

Government of Jersey
Union Street | St Helier | Jersey | JE2 3DN

Deputy Catherine Curtis
Chair of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel
By email

13 March 2025

Dear Chair,

Follow up matters from the Public Hearing on 27th February 2025

I write in response to your letter of 28 February, following the quarterly public hearing on 27 February. I include below further detail on areas as requested, and answers to your questions which you did not have time to ask.

- The Terms of Reference for the independent review into how the Police, Law Officers' Department, and Courts handle cases (as recommended by the VAWG taskforce); and

A copy of the Terms of reference for the independent VAWG criminal justice system review has been included as an appendix, which has been provided in confidence.

- The cost of a body scanner for La Moye Prison, including confirmation of whether funding for this has been previously requested and / or rejected

Further to the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) report, options for purchasing a body scanner for the Prison are being reviewed, however a business case to obtain the necessary funding has not yet been bought forward and the cost has not yet been formally scoped, and quotes have not been obtained. As such no request has been denied.

Whilst this equipment is not available security risks are mitigated by searching procedures. The States of Jersey Prison Service is actively working on improvement of dynamic risk assessments to address the concerns raised in the HMIP report. This will ensure that all decisions to authorise searching are fully justified, proportionate to identified risk and aligned with best practises in security management.

- Business case – transfer for SOJAS from JHA to HCS

There is no need for a business case document for the reintegration of the States of Jersey Ambulance Service into Health and Care Jersey, as it does not require additional investment. I have agreed with the Minister for Health and Social Services that this move should happen, and the Chief Officers are working together, with their teams and project support from Health & Care Jersey, to ensure a smooth transition.

I am confident that this will give the attention to detail needed and the Minister for Health and Social Services and I look forward to being updated on their progress in due course.

Ambulance, Fire and Rescue Headquarters

I was pleased to provide the panel with a Private Briefing on this matter on Thursday 6 March. In accordance with that briefing, I provide the following answers as a summary of some of the information discussed.

1. Minister, please can you share any concrete timeline or updated feasibility findings regarding Ambulance and Fire station relocations or upgrades?

As the panel are aware, there is no longer an intention to create a joint Ambulance, Fire & Rescue facility. Separate developments for each of Ambulance, and Fire & Rescue are being planned, and high-level feasibility work is nearing completion in order that we can properly understand the most appropriate way of delivering those facilities.

Working with the Minister for Health and Social Services, we will recognise the implications of the move of the Ambulance Service to Health and Care Jersey and I understand that consideration will be given to alternative locations for the Ambulance Service as part of the wider New Healthcare Facility work.

This work will then be held until investment funding is available for these projects in the Long-Term Capital Plan. These will be two separate projects which will require governance via two different sponsoring departments. It is anticipated that substantive work will progress in 2028.

2. How are you ensuring staff safety and building compliance at the existing Ambulance and Fire & Rescue sites, given known issues with building age, infrastructure, and capacity constraints?

I recognise and share the concerns of the panel in relation to the ongoing viability of the current sites pending their replacements. There has been condition surveys of both sites, and action taken as a result:

Ambulance Station - Works across 2024 and 2025 to date include:

- Full renewal of electrical switch boards
- New generator installed and full electrical drop testing and general electrical testing completed
- IPAC compliant floors installed in ground floor communal areas and IPAC compliant walls installed in key station areas
- Full decoration works and repairs across site, refurbishment works to all staff and stores areas ongoing including facilities review and renewal
- Renewal of tarmac on Ambulance vehicle run in
- Portacabins fully installed with compliant structural engineering report, adding 4 rooms to site
- New Fire system installed across site; new fire complaint doors installed on rear of station, workshop and oxygen stores
- Fire audit commissioned to review doors, spaces and routes
- Window Audit commissioned across site
- Roof survey has been completed

- Garage floors repaired and re-rendered
- New offices installed on station 1st floor including new toilet facilities and hot water installations.
- New security fencing installed externally

A Jersey Property Holdings (JPH) Service Level Agreement is in place alongside a reviewed Planned Preventative Maintenance schedule as well as additional work in partnership on reconditioning project works.

For Fire & Rescue, following the condition survey a programme of works and building improvements are underway to modify the site. This work is being dictated by a risk profile, developed in collaboration with JPH, and has already included the installation of a brand-new fire detection system, back-up generator and a refit of all front facing windows.

JPH are responsible for the overall maintenance and compliance of the property, and we are actively working in partnership with them to ensure staff safety.

- 3. Minister, you referred to this as part of a “puzzle” involving Gas Place and Rouge Bouillon School. Can you describe what progress has been made to coordinate with the Minister for Infrastructure and Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning on a cohesive plan that meets all departmental needs?**

I, and officers, continue to work constructively with fellow Ministers and officers. Due to the timing of investment in relation to these projects, this is high-level activity at this stage, and we are all committed to ensuring that the solutions we are working towards meet all departmental needs. I am confident that our emerging plans for the Fire & Rescue Headquarters will continue to complement the future needs of Rouge Bouillon School, and we will strive to ensure that is the case.

Police Complaints and Independent Oversight

- 4. Minister, will you explore the possibility of engaging an external body, similar to the UK’s Independent Office for Police Conduct (IPCC / IOPC), to investigate certain serious complaints against the States of Jersey Police and ensure independent oversight?**

There is already the facility to request an external force to conduct an investigation of a complaint where that complaint is, for example, particularly wide ranging or significant. I consider that this works well and have no plans to make any changes in that regard.

- 5. How do you monitor the effectiveness of the Jersey Police Complaints Authority (JPCA)? In particular, can you describe recent improvements or plans to enhance the transparency and timeliness of complaint investigations?**

The effectiveness of the Authority’s actions is monitored by monthly briefings with the Chief Officer of Justice and Home Affairs, and a minimum of 2 briefings per annum with the Minister and /or the Assistant Minister. The Authority publishes an annual report which is laid before the States Assembly. The Authority regularly (currently monthly) meets with the Police and Law Officers Department to ensure timely progress of complaints and their resolution.

With regard to recent improvements, the Authority has recently published and applied on its website a complaints procedure in respect of complaints about its members, staff and work.

Looking forward, once the new Regulations, which are currently in the final stages of Law Drafting, are in force, this will lead to process revisions which will be published on the Authority's website when agreed.

6. Minister, we note the JPCA's membership is often drawn from experienced professionals in the Island. How is potential conflict of interest managed to ensure the highest public confidence in the complaints system?

Conflicts of Interest have the potential to be endemic in a small island setting. However, members are expected to highlight any that may appear during the conduct of their duties, and these will either be recorded, depending on their materiality, or the member will step aside. All members go through a DBS and Vetting process on appointment and are expected to abide by the members code of conduct based on the "Nolan Principles" - the seven principles of public life.

Youth Justice

7. Minister, in summer 2024 it was indicated that the Youth Justice Strategy was nearly ready for release and during oral questions in the States Assembly on 10th December 2024, you stated that a final version was ready for release in January 2025. Could you clarify the reasons for the delay for releasing this strategy and confirm the revised publication date?

The Youth Justice Roadmap is at an advanced stage, and the Assistant Minister is leading on this.

Partners across the system met at the end of January and were briefed on the final version (which has been shared with the Council of Ministers and the Panel). A Child Friendly Version has also been produced.

Following feedback, there are some minor amendments which we are further considering ensuring alignment with other key areas of work.

Throughout the process of writing the roadmap, consideration has been given to how we can use the feedback children and young people have provided about growing up in Jersey and interaction with services, including the Youth Justice System.

The Youth Justice Roadmap has potential to impact on a child's rights in some cases, therefore a Children's Rights Impact Assessment is currently being finalised to evidence the consideration given on the direct or indirect impact of the roadmap on children's rights. This important process will enable us to identify whether we have given due consideration & adequately reflected the views and experiences of children who could be affected by the roadmap ahead of final publication.

- 8. Also, during oral questions in the States Assembly 10th December 2024, you stated that stakeholder feedback led to the strategy being viewed as “too aspirational.” Could you specify which particular elements or objectives were removed or modified between the earlier draft and updated versions, and explain why they were deemed unachievable?**

In May 2024, a stakeholder meeting was held to discuss the near ‘final draft’ of the Youth Justice Roadmap which included a detailed action list. During this meeting, stakeholder feedback indicated that the proposed roadmap was not fully cognisant of the current Youth Justice ‘here and now’ situation and as such the proposed actions were too aspirational as they did not consider the existing challenges in the system. Stakeholders were also asked to provide written feedback, and further discussions were held with individual stakeholder groups.

In addition to this, stakeholders with allocated actions were asked to provide further feedback to gain a full understanding as to the anticipated resourcing required, achievability and timeline to deliver the roadmap. We asked stakeholders to ‘RAG’ (red, amber, green) rate the priority level of their actions in addition to providing information and a schedule for delivery of the actions.

In doing this activity, stakeholders continued to raise concerns that whilst the roadmap clearly and rightly sought to shift the focus towards prevention, we need to understand the challenges in the ‘here and now’ and address these concerns to ensure that this new vision did not fall short of its evidence-based intentions.

It was also repeatedly noted that with a current lack of additional resourcing to deliver the roadmap, taking an approach focused on individual services rather than a multi-agency approach could inevitably lead to further silo working rather than developing a multi-agency systemic approach.

It was decided to therefore take an approach in the roadmap which focused on understanding and maximising existing resourcing and addressing challenges within the system. This roadmap seeks to create a safer community by addressing the challenges faced by children involved in offending behaviours. However, it is crucial that from the outset we acknowledge, understand and address the systemic challenges that hinder our ability to achieve better outcomes for these children. These challenges have become increasingly evident throughout the consultancy period in the development of this roadmap therefore it is important that we take an approach which enables us to have a comprehensive understanding of these to inform what further resources and changes are required to deliver the more ‘aspirational’ actions from the roadmap.

- a. Could you clarify whether resource constraints have been a key factor in revising the strategy?**

Currently within Justice & Home Affairs, there is only the Chief Officer and one part time Officer who have a focus on Justice within their roles. As such resourcing is limited within JHA with regards to Justice work however the Officer has worked on the Youth Justice Roadmap consistently from May to date.

- 9. Minister also in the oral questions you referenced that the ‘Building a Safer Community’ initiative has now been operating for nearly a year. Beyond school-based activities, could you outline what has been delivered so far under this programme, including any tangible outcomes or progress on youth prevention efforts?**

Over the past year, since the launch of the Building a Safety Community Framework there has been a considerable amount of work undertaken by the BASC Coordinator to establish the BASC

Framework. It should be noted that a support officer was not in place until December 2024 and as such the BASC Coordinator initially focused on working with colleagues to design and deliver the new BASC Education Day which has now been delivered to nearly 1400 students in the Island and is now being coordinated by the BASC Support Officer.

In addition to this, below is a list of different workstreams which have been undertaken under the BASC Framework:

1. **Youth Justice Roadmap** – The BASC Coordinator took on responsibility for the Youth Justice Roadmap in May 2024 and has been responsible for working with stakeholders to finalise the Roadmap. The Roadmap will be coordinated by the BASC Coordinator.
2. **BASC Data Partnership** – A BASC Data Partnership has been created to facilitate cross-agency collaboration, and improved data accessibility in community safety research and reporting. It has 35 representatives across 19 data functions within government and the wider community who provide data, analysis and governance to support and contribute towards community safety. The Partnership has begun a Partnership Data Profile to streamline sharing of collective data, insights and intelligence.
3. **Beach Safety Campaign** – Working with SOJP, BASC supported a Beach Safety Campaign.
4. **St Brelade's Bay Anti-Social Behaviour** – The BASC Coordinator worked with me and the police to undertake a stakeholder meeting in St Brelade's Bay, using Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) following reports of young people engaging in anti-social behaviours. Over 40 people attended the workshop which worked through data, looked at the concerns and designed an action plan which was then coordinated through BASC. This work resulted in:
 - a. **25% reduction in ASB June – September 2024** compared to same period in 2023
 - b. Only 1 crime reported for 2024
 - c. Increase in reporting from stakeholders
5. **Facilitated Prisoners Week**
 - a. Restorative Justice Workshops
6. **OBA Certified Professional** – The BASC Coordinator has qualified as an OBA certified professional and has lead OBA workshops with:
 - a. Prisoners
 - b. Prison Staff
 - c. JHA Business Support Unit
 - d. Cross Government Commissioning Board
7. **7 Pathways to reducing reoffending**
 - a. Working with the prison, work is being undertaken by the Coordinator to deliver a strategic overview of the 7 pathways to reduce reoffending using OBA. This supports the need to improve 'purposeful activity' within the prison as recently highlighted in the Prison Inspection. To date the following has been undertaken as part of this work:
 - i. (OBA) workshops delivered to all Pathway Leads and the Prisoner Council.
 - ii. One-to-one support sessions in progress to streamline pathway delivery, improve data collection and quality and devise purposeful action plans using an OBA approach.

8. VAWG

- a. BASC are providing support to the Policy team to ensure that output from the VAWG taskforce recommendations are built into ongoing delivery. Over time responsibility for the oversight of the VAWG recommendations will move under the BASC framework.

Customs and Excise System for the Administration of Revenue (CAESAR)

10. Minister, with regards to the CAESAR system, used to administer revenue and customs data, can you clarify if there are any current or future plans to review its suitability for increased demands, and has there been any discussion around replacing or upgrading it to ensure it remains fit for purpose?

CAESAR is a bespoke freight handling system which is iterative in nature. JCIS maintain a strong relationship with the software developers and continuous development work is undertaken to ensure that CAESAR remains fit for purpose, ensuring that Jersey can meet its trade obligations and collect all import duties liable.

Following the Barriers to Business report commissioned by the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development in 2023, JCIS led on a joint consultation in conjunction with Jersey Business specifically to identify and focus on CAESAR development for local businesses to ease trade on import and export. This work is ongoing and forms the strategy for CAESAR development in 2025/2026. Future development is also dependent on both international trade regulations and preparedness for any new local legislation in respect of import duties.

A procurement process was undertaken in 2022 in respect of a review of the freight handling system for Jersey, and there are no current plans to replace CAESAR.

11. Are you aware of any disability or accessibility audits undertaken in respect of CAESAR to ensure it is user-friendly for all employees or stakeholders who interact with the system?

No accessibility audits have been undertaken, however as part of both the user interface upgrade work in 2022 and the business interface upgrade work currently being undertaken, market research companies have been utilised to ensure the user experience is considered and developed accordingly.

12. Minister, could you advise if there have been any ongoing talks, either within your department or in collaboration with the Treasury, about a strategic approach to CAESAR's long-term development or integration with other digital systems in Government?

The Revenue Jersey and JCIS teams have a very close working relationship at both an operational and strategic level, with regular meetings, engagement and shared learning. Any significant development required, such as in preparation for the drop in the GST de minimis, is scoped and undertaken by JCIS in consultation with Revenue Jersey. CAESAR also generates a number of regular reports both monthly and quarterly which are shared directly with Revenue Jersey in respect of accounting transactions and administration of duty rates.

JCIS also work closely with other GoJ stakeholders, including I&E, in respect of the movement of goods, with constant consideration given to long term development and integration with other digital

systems. Work towards a robust Single Trade Window is ongoing, in collaboration with all relevant GoJ stakeholders.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. R. Hegarat". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Deputy Mary Le Hegarat
Minister for Justice and Home Affairs