

2016.03.22

3.8 Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the number of Jersey Police Authority meetings she has attended since her appointment:

I certainly hope this will not exceed 90 seconds. How many meetings has the Jersey Police Authority held since the Minister became Minister and how many has the Minister attended?

The Deputy of St. Peter (The Minister for Home Affairs):

I am grateful to the Deputy for his question. The Jersey Police Authority operate independently and schedules its own meetings as the Authority judges necessary. I am therefore only able to comment upon ministerial meetings with the Authority. I hold meetings regularly with the chairman of the Authority and for example have met with the chairman on 4 occasions over the past 10 months. Further meetings are scheduled for April, June, October and December of this year. In addition, I was pleased to attend a joint meeting with the Chairman of the Authority and the States of Jersey Police Force in December last year in order to review a proposed new operating model for the police. A follow-on joint meeting with the Authority and the police took place in February and was attended by the Assistant Minister for Home Affairs in my absence. Further joint meetings of the Authority and the police at which either the Assistant Minister or I are due to be present are scheduled for July and October this year. I continue to keep in regular contact with the Police Authority. Indeed I have a meeting with the Authority scheduled to take place later today.

3.8.1 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I thank the Minister for her response. Given then how long the Jersey Police Authority has been in operation, given that it is to be the bridge between the Minister and the police force and the way that it operates, can the Minister please explain to the Assembly how well she thinks that it has been going given the small amount of meetings that she has attended with the full authority?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I have never heard the description of a bridge between the police force and the Minister. The work of the Jersey Police Authority is to ensure that the police force is run effectively and efficiently and we are each independent bodies doing our own work. I have been very pleased to meet with the chairman of the Authority and to discuss matters with other members of the Authority individually and I am very satisfied by the relationship.

3.8.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

Can the Minister confirm when she meets with the Chairman whether the meetings are formal, informal, whether they are public or private or whether they are minuted or not?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

These meetings have been private meetings with a full note taken.

3.8.3 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Could the Minister tell us how many meetings she has had with the Chairman alone and how many meetings she has had with the Authority because her answers seem to fudge the issue? I would like to know whether the private meetings are the only meetings she has had with the Authority. In fact just specify how many you have had with the Authority and the Chairman separately.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I think I did express that in my original answer but perhaps it was difficult as there was quite a long list. Essentially, personally I have not attended a meeting with the full Police Authority simply because those meetings have not been scheduled on days when I have been able to attend. The Assistant Minister has attended one, as has the Chief Minister in my absence on one particular occasion, and indeed we have worked with the executive officer of the Police Authority to find suitable dates in the future whereby I will be able to attend.

3.8.4 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

Supplementary. Can the Minister tell us again how many private meetings she has had with the Chairman and if she thinks that is a satisfactory arrangement for controlling the police or enabling the Police Authority to control the police?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I have had 4 meetings with the chairman over a period of 10 months and I am satisfied with that frequency.

3.8.5 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you, and if the term “the bridge” has not come to the Minister beforehand may I ask her to go and read the Hansard when this was originally presented to the Assembly by Senator Le Marquand who made it quite clear that the point of the Authority was to separate the operational aspects of the police and the Minister in order to separate some of the pressure and maintain the independence between all the different estates as it has been going forward so that she is able to fully understand the role of the Minister of the Jersey Authority and of the Police Force.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I thank the Deputy but I am rather satisfied that I understand my role.