should ease one of the main concerns that was expressed.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay, thank you. The Chief Officer of the Prison I think stated that the budget was very tight in the prison, which obviously is why these machine changes have been necessary. I wanted to ask about best practice in terms of prison provision. Do you feel that we are meeting best practice standards in Jersey for provision or could we be doing better if there was more funding?

Chief Officer, Community and Constitutional Affairs:

My own sense, and I have not got an independent report looking at this so it is just my sense, is that we are doing very well against the kind of best practice around the British Isles. We had some quite strong recommendations from Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons last time they visited and the majority of those, particularly those relating to prisoner rehabilitation and treatment, have been implemented. I think that my sense is that our Prison Governor is doing a really good job with the Prison Association to deliver necessary efficiencies and savings in the overall cost of the prison while still following the guidance from the Minister, which was that the Ministers very much wanted the whole treatment, rehabilitation and training regime to be maintained even though some of the funding still had to be reduced. I think that the governor, the Jersey Prison Association and prisoners themselves have done a really great job up there. I think that I would, in many ways, rather have our prison than some other prisons around the British Isles where the solution to very deep budget cuts, particularly in the Ministry of Justice in the U.K. and elsewhere has been to tighten up on the regime in a way that has been quite challenging. The U.K. is finding new solutions to that challenge now. The latest thing they announced is that they were going to sell certain city centre prisons in order to build new more efficient facilities in cheaper areas. So they are using options like that which are not available to us but I think that, out of the available options, my sense is that the Governor and the prison staff have absolutely prioritised the right things and that the prison is undoubtedly in a much better shape than it was a few years ago. I feel very confident when we have external

visitors showing them around the prison and the regime. Could we do more with more funding? Well, of course. I mean that has to be a yes, but equally they are doing a really great job with what they have got, in my sense.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay, thank you. So obviously there have been some cuts from the first round of the M.T.F.P.; are you envisaging further cuts to the prison budget and, if so, what further regime changes might have to be made?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I would hope that that would not have to happen, other than general efficiencies that can be found through looking at day-to-day workings; that would be an area I would like to protect.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay. Thank you for that. I think that is everything from me. Are there any other questions you would like to ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

No, that is it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Okay. Thank you very much for your answers. Sorry, we have gone about 8 minutes over time but it is not 4.00 p.m. so it is not too bad. Minister, is there anything you would to add before we finish?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No. I would like to thank you for your questions that are always wide-ranging but thought-provoking and focused, and I am grateful to you for that opportunity. Thank you.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you very much. Thank you so much for being with us today. So I draw the hearing to a close now. Thank you, everybody, for coming.

[15:09]