



Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Government Plan Review

Witness: The Minister for Home Affairs

Friday, 30th October 2020

Panel:

Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier (Chair)

Deputy T. Pointon of St. John

Deputy M.R. Higgins of St. Helier

Witnesses:

Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement, The Minister for Home Affairs

Deputy G.C. Guida of St. Lawrence, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs

Mr. J. Blazeby, Director General, Justice and Home Affairs

Mr. R. Smith, Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police

[14:30]

Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier (Chair):

Good afternoon, everybody, and welcome to the public hearing of the Minister for Home Affairs. This public hearing is to focus on the Government Plan which has been published, as part of our scrutiny process of that. If we start with some introductions, I am Deputy Robert Ward and I chair the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy T. Pointon of St. John:

I am Deputy Trevor Pointon, Deputy of St. John, and I am a member of the panel.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Deputy Higgins will be joining us in a second. He has just had some technical issues. Minister?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Constable Len Norman, Minister for Home Affairs.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

Deputy Gregory Guida, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Director General Julian Blazeby, Justice and Home Affairs.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. Deputy Higgins, are you there?

Deputy M.R. Higgins of St. Helier:

Yes, back online now, thank you.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Would you just like to introduce yourself, just formally because we have started?

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Deputy Mike Higgins, member of the panel.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, that is great. To begin with, Minister, can you confirm the amount of departmental budget base, the base budget that you hold responsibility for, in the Government Plan this year?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, the net revenue expenditure for Justice and Home Affairs as a whole comes to about £86.5 million. Some of that ... not all of that comes under my ministerial responsibility, although the department is, for example, responsible for the testing and tracing programme, Health and Safety Inspectorate. The remainder of it is under my ministerial responsibility but, as I say, the department has additional responsibilities as well under different Ministers.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That is interesting because I have to say on page 131 of the Government Plan under the list of Ministers and their allocations, it is £86.627 million that is put against Home Affairs. So are you

saying that figure there in terms of ministerial portfolios is not all your portfolio? Would some of it be in someone else's?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The Health and Safety Inspectorate, for example, the Director General is Mr. Blazeby but the Minister is the Minister for Social Security.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. Sorry, so is there double accounting of that money then? Because would the monies that would be for that department appear in your ministry or the Social Security ministry?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is under the Justice and Home Affairs Department's budget.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. We may ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is only there once, I can assure you.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, that is fine.

The Deputy of St. John:

May I just come in there for a moment?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, please do.

The Deputy of St. John:

I was wondering if within that figure is the figure we have for test and trace programme, £30 million. Does it include that?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, it does.

The Deputy of St. John:

So your actual budget minus that is around £50 million?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, about £54 million, £55 million, yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That moves to about £57 million and a bit for the 3 years after that, so that does show that extra £30 million. So in terms of the various services that fall under your remit, can you give a general overview of how that budget is broken down?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

As far as the department which comes under my ministerial responsibility, around about 90 per cent of the costs are involved in staff costs, in pay. That is where the money goes. It goes on people or it goes on officers who are there to keep the Island safe. The remainder is on general administration support ... well, not support staff because that is staff as well, but general administration and minor capital assets, things like that. It is virtually all staff as far as we are concerned.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. How does that compare to the 2020 budget, removing the £30 million for test and trace, which I think we all agree is a one-off ... well, we all hope is a one-off cost?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, our budget has really only gone up by the pay awards and not significantly more than that, except for the States of Jersey Police, of course, where we have recruited some 30 new officers over the last few months. So, you can make that comparison, I think. Our budget has increased and it has increased only because of pay awards and additional staffing in the police.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. So the only additional funding with the £30 million aside for test and trace is to account for pay awards that were awarded this year?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes. We are talking about revenue here and that is the case, yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, so there are no extra projects that have been growth projects as they are being referred to or are they there but it is not extra money for them, the money for them is coming from efficiencies?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, we have efficiencies. There are some additional growth items, for example, in the Customs and Immigration Service because of the extension of the settled status scheme. We have had some additional funds provided for that, and also because of the confirmation of the extension of the permanent life of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre. Some additional funds have been provided there as well, but that comes under the police budget, so that is why there is an increase there as well.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, I think Deputy Pointon is going to ask some questions on that in a moment. In terms of funding pressures that face the services under your remit, are they being addressed in the Government Plan and, if so, how are they being addressed?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, to be honest with you, Chairman, I do not feel that we have any significant funding pressures. I think it has been recognised that the services that come under Home Affairs are there to underpin the Government Plan and the 5 points under the Government Plan, to keep the Island safe, to make sure that Jersey remains a good place to live, a safe place to live, work and visit, and that has been recognised. There are no funding pressures, but we need to keep under review and looking all the time at the level of services that we provide to make sure that they are at the optimum level for the Island. That is why we have regular inspections. We just had the police inspection about 18 months ago now, I think, but we are hoping next year to have one for the Fire Service and also for the Ambulance Service, followed up by the Customs and Immigration Service, to make sure that the services we provide are at the optimum level.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That absence of funding pressures is true then for ambulance, fire and all the other services that are under your remit, you are saying?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes. Clearly, we have to, as States Members, challenge the budget, challenge the funds that go into all of these services to make sure that they are doing what we want them to do and it is not all just nice to have. We have to do that and the taxpayer would expect us to do that. But I have also made a commitment, which I made very early when I became Minister, that there would be no cutbacks in front line services, and I have maintained that and I have had the support of the Council of Ministers and, if the Government Plan is approved by the States, will have the approval of the States for that policy as well.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

In terms of other sources of income that the department has, have there been any changes in those or are there any envisaged during the Government Plan period?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, the only thing we are looking at of any significance is an increase possibly in the charges for Fire Service inspections, which need to, in my view, reach cost recovery level. At the moment they are being subsidised by the taxpayer. Other than that ... there will also be an increase, of course, in work permits when the U.K. (United Kingdom) leaves the European Union, where work permits will be required for E.U. (European Union) nationals as well as those coming from the rest of the world. These are not going to be huge amounts, but they will make a difference to the services.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. Are there plans downstream to increase those charges or are they worst-case scenarios?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No, they are not worst-case scenarios. We are looking at the Fire Service ones next year and the work permit ones for the Customs and Immigration Service are already included in our income forecast because we knew that that will be applying from next year.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, thank you. That is the questions I had in that area. Deputy Pointon, do you want to ask some questions regarding the S.A.R.C. (Sexual Assault Referral Centre)?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, and the Dewberry House situation, of course. Minister, can you confirm the breakdown of the £150,000 per annum over the next 4 years between the S.A.R.C. services manager and crisis workers? How many crisis workers are employed by this funding?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Sorry, Deputy, I do not have that number in front of me. There was an error last year where the funding was short of what was required and the department made that up from the internal budget, I think from minor capital assets that were not needed. That funding has now been re-established in the Government Plan for 2021, but the exact staffing numbers, I do not have that in front of me. Certainly, I have met most of the staff and I have certainly met management in recent times and I am very impressed with the work that they do.

The Deputy of St. John:

But you were recruiting staff during that period of time, I imagine?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

It is Julian Blazeby. Like the Minister, I do not have the exact figures to hand. Just to support what the Minister said there, this funding is securing the funding on a permanent basis because there was an error in the administration last year that needed addressing, which is why there is £150,000 in the Government Plan going forward. So the additional staff was identified in support of the S.A.R.C. and the growing requirement. That funding is now in place and will be in place going forward with the support from the Minister, so we will be able to provide you with the exact staffing ratios in terms of the workers you described and the manager, but in effect what it is doing is ensuring the budget is there going forward and it is not changing the resource model.

The Deputy of St. John:

Thank you for that. If you could perhaps let us have the figures in a written form, it would be appreciated.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Of course.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Would they be in the annex of the Government Plan at all? I am just asking ... those figures?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I am not sure and maybe I am not sure because it is unusual. If this was growth in its traditional sense and, therefore, it was equating to a number of additional headcounts, maybe, but this is a - if I can use such a phrase - budget realignment to ensure that the funding is secure going forward.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, while it is shown as growth, the reality is it is to fund staff who are already there.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I wonder if we need to start to create a key: efficiency, rebalancing, realignment, growth. It might be useful for the public. I am being flippant. Trevor, do you want to carry on, sorry?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, I will. The business case in R.111/2020 explains that a child house model is being developed. Can you outline exactly what development has taken place on that child house?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Clearly, with the move and the rebuild or the creation of the new S.A.R.C., which is going to incorporate the child house model, there has been some delay. What we need to do is to amalgamate the 2, the S.A.R.C. and the child house model, so we can deliver all the services in one place: medical, social care, advocacy, therapeutic support and, of course, police support where needed, so all the response units are in one place under one roof which people can access easily. We are recruiting core staff ready for this and embedding the child sexual abuse pathway, which has already resulted in an increase in referrals to Dewberry House.

[14:45]

So it is a valuable and essential service which we want to get sorted as soon as possible. Clearly, a new build, which I think it will be, or the conversion of an existing building, will take time but the services will continue as best they can at Dewberry House for the time being.

The Deputy of St. John:

So have you some idea of what additional resources may be required to make sure there is an effective delivery?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, not at this stage because, as I say, it is going to take 18 months to 2 years to get the new building going. So during that period we will be sorting out the resources that are going to be required and we will do that in conjunction with the management at Dewberry House.

The Deputy of St. John:

So there is currently no capital funding available to build this place?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Oh, yes, there is £2.5 million. £2.5 million has been put aside for this in the Government Plan from 2020-23. So, yes, the project is assured and what we have to do is find the site or find the building to be converted. It is so important. We have learnt over the last 3 or 4 years since the S.A.R.C. was created how important and valuable it is and what a wonderful resource it is. So, yes, the money is there and the project will go ahead. We have a project manager and we have a project team. All we do not have at the moment is the preferred site to develop it.

The Deputy of St. John:

Okay. So when you have your site and you already have your team, can you please, Minister, detail the services that will be included with this approach?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The services will be similar to what they are now. The main thing is support for people, be they men, women or children, who are subject to sexual assault. They have to be able to have the confidence to take advantage of the services that are there. They can do it, of course, without the involvement of the police, because many people, particularly in the initial stages, do not want to involve the police when they have been subject to an assault, and that is important. The things that they can do, obviously there is medical services that need to be provided and what the S.A.R.C. do is to keep evidence of sexual assault, which can be used if anyone who has been attacked decides later that they want to bring forward criminal charges. So, again, it is what I said before. It is medical. It is social care, which is very important, and therapeutic support. That is the basis of what we are looking for.

The Deputy of St. John:

Your intention is to co-locate these facilities?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Absolutely, then it is all under one roof. People can attend one place and not have to wonder where they have to go. It will be the one unit where all these services will be available. In fact, it will be a victim support hub, if you like, because it will be not only for assistance and advice for sexual assaults but for all crimes. Anybody who is a victim of crime will be able to get support from this unit. That is going to be a new, important development as well.

The Deputy of St. John:

Is it an intention to have some residential accommodation on the site?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No, I do not think so. I do not think that is the plan because where residential accommodation is required ... clearly the staff there would be able to support people and help people, because you have places like the Women's Refuge where people could be referred to if necessary, and the shelters as well if men are involved. So there are facilities already for residential accommodation.

The Deputy of St. John:

Okay. You are indicating that you have not yet selected a site or a building. It sounds as if there is going to be an awful lot of people needing to be accommodated in the building, an awful lot of services. Are we sure that £2 million is going to be sufficient to provide this facility?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is £2.5 million. I would expect so but, Deputy, I think you know me and if you do not know me terribly well you know me by reputation. If we need additional funding to provide the right facility that the Island deserves, then I will not mind going back to seek additional funding. But it is quite a lot of money, £2.5 million, so I think we could get a pretty decent resource for that. Julian Blazeby wants to say something.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Thank you, Minister. If I could just add the intention is not necessarily to put all the services that the Minister referred to in one location. It is about having a locus where those services can be co-ordinated around. So there will be support for victims. There will be other agencies that will be in support of the broader challenge, but they will not all necessarily need to be and want to be housed under one location. So, therefore, the funding will provide sufficient to enable the critical element of that, and that is to enable those people who have suffered sexual abuse to be able to receive support from the service and then they can be signposted from that location to other functions in support of victim support.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Can I ask a quick question on the funding of that, Deputy Pointon? There is an example of that in London, in Camden, which I visited. One of the comments they made was that their funding was adequate to set up, but for the extras, the rooms that they use for children and the toys and the decoration that made it such a special place for them to go, they had to rely on effectively charity. So are we looking to fund it for all of its needs, including those little details? I think it is a very important question because of the role of these centres in making people feel at ease.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The intention would be that the revenue budget would be sufficient for their needs, but I would have no objection and I am sure you would not have any objection if other outside agencies wanted to help support such a venture. I am not saying that they should go without the toys and the facilities they would need for young people, but if there is additional resources that could be provided by charities or philanthropists, whatever, I do not think any of us should be looking to turn them away.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. Deputy Pointon, have you finished your ...?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, I have finished. You can carry on with COVID-19.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, test and trace, okay. Obviously, there was an additional £30 million worth of funding for the test and trace programme. Can you give an overview of how that funding would be broken down in respect of the project itself?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Julian Blazeby as our Director General is responsible for the test and trace programme, so I think if you do not mind, Chairman, he could deal with this particular part.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Thank you, Minister. Yes, I am happy, Chair, to answer those questions. The funding for this year runs up to the end of December and that is in the region of £24 million. The additional funding in the Government Plan of £30 million is for the first 6 months of 2021. That is broken down into a number of areas, including the on-Island testing capability. So that was OpenCell that you will have seen we have procured and are using now that turns around results in an average time of 12 hours or less. So that is a continuation of that facility. It is also the test to travel, which is a significant chunk of the funding in the Government Plan for the first 6 months of 2021. That is the cost of the whole process, of the swabs, of the analysis of the swabs and getting results out. That is in the region of £18 million or so, and of course that is dependent on demand. There is then testing to protect, which is on-Island testing and the staffing that supports that, whether it is in the hospital, whether it is across our central worker regime and similar. There is also then the funding for the monitoring and enforcement team that you will be aware exists, and also the contact tracing team as well. Then in addition to that there is project support or programme support and then there is the technology element of that as we develop the system. So, in all, that comes to around about £30 million, and I say "around about" because the figure for the last 6 months of 2020 is £24 million and it is projected to be slightly more for next year. It is quite a flexible beast, as you understand, depending on the extent of infection, the amount of people who are tested, therefore the amount of staff we need, the amount of contact tracing that is required and the amount of monitoring and enforcement that is required. But there is a robust business case behind all those elements I have described that takes us to the amount projected for the first half of 2021.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, I think it is the timeline. I have some questions on that. I will jump ahead a little bit, as you have mentioned it. The timeline for the spend, you say it is up to June 2021. There is an obvious question comes there as to what happens if things extend beyond June, so that is one question I think we would like addressed. The one is: do you have particular spend points? So, for example, would you be looking at the end of each month to see whether you are on target for spending, projections in terms of cases? At what point do you start charging arrivals, for example? Just to put some detail on this possible timeline of spend and how you would know where you are.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, I think overall I will start off by saying, Chair, that we absolutely recognise and it is clear because it is documented that this is a significant investment of public money from the Government. Over a 12-month period over £50 million is an awful lot of money. Therefore, we have been asked by Ministers and we are in the throes at the moment of working up what a charging policy would look like. Is it right and fair that we continue to ask the taxpayer to fund this activity? It may be that Ministers decide this is absolutely the right way to go, but we have been asked to look at a different charging framework that may offset some of those costs. So that is the first thing and that will be developed over the coming weeks. Certainly, we have a breakdown in terms of the spend across all those areas over a monthly period, so we can see beyond or behind the headline figure of £30 million what that spend looks like broken down into a monthly period for each of the activities. As I say, it is quite flexible because the spend was originally predicated on the forecasted arrivals to the Island, for example, and those were forecast a number of months ago. Of course, as the second wave emerges across Europe and the U.K. we have noticed a drop-off, quite a significant drop-off, in travelling numbers. That then has an impact on the amount of people that get tested but, of course, that is sometimes offset by the number of direct contacts and the activities of the monitoring and enforcement team. So it is quite a flexible beast and our staffing and resources model reflects that, so a mixture of, for example, zero hours, full-time contract, we have people seconded from other organisations or, indeed, within Government. So it is quite complex to then nail completely each month it is costing us in advance this amount, but we have a reasonably good idea across those areas.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, and, of course, with that complexity comes perhaps an issue for scrutiny in terms of any remaining funding that may not be required. So, for example, as numbers drop if a vaccine becomes widely available and the test and trace is not required as much, what will happen to remaining funding if it is not required? Minister, do you have control over that? Can you reallocate that for things that you perhaps have delayed or ... I do not know what the phrase is now. Someone can perhaps put it in ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Deferred?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, deferred, that is the phrase. Do you have control over that?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I wish. I really wish, but no. This money is specifically for this project, for the test and tracing, and it would be wonderful if we did not have to use it all, as you say, if a vaccine came in and was really effective. But no, it would be returned to the centre.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So when you say the centre, that is the Treasury, is it?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. That is interesting. In terms of the key ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

That is my belief. Sorry, can I just check with Julian? That is what would normally happen?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, the funding has been provided. The Minister for Treasury and Resources ultimately ... the Council of Ministers agreed the funding through the appropriate business case route that we took. It got scrutinised by the Council of Ministers. It was approved and then the Minister for Treasury and Resources ultimately signed off the business case and, therefore, release of the funds. As the Minister said, if we do not spend - and let us hope we do not spend - all that money, then that will go back into the central coffers, I would anticipate.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes. It was just the complexity of the spend that you talked about, and we understand that. In terms of key performance indicators for the project and its success, what are they?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

In some areas of the different business units I have described, it is difficult to have K.P.I.s (key performance indicators). I talked about the predicted passenger figures and, therefore, would you want to be able to swab 100 per cent of those people who come into the Island within a given time? Some of those times can be measured against key performance indicators; however, our policy, as you know, has changed quite regularly.

[15:00]

So we have gone from green arrivals to amber to red and 5 days and 14 days and then additional tests, so monitoring the performance has been a moving feast, although we do obviously record all those figures and we are able to scrutinise them, and I chair a programme board that has oversight of all those different elements. Certainly, in terms of contact tracing and monitoring and enforcement, then there are K.P.I.s. For example, the percentage of those people who are emailed or texted in terms of making sure they are complying with the regulations, those number of people that we make a visit to, to make sure they are self-isolating, and those figures are available and are scrutinised by, for example, S.T.A.C. (Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell) and others. So, there are some K.P.I.s but it is not that easy in some of the areas because of the agility of either the policy or the infection rate.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Would one of those be the number of people you are unable to contact and, if so, what is that number? Is there a number that you can talk to us about?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I am just looking. I have some figures from ... they do not do the entirety since we opened our borders up, but I can give you an insight into the type of activity these captured. So the total calls to passengers who are not responding ... so you mentioned everybody gets a text and you may have had that on arrival back in Jersey. So if you do not reply to either "COVID" or "well" then we are capturing the number of calls to those passengers who have not responded or they sent an incorrect text. So in the week commencing 19th October, for example, there were 43 individuals who were not answering or sent an incorrect response. Then there is the number of telephone calls to those passengers from an amber region who are self-isolating. Similarly, there are calls to those passengers from a red region who are isolating, and I have the figures for those. Those ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Sorry to interrupt. Do you record the numbers of those who we have just been unable to contact full stop through all of those means, either through not answering, from a visit? Do we have many of those? Because obviously those are the ones that people I think would be most worried about.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, the first description I gave you was total calls to passengers not responding and also an incorrect response to the daily text, and that was 43 for the week commencing 19th October, as an example. So a very small number compared with the amount of arrivals that week, but absolutely if there is no response from people then there is follow-up.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

There is nobody that has not been followed up at all, that you have had no contact with?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Well, the information I have is that we had 43 of those people and there is follow-up. I do not have any further detail on that at the moment, but the team do follow up if there is no response, which I think is your question.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Well, the question is how many people have not ... do the team know they need to follow up but could not get in contact with, but I think we have got a little bit stuck on that. But it would be interesting to know that figure because you do not have it in front of you.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

So 43 for the week commencing 19th October.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think the Chairman is asking how many are we not able to contact at all. So of the 43, have we been able to track them all?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Okay.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think that is the question, is it not, Chairman?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, it is. I think the devil in this is, of course, in the detail and that is why I am asking these questions. So that figure, but perhaps I can ask something else as well then. At what point ... and this is where we are coming to. Contact tracing works in small populations, but as the numbers increase and increase, as they are finding I think all over Europe, to be quite frank, it becomes unviable. At what point in terms of the number of cases will contact tracing become unviable in Jersey? I am certain that would have been in some form of risk assessment for this process. Do you have that figure? Do you know what that will be in terms of this project, which is £30 million worth of spend and we have to be realistic about it?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

It is a really valid question and one that we have talked about, both through the S.T.A.C. and the Medical Officer of Health and, indeed, my senior team and the staff within the contact tracing and

monitoring and enforcement areas. So the first thing is the staffing model was based upon 10 positives per day with an average of 15 direct contacts, so that enabled the team to model the amount of work that was involved and, therefore, amount of resource. That resource can cope with that amount of work I have just described. They have gone on to model what it would look like if the R rate increased from 0.5 per cent to 1, which is described as medium, up to 2, which is high. Therefore, that would obviously have, you would understand, a greater number of positives and, therefore, direct contacts. When we start to get into the R rate of 2, that becomes then that we need more resource than we currently have, quite a significant amount of resource. What we have not done is taken that on to the next level to say if that exponentially increases at what stage does contact tracing and monitoring and enforcement become unviable because it has gone beyond the ability to keep tracing and tracing if the numbers get so great. That is a conversation that we have and, as I say, S.T.A.C. are considering. It is difficult to put a number on it, but I think if we got to that stage, then we would be very much within a very steep rise of the epidemic and it would be very problematic for the Island.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Could I ask how you have coped so far when we have been getting into the 80s and then with the number of contacts those people have had? How have you been dealing with that up to date?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

So the team is around about 55 personnel. They work on a team system, so one team in, one team on rest days, and they are split across a number of sites. To date they have been managing it and they have not had to bring people in on their days off, but it is fair to say it has been particularly busy, particularly if I go back to about 3 weeks ago when we had that spike of around about 30 over a weekend. They are managing okay. They are on top of all their direct contacts and giving advice, but we are making sure we have the right resources and we are introducing a surge capacity where we can draw upon additional staff if we get greater spikes, to enable us to keep on top of the contact tracing.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

If you do get a spike, what sort of numbers do they have to go up that you think you will be experiencing some problems?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Well, as I say, we had a spike of 30 over a weekend, over a Friday, Saturday, Sunday. The team coped with that well. Then we had, as we know, a couple of instances in schools and another premises in town and all those were dealt with as well. So that is, as you say, when we were up to 81 positive cases and 464 direct contacts. So that is not an insignificant number of people who they

have managed to deal with, process and keep in touch with. We are building a surge capacity of some additional resource if that does increase so we can cope with it.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes. Just to talk about ... well, there are a couple of things there. One is the R number, which is a constant that is reflective of the rate of infection, so I do not think it is right to call it an R rate. I think that is quite important. Is there a relationship between that R number changing, that constant changing which reflects the infection rate on the Island, and the point at which contact tracing becomes unviable? To put it at its most harsh, it just basically becomes a waste of our money as much as anything else. Surely during the development of that programme that point would have been considered.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I am unable to and I am not qualified to answer that question specifically because that would take probably some epidemiology and scientific approach to try and achieve the answer and I am not sure whether those colleagues could. But what we do know is if we are working on an R of 2, the modelling in terms of those number of positives and, therefore, the direct contacts does become quite challenging in terms of resource. When it gets to the break point we have not worked out yet because we do not know the modelling behind that.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. In terms of the staffing then - and there are a number of reasons why this is important - it is the number of fixed-term contracts simply because fixed-term contracts are not permanent contracts, but in particular secondment, because we have heard a lot about certain things not happening in government because officers have been seconded elsewhere. So how long do you think those secondments that might be getting in the way of other work will remain or will you be heading towards more fixed-term contracts to train staff up so that other specialist staff can get back to their departments, so to speak, and move government along, given the funding that you have obtained?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, your description is absolutely right. In the early days it was very much all hands to the pump and we seconded staff from different departments and, as you say, their business as usual did take some setback because we had to ensure we delivered this capability. We are very much moving on to a more secure footing now. We still have some zero-hours contracts and some of those zero-hours contracts and that approach very much works with the flexible approach that is required and the agility due to, as I have mentioned already, the unpredictable nature of flight arrivals and arrivals on the Island, as we know. So flexibility is key to the delivery of this. We are moving a number of

people on to fixed-term contracts and more permanency and less people seconded from departments for the reasons you have described. We have been recruiting and interviewing over the last month to enable us to do that and return key people back to their departments.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

I would just add that, of course, technology is helping and if the app works in the Island this will automate a massive amount of the tracing process.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes. Can I also then just make sure that when people return to their original jobs that happens, if you like, seamlessly? What I am thinking about is somebody who may have been in a situation where the target operating model has changed the role, they have not been in the role, and they come back and suddenly they do not have a role. Can you reassure people who have gone on to do a really important job elsewhere that they can come back to their job, that there will not be any circumstances where that happens?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I can reassure you, Chair. Across my director general colleagues we talk about that and particularly if departments are asking for their staff back because they have a particular concern. A number of them are going through their target operating models and that conversation is definitely happening on a regular basis. So I am very confident that people would not go back and find their desk and chair has been taken by somebody else.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

In terms of the cost per test, we understand that it is confidentially sensitive information. Assuming that incoming travel increases again in the summer months, has the budget in relation to that testing been calculated? So be it the cost to the Government or cost to those travelling, do you have a clear picture of what that is? Because June is not that far off in the scheme of things, although this year it does seem to be a long time.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I referred to a business case a little bit earlier on. The business case has been very robustly challenged, quite rightly, by senior colleagues in the Treasury Department and others to ensure that the facts and the figures and the analysis behind the ultimate figures are as accurate as possible. So you are quite right, it is based on predicted travel numbers. That is based upon what 2020 looked like because we did not want to put a position in that meant we were sold short. Those figures, of course, are uncertain but I am confident the headline figure of £30 million takes into account a very sensible projected figure for the first 6 months of the year in terms of arrivals. If, of course, the

vaccine comes in early and that changes things and people can travel more in a safer environment, then we would have to keep that under review. Conversely, of course, we could have less people travelling.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The additional funding that you have in the Government Plan, the £30 million, will cover the corresponding increase in work for the monitoring and enforcement team, given that, to be quite frank, it does look like the whole of the U.K. will be red and virtually all of Europe will be red pretty soon?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

It does, yes. It definitely covers ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Can I ask you, sorry, just as you answer that, were you expecting that change? Was that something that you had planned for? I think these are the sort of reassurances that fit with the Government Plan in terms of allocating that spending; people can be reassured that that amount of money is going towards covering all eventualities and you are prepared for that. Were you ready for that? Minister, do you think you are preparing for the worst, the very worst-case scenario?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is very difficult, is it not, Chairman, because we are in a moving feast? I think a lot of people ... we certainly anticipated the second wave and the presumption was, as in previous epidemics of this nature, viral epidemics, the second wave is usually worse than the first wave, and I think that is going to be proven the case in some areas, although we are not seeing the same number or the proportion of fatalities and I hope that stays that way. I think Jersey has been well prepared and the actions Jersey has taken ... we are sixth in the world for the numbers that we are testing, so I think Islanders should be reassured that the Council of Ministers and the States are doing everything they can to keep the Island safe during this pandemic.

[15:15]

You talk about June and you say it is not going to be a long way away, but hopefully a heck of a lot is going to happen between now and June. Hopefully, the vaccine will come and hopefully the vaccine will be effective. If it does not come, or if it is not effective, then the Island is going to have to think about how we are going to protect ourselves. Because as Julian was saying a few moments ago, the numbers who are now coming into the Island, because of what is happening in France and in the United Kingdom, are dropping very, very significantly. I think we have to be more concerned

not about people coming to the Island but how we are going to get our people back in from the United Kingdom, when students need to come back from colleges, universities and boarding schools. So there are some significant challenges, but I think we have proven ourselves to be prepared and I think the Island can be reassured that we will be prepared for whatever happens over the next few months. It is very difficult to be too prescriptive about it.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

If I can just add, obviously a £30 million projected investment I think is a significant investment in preparation for a challenging number of months ahead. Also, the Nightingale wing has been extended in terms of its funding and capability into the spring of next year and the Council of Ministers approved and, indeed, we have just taken delivery of a worst-case scenario 90-day pandemic stock of P.P.E. (personal protective equipment). So that puts us in a strong position in the worst-case scenario. We all obviously hope that does not arrive. The testing and tracing programme is one of that, but as the Minister ... I am very grateful to him for saying it. We have one of the best testing and tracing regimes in the world, which is a testament to all the staff and the Council of Ministers for investing in it.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes. I just wonder whether it would have been pertinent to plan for the whole year and then be prepared to use that money for something else, but I suppose we will come to that. We hopefully will ... well, we would have to come to that point if it happens. It has been stated that charging for arrivals will remain under review. At what stage do you have an outcome to that review and what are the trigger points for conducting that review if you do not have a time for it to happen? I think you mentioned it was already starting.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, we have started the work to bring proposals to Ministers around what a charging framework would look like, and that work is ongoing. I do not have a particular date where we need to achieve that by. I think the important thing is that the testing and tracing regime is in there and it is providing a safety net as part of our suite of measures to try and keep the coronavirus on the Island to as minimum a spread as possible. We do not want to introduce charging that will jeopardise any of that, but at the same time it is that balance between ensuring we can deliver the best testing and tracing programme on the Island and making sure we have value for money. So we will present proposals to the Ministers in the coming weeks around a charging framework and we will see where that goes.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, and it is not as simple as it sounds because we would have to consider who we charge. Is it just visitors? Is it just people coming over on business? Do we charge university students coming back home? Do we charge local Jersey people who have been on holiday coming home? As I say, how much we charge ... not that easy to decide. There are some real issues there.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. I have not finished. I just have one thing to clarify which I missed out in terms of the monitoring and enforcement team. How many staff are working at any one time? I have a figure in my head of around 14 from, I believe, a previous hearing in regards to safer travel, but I wonder if you can confirm. I believe there was 40-something staff there in total, but I just wondered ...

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

There is a total of 55 staff and that includes the managers, and then they are split into teams to ensure resilience because of obviously coronavirus. I was there only in the last week talking to the teams and the team leaders. It is between 14 and 17 on each shift that comes in, and they cover between 8.00 a.m. and 8.00 p.m. every day. So a team comes in at 8.00 a.m. and finishes early afternoon. A team comes in at midday and then works through to the evening, and there is an overlap where both teams are on for about 3 hours.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, thank you. Deputy Higgins, do you want to ask questions 23, 24 and 25? I did put in the chat that they were allocated. Are you okay with that?

The Deputy of St. John:

May I just interject and ask a question about the introduction of charges?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, please do.

The Deputy of St. John:

I believe I heard the other day from another briefing that charges would not be considered until other jurisdictions around us were actively charging people arriving in their jurisdiction or, for that matter, leaving the jurisdiction. Is that the case or is it something we are considering doing independently?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I am not cited, Deputy, on that particular issue but I think what Ministers have asked us to do is look at other jurisdictions, look at what we may propose in Jersey and then put a number of alternatives and options to Ministers to consider. I think that would absolutely take into account our nearest

neighbours in terms of departure to the U.K. and the C.T.A. (Common Travel Area) and maybe Europe, but of course that is ever-evolving as well. We know that Heathrow is looking at introducing tests and you have to pay for those. So the paper will probably try and capture the developments as they go along over the coming weeks, which are continually changing.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Other than Guernsey, I do not think any of our close neighbours are doing any testing on arrival, certainly not the United Kingdom, although they might do, and certainly not France. So the only one we could possibly compare ourselves with would be with Guernsey, I think.

The Deputy of St. John:

I am mindful that other jurisdictions are being driven to test people on arrival simply because they are overwhelmed or their general exposure to the virus is so significant.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I would tend to agree that it would be a wise move for some jurisdictions but probably too late for some.

The Deputy of St. John:

Definitely for the U.K. Thank you.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay, we are going to move on now to the funding of senior posts within the Justice and Home Affairs Department. Can you please explain, Minister how the funding is broken down between the different roles?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Sorry, which roles do you mean, Deputy? We have 2 senior members of staff in the Justice and Home Affairs Department, the Director General and the Group Director.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay. Well, for example, you also had a post at one point of a director of offender management, but you are saying this is no longer required. Can you explain why that post is no longer required?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, certainly not at the moment because that was predicated on a belief at the time that the governance arrangement between the Probation Service and the Prison Service was going to be more greatly integrated. That has not happened. We do not know if it is going to happen, so it is

not a post that is required currently in the target operating model. But if there were greater integration between the 2, it would make sense and there would be one person as the director of offender management, but that would be something for the future.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Is anybody doing that role at the present time or have the other senior people taken it over?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No, there is no director of offender management at this time. It was, as I say, predicated in case there was greater integration and amalgamation between the Prison Service and the Probation Service.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay, I think that ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The problem is, Deputy, as you understand, there is a governance difficulty in offender management because both the Probation Service and the Prison Service and, indeed, the police to a degree have an involvement in offender management, but they have different governance models. While the Prison Service comes directly under the Justice and Home Affairs Department and is the responsibility of the Minister for Home Affairs, the Probation Service has no political oversight whatsoever and is directly responsible to the court. So it does give you some challenges there.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay. Can I just ask was any funding originally allocated for that and is that in the budget?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No, the funding for the senior management posts were taken by the other department, S.P.P.P. (Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance). So we had to find some new money for our senior management.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

You say you had to find it. Where did it come from?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Last year it came from underspends. In the new Government Plan it has been put where it properly should be, in the budget of the Home Affairs Department.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay, thank you.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The next one is Deputy Pointon is going to use his specialist knowledge to talk to you about the firearms range, which will be good.

The Deputy of St. John:

Minister, I do wish to talk specifically about the firearms, the proposal to develop a firearms range specifically for the police. Have you identified a site for this firearms range?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Officers from Home Affairs, the police and the I.H.E. (Infrastructure, Housing and Environment) Department are working together to identify a site. Clearly, we are hoping that we will find somewhere, and we did have a preferred site at the Crabbé area, because that is a logical place for such a facility to be. There are some issues with planning so we are looking in that area for an alternative site. **[Interruption]** That is the police chief arriving, I think. We are looking for a site at Crabbé and I believe that we will be ... well, I know we will be successful because it is a very important facility and clearly the Crabbé area is the appropriate site for a firearms range.

The Deputy of St. John:

Will this be an outdoor 500-metre range?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think it is ... between 50 and 75 metres is the information that has been whispered in my ear and, yes, it will be outside.

The Deputy of St. John:

So 50 to 75 metres, is this going to be sufficient for police firearms officers to ... **[Interruption]**.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The police chief is somewhere around here and would probably answer that question better than I can.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

It meets all their requirements.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Julian Blazeby is a former senior police officer and he has confirmed that the range we have in mind will meet all the training requirements for the police.

The Deputy of St. John:

Would that include training for sniper work?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Can I ask if ... sniper work?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Snipers will either go off Island for courses or maybe use a different range because of the distance.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, okay. Apparently for sniper work they would need to go off-Island, as I understand it, because of the distances that are required.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

The Island range is actually adequate. It is only active work that you need to do in a completely enclosed area, but just aiming at 600 metres we can perfectly do in the Island.

The Deputy of St. John:

Right, so this is going to be a significant development which will be exclusively available to police?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No, it will be available to the Ministry of Defence and to the cadet forces and other shooting clubs when the police or M.O.D. (Ministry of Defence) are not using it, and even possibly to visitors. So it will be an Island facility but clearly the police will have first call over it.

The Deputy of St. John:

So they do not have first call over the existing facilities, is that what you are saying?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Well, that is my understanding. In fact, they do not really have a proper facility over here. That is why they have to go to the U.K. to do their training at not an insignificant cost and, of course, not only is it cash cost but the cost of not having officers available on-Island.

The Deputy of St. John:

But they are still going to have to go to the U.K. to be able to learn the skills of long-range target acquisition.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I am not 100 per cent sure of that, Deputy. I do not know ...

The Deputy of St. John:

I think Deputy Guida just said that.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Deputy Guida said they need not go. I am not 100 per cent sure because I am no expert in firearms like Deputy Guida is.

The Deputy of St. John:

The reason I am asking these questions, Minister, is the fact that this request for not inconsiderable funds is to build a range, albeit you are saying it will be available to the general public or to groups and organisations, when this Island has quite a significant number of ranges available that the police currently use, not just at Crabbé but there are indoor ranges at Fort Regent, for example, and there are all sorts of ranges in the parishes. I am not suggesting that all of those ranges will be suitable for high-velocity rifle use, but there are certainly many of them useful for low-velocity pistol use.

[15:30]

The T.A. (Territorial Army), for example, under whose remit it comes, have a range which is very suitable. It is a 30-metre range, I believe. So why do we need this additional expenditure when there are ranges available and people have to go off Island anyway to achieve - I use the term sniper - long-distance accuracy with their weapon?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Chair, it would be helpful to bring the Chief of Police in, who will be able to give you more detail. My only observation will be that the police have to have accredited ranges through the College of Policing in the U.K., and one reason why police officers are being sent off Island is because the current range does not meet the right specification from a safety point of view; that standard is very different to a normal club shooter. But I know the Chief of Police is online. I am not sure whether the technology is enabling him to speak. Chair, could I invite you to see whether he can hear you and indeed can contribute?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, of course. I am not sure he is online at the moment, nothing on my screen is showing. Sorry, are you there?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Apologies, Chair. Here we go.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It seems to be a bit of a delay.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Can I just come in then and say at this stage can you present us with some information then? Because we do have these ranges in the Island which are the envy of many other places, especially with the range of firearms we have here, and I would like to know why they are not up to the standard that is required by the police forces in the U.K., especially when M.O.D. use the existing ranges.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, we can certainly provide you with the facts and figures. There has been an extensive amount of work done by experts on ranges in the U.K. and here. I can assure you that when I was in the police - and indeed I know, speaking on behalf, the Chief of Police as well - we would want the staff to stay on Island and indeed be able to train and be accredited, but the stringent conditions from the College of Policing, ultimately if clearly they do not adhere to those standards then we are at risk of prosecution and a whole raft of other issues. We can certainly provide you with proper reports by accredited and trained people who will explain why the current range capability does not allow for certain calibre of police training, which may be different to normal gun clubs.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think the reality is we would not be spending £140,000 or £150,000 sending police officers to the U.K. for firearms training if we could do it locally; that would be totally irresponsible.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

I agree, and especially with some minor modifications and less expenditure we could upgrade the ranges we have already got in the Island for the benefit of the police and the rest of the gun users in the Island.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

As a very active member of almost all of the ranges here, I looked very, very closely at this. Of course, the police would have been extremely interested in upgrading, for example, the Jersey Pistol Club 50-metre range, but this was found to be completely impractical. Each of the users have their own specifications. The M.O.D., for example, find that our ranges, which are perfectly safe for the user for sports shooting, are not safe for them to use with other shooters. When the M.O.D. comes to Crabbé they command the whole place; nobody else can shoot in any of the ranges. The police have similar problems with the way that the ranges are protected. Because, of course, the exercise is not to shoot at a still target from a fixed distance, they need the range to be much, much more protected. Even though we tried to see whether we could fix the 50-metre range so that it would serve them, it was impractical to do so. Unfortunately, we know that it is a lot of money, but they need a very, very specific range for their needs. The good thing is that a range that suits them is also good for the M.O.D. for some exercises and also good for the shooting community.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay, but if you could supply us with that information because, I will be honest, we need some convincing.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

There is a design which is almost a year old, which we can show you and that shows how complex the design is.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay, as I say, if you can provide the information then we can perhaps talk again.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I understand it is £1.2 million for this range, state of the art range, I take it?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

The cost is because the specifications to meet all safety standards is quite rightly significant and I do not think anybody would expect otherwise. You are right, it is quite expensive. The money is due to come out of the confiscation fund, which is a good use of money that has been seized from criminals to invest in police training. Of course, as I said, it does need to meet the right specifications, which is a very high standard to ensure the safety of both those using it, the people around the area, and to make sure the training is right.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Could I ask how much money is in the criminal offences confiscation fund at the present time?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is a lot more than £1.2 million. What it is I would not know, you would have to ask the Minister for Treasury and Resources that, but it is not an insignificant amount.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay, thank you.

The Deputy of St. John:

Would it be perhaps preferable to make an application to that fund?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

That is what we are doing. That has been subject to Government Plan; that has been approved.

The Deputy of St. John:

This is not coming out of taxpayers' money?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Correct, yes.

The Deputy of St. John:

I wonder why it is included as a budget item and why it is not made clear that it would be coming out of the injuries compensation fund.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I am sorry, I cannot answer that question. I have the Government Plan in front of me. I do not want to look at the entry but that has always been the intention. The case was made to the criminal assets compensation fund and has been agreed in principle, subject to the Government Plan approval.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I cannot see where it says the criminal fund in the Government Plan, I have to say. That is something, I think, for clarity would be quite interesting to see. Have you finished all of your questions, Deputy Pointon?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, we have covered them between us.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, thank you. Mike, I think you are going to take on some questions regards the domestic dwelling. There is about 3 questions, I think, that is all.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay. Let us make one comment, though, again just following the last comment. I cannot see why the passing of the Government Plan is related to this range if the money is coming from an off-budget item or funding source.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I have to confess I do not know how the technicalities work but that is the way we have been asked to present it.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay. When you have worked it out, can you let us know, too, why they have put it in there? Moving on ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think it is only fair that the States have a say in how this money is used. I do not think it should just be a matter between the Treasury and the relevant Minister. I think the States have to have their say, have they not?

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

I agree, but it has not always been the case in the past. Thank you. Let us move on. You have at the present time a domestic dwelling that was operated for, used by, the Fire and Rescue Service and you are planning on selling that. When do you expect to receive a valuation for this property and how are you going to deal with the loss of rental income that is coming from it, from your base budget?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes. What we are expecting to happen, Deputy, is if the Government Plan is approved and this part is approved, Property Holdings will market and sell the property on behalf of the Fire Service. I am not sure if we have had a market value done really, I am not 100 per cent sure, but that would be the process.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay. Can you tell us is the property being occupied at the present time? What sort of notice period are you giving the person who is there, if there is someone there?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

There is a lease, so even if the property is sold the occupier would have the protection of that lease.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay. Is it at market rate, below market rate or what?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Crikey, if it is going to be sold it will be at market rate. It will be a totally commercial transaction.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Okay, but does the lease allow for that at the present time?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The lease would have no impact on that. The lease would have no impact on the value, unless the rental charge was less than the commercial rate, which it is. It should have no impact on the commercial rent, otherwise Property Holdings could wait until there was vacant possession if there was going to be an impact because of the tenant having a long lease.

The Deputy of St. John:

Minister, the impression that we have is that the current tenant is paying a reduced rent, largely because he is also employed by the Fire Service to assist with the maintenance of the Western Fire Station. Is that the case?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Is it the case? Yes. I do not know the detail behind that but, in essence, the individual is paying slightly less than the market rate rent because they have some responsibility to the fire station. But I think the Minister is talking about the market rate for the sale of the property, as opposed to the rental income. The Minister is saying that once we give notice to the lease, the lease would be released and then we would sell the property at market rate.

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, but the lease would still exist, would it not, and that tenant would be held to that lease and the new owner would have a control over the tenant? Would he also give a reduced rent to the tenant?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

They are renting the property like anybody would rent a property. Once we give notice that that rental period is going to finish, then that is the end of that rental agreement and that is it. We then

sell the property as a straightforward commercial sale at market rates and whoever buys the property has no connection or relationship with the Fire Service or indeed the Western Fire Station at all.

The Deputy of St. John:

This issue of the lease is really an irrelevance, is it not?

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

The only issue with the lease is that we give the current tenant the appropriate notice, as any landlord would do; they would finish in the arrangement.

The Deputy of St. John:

Right, so we are getting down to the nub of this. There is going to be this chap who is currently employed at the fire station turfed out on to the street and having to find a property which is at a market rate.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I would not describe it like that. It is like any arrangement between a landlord and a tenant ...

The Deputy of St. John:

I choose words that would not be considered to be parliamentary but this, in effect, is what is likely to happen.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Ultimately, like any rental if you rent a property you know at some stage you do not own it and you may not be able to continue to rent, and those conversations you can have with any relationship between a landlord and the tenant. It is never a nice thing, is it?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, as long as we know where we stand with this one.

Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, absolutely.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

With the loss of that rental income, is that accounted for in the base budget?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, it has, the £20,000 has been added to the base budget of the Fire Service to make up for the loss of rental income.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The cost of maintaining the fire station, would that person still be doing it or will you employ someone to do that? Because you could be employing somebody at £20,000 a year, I would imagine, or at least that if it is a maintenance job full time?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think in reality the maintenance of the Western Fire Station is not a full-time job, any more than the maintenance of the fire station in town is a full-time job.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I do not want to go too long on this but you have a plan for that?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes. Well, it will be managed by the management team of the Fire Service.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. I am conscious we have about 15 minutes left and we have got a few questions to do, so are you okay with me moving on, Deputy Higgins?

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Yes, fine, I think we have exhausted that. Thank you.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay: "The States of Jersey Police, through the application of enhanced workforce planning, will implement a vacancy factor recruitment into approximately 1 per cent of staff costs. It is part of the efficiency and rebalancing programme." It seems efficiency and rebalancing are 2 different things. The proposal states: "There will be some disruption to customer service, depending on the area of service when a vacancy is held." It goes on to state: "This will be mitigated by a senior management team." Can you confirm the process that will be undertaken to mitigate any issues that possibly will arise?

[15:45]

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes. I am trying to see if the Chief of Police is on the line. He will be in a much better position to answer that question than I am. I can see his telephone number up.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, I do not think his technology is working, I am not sure.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Deputy Ward, can you hear me?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, we can, there we go.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

There we go and forgive me, it seems the Teams is not behaving very well; the old-fashioned method. Sorry, the question is around the 1 per cent vacancy factor, is that correct, Deputy Ward?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes. It says here: "Disruption to service will be mitigated by the senior management team." I just want to confirm the process that will undertake to mitigate those factors or that issue.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Firstly, I am not anticipating any impact on service, particularly not front line service. Throughout, with the support of the Minister, we have looked to maintain and indeed enhance what we would describe as front line services. This process of a 1 per cent vacancy factor, as you will know and other Members will know, is part of the natural churn of an organisation and exceeded the opportunities for when people leave and when people come in. It is that sort of gap where we can drive efficiencies. As you quite rightly added, there is an awful lot of words used around efficiencies and savings and whatever. The question you asked me was more around the process. I meet with my senior team every week. That includes also the finance business partner; we meet, as I said, every week. The savings plans are reviewed to make sure that we are on target, if you like. The most important thing, though, is ensuring that we are still delivering service. Of course, as you will have already heard in this meeting, referenced very early on by the Minister, we have seen over the last few months an additional 30 police officers. Next week we will launch our community policing team as well. Where we will look to make those savings, though, and this is my final point before I pause for any questions, is of course what we would call more of our back-office functions, how we can drive efficiencies. Some of that also includes things like overtime. We have really drilled down on overtime this year and indeed for the first time, I think, in memory the likelihood is that our overtime budget will be underspent. I will pause for any questions, Chair.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, I think what I would put in here now is one of the submissions we have had was concerned about this and I will read you a part of that because I think it is important. It says: "This efficiency suggests that the States of Jersey Police service will be operating without some positions being filled, leading to saving in staff cost. This carries risks in terms of quality of service and impact on staff that will be required to pick up the workload created by the vacant posts. Again, our experience is that where staff are subjected to increased and unmanaged workload, this has further detrimental impacts on individuals in terms of increased anxiety and stress." I think that is the reassurance that was needed whenever a 1 per cent vacancy load is being planned for, that that does not create extra workload and stress on other members of the team, be it front line or back-office services, which could be seen as equally important in terms of function of an organisation.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I cannot disagree with any of those comments and it is part of my job and the senior team to make sure that we seize opportunities where some positions are not filled. For example, there have been some positions that have not been filled in States of Jersey Police for over 12 months. The question would be: do you need those posts into the future? My job is to make sure that there is not a disproportionate impact and some of the work that we are doing is also looking at internal and external demand because we sometimes generate our own demand and then put pressure on some of our staff. In the interests of that question and to the author of that question, you can be reassured that I will be monitoring that very carefully, particularly as we go into 2021.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I will just ask the question: the phrase "customer service" is used in the proposal. What do you mean by customer service in those terms? We think of the police and we think of officers and so on but in terms of customer service of when you ring the police up, when you ...

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I think it is a very wide phrase, is it not?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I think for me it is about the service we are giving to Islanders and I think that is everything. I think that is the people that come into our reception centre at the front of the police station, particularly those people who call us, particularly those on emergency calls, but it also includes services we

provide to helping young people through the whole gambit. I think it is very much a catch-all phrase, which I think you have just alluded to.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Do you think there are any areas that are more likely to be affected than others?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

The areas that would be affected more than others would be what I have described as not always a helpful title or a description is our back-office functions, particularly where we have got unnecessary, onerous, bureaucratic admin functions, which probably do not always provide the best service. My commitment and one of the principles I work to is we will look to maintain our front line officers and indeed, as you have seen, we have increased them and our savings will come from the back.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Sorry, did you have a question, Mike?

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Yes, I was just saying please give us an example of some back-office functions that he thinks could be remodelled or changed.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Deputies, I cannot give you an example of that, but what I can give you is we are currently going through what is described as our staff review. Some people have called them T.O.M.s (target operating models) in other departments. Our staff review started a number of months ago. It is due to go out to consultation in the next few weeks. The results of that - that is a full consultation in December 2020, to just correct myself, with a view to having our outcomes around the first part of the new year - is looking at our support staff functions and where we can legitimately and appropriately make efficiencies. I will be able to answer that question in a lot more detail in the early part of the new year.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

This is an ongoing project that will spread over 2021 to 2024 with a saving of £215,000 per year in the description of the proposal. Is that a maintained saving of £215,000 per year or is that an additional £215,000?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I think if that means it is a recurring saving, is that the question you are asking?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

There is a recurring saving, as indeed there are across from 2021 to 2024 recurring savings, where we will continue to drive those efficiencies.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Is that not effectively just simply cutting the workforce by 1 per cent?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

No, not at all.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I understand that it means that you can hold these vacancies and different positions, but in the end if you maintain a 1 per cent staff vacancy factor you will only ever target 99 per cent of your staff positions being filled. To me that strikes as the same thing.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I think that is a fair question. I think there is every likelihood that the staff review will certainly look at how we deploy our police staff colleagues and I think we will see something coming out of that into the new year. Certainly, it could be that some members will have seen vacancy factors - certainly in my experience over the years I have seen vacancy factors - of as much as 5 per cent and sometimes higher. It does not necessarily mean that headcount drops, it means that we identify the savings that occur between when someone leaves and someone is recruited and that time lag, which is often a number of months between getting someone else in and the savings that an organisation makes in that gap in between. I do not see it necessarily as being a 1 per cent reduction in staff.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Do you think it will only be that 1 per cent vacancy rate that you run, so it will not grow from that? Because ...

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Sorry, forgive me, I interrupted you.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

No, that is all right.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I have no plans to increase that vacancy factor whatsoever, but I think it is a sensible thing to put in any particular budget.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It is just that the proposal says that there will be no anticipated impact on sustainable well-being or unintended consequences. Then we are just wondering about the process that had been undertaken to evaluate that conclusion because it is a conclusion that comes from the planning itself. How will you evaluate that? You are in a very challenging time at the moment, let us not deny it. We do recognise that and I think that is where this question is coming from. The last thing we want to do is see staff under extra pressure, obviously.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Yes, and I am very grateful to the panel and to the hearing to recognise that, but in many ways so are all the emergency services and indeed the other Government Departments in recognition of the impact that COVID has had over the last sort of 8 to 10 months or so. I think there are some good things to come out of this because what this does is it makes departments, organisations and police forces start to look at where the waste is; there is another word for you, Chair. We talk about efficiencies and various other phrases, but it also forces us to look at what we do that is wasteful, that is wasteful effort. Part of this process and one of the benefits that comes out of budgets and when we have challenges is we start to look at where there is waste and drive more efficiencies.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

There will not be any impact on other services? Because they are increasingly interconnected now, we have seen that.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

If I may say so, I think that is a brilliant question because certainly in my experience where some departments may make savings it can cause a cost to another. I will give a very basic example, not that it is a real-life example here in Jersey, far from it in fact, but if Children's Services, for example, let us say, close all youth clubs because of a funding issue, that means more young people are on the streets and then more young people may get themselves into trouble or become victims of crime. That is not an example here in Jersey but I am just using it as an example because I think that something ... that as we progress through 2021 and look at the savings we have to make, that a saving in one department is not a cost somewhere else, and that is probably something the panel would want to continue to look at.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, you anticipated my next question there but that is exactly the point. Sometimes innocuous effects in one place have an effect somewhere else. That leads us to a point. At what point would a success or otherwise of this proposal be reviewed during the 4 years? Because I imagine surely it must be reviewed; 4 years is a long time and particularly in our current climate.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Yes, 4 years feels like for ever, given what has gone on in the last few months or so.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, absolutely.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

You are absolutely right. I think certainly my own governance arrangements within S.O.J.P. (States of Jersey Police) and of course as part of J.H.A. (Jersey Hospitality Association) with Julian Blazeby, we all meet regularly, that is myself and my other emergency service colleagues and others, where we can share experiences and get a sense of where the challenges are. I am very confident about the governance arrangements, just to reassure you.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. I am conscious of time. We have about 2 minutes left. I think I have covered everything I wanted to on that. Deputy Pointon and Deputy Higgins, do you have anything that you want to ask in the final few minutes so we do not miss anything?

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Not from me, thank you.

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, I just wanted to qualify, Chair, in relation to vacancies, what is the mechanism for keeping a vacancy open? If somebody gives their notice in, generally speaking, people in the sort of roles that you have in your department, people need to give 3 months' notice. Do you not advertise immediately or do you keep advertising until that person has left post, so you have some wriggle room, as it were, that is a vacant post and you have, effectively, created that vacancy because you have not advertised to replace?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Thank you, Deputy Pointon. I particularly like that phrase "wriggle room". The way it simply works is, of course, as you will know, we do not know when our staff are going to be leaving us. Sometimes

we do from a police officer's perspective if they are approaching the end of their police service and will take their pension, so we can predict that. But it is much, much harder for our police staff colleagues and it is a simple process of once they have put in their resignation we will then make an assessment as to whether or not we are going to fill that vacancy. We do not do it routine, so it is not just, well, we will fill it, particularly as we are doing a staff review. While we do that staff review, say, for example, it happened on Monday and we decided it was a post that we just must have - often with police staff it is one month's notice as well so we can respond more quickly if we need to - we will probably look in the short term at a fixed-term contract until we are absolutely certain that we will need that post. But it would not be a matter of course that we would say no; in fact, ordinarily it would be a question of, yes, we will fill it but probably on a temporary basis, given the review.

[16:00]

The Deputy of St. John:

Thank you for that.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I will just finish off by asking the Minister one sort of general question. What does he see as the biggest challenges from the Government that he faces in the Government Plan for next year? What are the greatest threats to it being implemented and working as successfully as he wants it to be? Without using the words COVID, but that is a bit unfair I suppose.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Are you talking about the Government Plan as a whole?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I mean the ones under your remit.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, except we cannot get away from COVID, I am afraid; that is going to be the issue for the next few months. The emergency services have responded incredibly well to the last 6 or 7 months and they have kept us safe and it includes the police, the Fire Service, Customs and Immigration who have looked after the borders and involved with the track and trace. The Ambulance Service, particularly at the beginning, were under terrific pressure and full marks to them and their management team for the renewed structures they have put in place to make sure that they were not overwhelmed, in the same way that the hospital was not overwhelmed. Because this is going to continue to be the main threat to our services but I have every confidence in all of them to make sure that whatever happens in the U.K. and France and around us, the Island will be protected and

looked after as well as it possibly can be. I know we are grateful to the emergency services that I have mentioned, and I think the Island should be too and I believe that they are. Of course, the other issue we have coming up just in a month or 2's time is Brexit, so that is another issue which we do not know - we have some idea - how that is going to impact on individuals and businesses, depending on whether there is a deal or whether there is not a deal. Those 2 issues are the ones that are likely to impact or are a threat to us over the next few months, but I think we are well equipped to deal with those threats.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Thank you. I suppose I will just finish with one suggestion, which is there are a lot of terms in terms of efficiency, rebalancing, et cetera. Perhaps what we need to do is recategorise our ambulance and police and fire staff as high-value residents and then things will be a lot better for them. With that said, I just ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Highly valued residents they are.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Unless there is anything anyone wants to add, is there anything else you want to add, Mike or Trevor?

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

No. I just want to say thank you to the people who took part in this meeting. It has been very informative, thank you.

The Deputy of St. John:

No, I have nothing else and thank you, everyone, for the contribution.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, and I will echo that, so thank you very much to everyone and with that I will call the hearing to a close. Thank you.

[16:03]