

STATES OF JERSEY

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel Proposed Relocation of States of Jersey Police Headquarters

THURSDAY, 29th NOVEMBER 2012

Panel:

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour (Chairman)
Connétable M.P.S. Le Troquer of St. Martin
Connétable S.W. Pallett of St. Brelade

Witnesses:

Mr. J. Breeze (President, States of Jersey Police Association)
Mr. P. Varley (Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association)

Also present:

Mr. M. Haden (Scrutiny Officer)

[14:00]

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour (Chairman):

Good afternoon, gentlemen, and thank you very much for coming and seeing us today at such short notice. We would also like to thank you for all the collated responses that we have received as well as your response to those concerns. That has been very helpful to us. I should make the point that there are some matters which we will need to discuss in private later on so I will be asking the members of the public and the media to clear the room and the hearing will carry on for just a little bit, but to make everyone aware of the proceedings. If I can just begin by asking the President can you explain to us, so we are clear, the remit and the role of the Police Association?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Okay. That is governed by the Jersey Police Force Law and we represent all police officers in matters of discipline ... in fact, I can read it verbatim for you.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

With a magnifying glass.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

“We shall handle all matters affecting the immediate interests of the force, namely conditions of service which shall include pay, pensions, appeals and allowances. We represent and assist in relation to disciplinary matters as far as any statute allows and also any matter affecting the welfare and efficiency of its members, of police officers.”

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you. In that case, just for the record, can you confirm that some of the concerns raised by your membership are some matters which you are unable to be able to deal with?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

That is correct. In the context of this, it would be a matter of welfare and efficiency, and matters of public parking and transport and traffic flow and stuff would not fall under our remit. We have kept it strictly to matters which will affect the welfare of our officers.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you. If I can just probe a few questions to your formal response to the concerns raised by the police officers in relation to the proposed new headquarters at Green Street. I note you provide a brief history about how we got here or did we get here. You note that the instigation of seeking the membership's view was based on the letter of the scrutiny panel, although we understand there were some issues also raised at the police's A.G.M. (annual general meeting) and wonder if you could just explain.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

The reason for, in effect, canvassing our membership was prompted by a letter from Scrutiny in which it sought the view of the Police Association. So we thought it would only be fair that we would canvass our membership to give a true reflective view and we can only answer that question by asking them. It was always the intention to do that and then subsequently our annual general meeting came and went and it was just during that that some members raised some concerns at that point and we informed them that they would be canvassed in due course. So, the decision to canvass the membership had already taken place. It just so happened that at our annual general meeting some officers further raised some concerns.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Can you explain why it was at such a late stage? Obviously this is an issue that has been going on for some period of time.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Yes. We received that letter ... I cannot remember the exact date but you will have a copy of that letter. We were going to have an annual general meeting. There were several positions which were being elected within our committee and the decision was taken that we would allow our A.G.M. to take place, then the new committee would be formed and that we would canvass the membership then. The date of the letter was 8th October. It was discussed with the then committee shortly afterwards and our A.G.M. was on 25th October.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Could you comment on whether any concerns were given to the Police Association prior to that date and whether they were put forward?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

If any, they would have only been of a verbal nature. I can confirm there was nothing in writing or any formal concerns received at that time.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Were any sought?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

No. We decided that we were going to seek them by way of canvass but we were going to wait until ... it was agreed that we would wait until we had had our A.G.M.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Deputy Judy Martin's proposition was lodged on 2nd October, so you did not start consulting or anything until after that date?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

We did not get the letter from scrutiny until 8th October.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

That is the scrutiny part of it, but with the management of the force and with the Property Holdings ...

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I am led to believe that throughout this whole process there was drop-ins for any member of staff to come and give a view, see the plans, speak to the architects, and they were arranged by senior management of the States of Jersey Police. So a view, if you like, was sought in that way.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Just to get it absolutely clear, the Association did not seek an official view from its membership until at least 8th October?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

That is correct. Well, it was after the 8th.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

After 23rd October. 23rd October was the annual general meeting.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

If you like, your letter stating that you wish to seek our views prompted us to say in order for us to give that formal view to you we must canvass the membership for that view.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

It is just the point that obviously the whole plan for this police HQ had been going on for some time before that and it was just for us to get a clear understanding about how it all came together. Thank you. You commented also in your statement that you received 21 written responses, although there is not a record of any verbal responses, bearing in mind what has been raised at the A.G.M. Can you give us any idea at all whether any verbal concerns have been expressed throughout this period?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Which period, Chairman?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Sorry, since 8th October.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I personally have not had people come to me and give me verbal concern, but I am sure people talk. It is only human nature that they would have been talking. Have you had any?

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Nothing specific. By canvassing the membership we put an email out and we contacted every single member of our membership saying: "If you have any concerns please let us know as soon as possible." So if there had been any verbal concerns we would have expected our membership to put those in writing to us as a result of our communication to them.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Can you confirm that the correspondence you received was all anonymous, that they were not asked for any names in terms of the comments that were made?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

We know who they are because they have replied by email to us. Some of them are saying: "I do not want my name to be revealed about this concern" and we have turned around and said: "That is fine." To encourage people to partake in that process we agreed that we would take their concerns, cut and paste and provide them to initially senior management and then in turn yourselves.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Considering it is such a sensitive issue, would it not have been better if they had been able to put those concerns to you totally anonymously without any record of who they were? I am just thinking of the small number, potentially 10 per cent. One of the comments that is made is it is only a small number, a small representative group or small group. Do you not think you would have had wider views and, in terms of numbers, a stronger view back if you had done it totally anonymously?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Well, there is potential for that. We did not take that route because we felt that our membership would trust their police association to deal with that issue sensitively.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

It is something we do every day. We represent our members every day and they bring concerns to us. We do not always tell everybody who the concerns come from. That would be self-defeating.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Just to confirm, you are just representing police officers as well?

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

That is correct, police officers.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

There are many civilian members of staff as well.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

We do not represent staff. We really have to be quite clear that our representation is for police officers.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Have they in any way been canvassed?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

You would have to speak to their representative.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

So maybe over half the people using the proposed building would not have given their views to you.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I take your point, Connétable, but it is not a matter for the Police Association.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

I can understand that, but it puts another perspective on it that I think we might look at.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes, you are right. Thank you. I also note in your letter you say that this process has been productive and that some areas for minor modifications of the plans have been identified. I wonder if you are able to tell us what they have been.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

One which a member of our committee brought up during our meetings with the project team and the senior management was that if someone was to attend at the police station who then had to be arrested you had to take them out of the front doors and then round the side of the building and then into the custody door. Also there would be vehicular movement there and that is an officer safety issue, it is a security issue, and it might necessitate someone being handcuffed for that purpose when you might not ordinarily handcuff them, when you could take them straight in through the police station to the custody suite internally. We raised that point and the feedback we got was that that is quite correct and they are looking to have a passageway through from the front desk to custody, which was not in the existing plans.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Can I bring up the issue of parking for officers. In your reply you say: "It is clear there is a lot of concern over lack of parking for officers", and I think that came across in the 21 comments that you did receive: "Cannot be expected to find and pay for their own parking." "No doubt certain citizens will work out which are our vehicles and worried about malicious damage." Another one: "Complete lack of car parking." That seems to be a vein that runs through many of the comments. Can you give us your view about what is available and what you would like to see and what discussions you have had with management in regard to officers' parking?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

On a positive note, it has been identified there is 50 spaces for pedal cycles and 50 spaces for motor cycles, so we take that as positive, and that will deal with a large percentage of police officer parking as a lot of officers travel in that way at the moment. Ideally we would like to see some provision for parking, particularly in relation to operational callouts. If we have a callout or an incident requires officers to attend quickly and have to be operationally deployed there may be problems that they are seeking parking spaces around the area and that is going to prolong that

process of them getting to the station for deployment. That is one issue. The other issue of staff parking just relates to police officers trying to find somewhere to park. It is a problem that everyone experiences, police officer or not, so there will be several viewpoints on that. Ideally, yes, we would like to have a site or have provision for parking for in particular shift workers and more. Yes, we would love to have that.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Some officers did mention their own personal safety, not a lot but there were a couple who said about their own personal safety in relation to where they parked their vehicles.

[14:15]

Have you got any comment to make on that, whether it is a concern for yourselves? Also has there been an issue in the past with the current police station and the parking arrangements for that station?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

With the current situation you can walk across the road and very quickly into a car park which is up a side street. It is not easily identified as police parking and you are away from the area quite quickly so there is not really a problem with that. I think what they are alluding to is if they have to park some distance from the police station on a day and then they work through on into the night they will say that there is opportunity for them to encounter people that they have dealt with, aggressive people, and now they are off duty and in no contact with the police station and what have you. They perceive that to be an officer safety issue, and there is potential for that.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

To sum up, really what you would like to try to somehow find is specific car parking at a reasonable distance from the station that staff can use. The obvious place would be Green Street car park if dedicated parking could be found within that car park.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

That, indeed, would be a utopia for it but ...

The Connétable of St. Martin:

From what you are saying now as well then, I was just thinking that the arrangements at the moment are not very good but they are better than nothing. The car park has gradually got smaller and smaller, as we all know, in your current position. But in the plans we have got now there is no parking for cars, none whatsoever, and is it better we get it right at the beginning now at the new building stage so that there is parking available? We are going to have something new, the proposition was to have something brand new and that cannot be changed. Would you agree?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Absolutely. I can only agree, yes. I absolutely agree that if we could solve the issue of that and identify parking then, yes.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Another question raised from the comments from your membership is the suggestion that there was no consultation with custody staff on the layout of the custody suite, to our surprise. I wonder if you can confirm that you have had the opportunity to speak to custody staff and are able to inform us what consultation process has happened, if any.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I am aware that there was consultation and sessions for all departments to attend and give input, so I am quite surprised. It depends, it might have been that they have approached departmental managers of custody and got their view on the custody. I would be surprised if no one from custody was given the opportunity to have their view.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

If I can take you back to my initial question, have you actively gone out and spoken to any of the custody staff to ask them about this particular issue?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

We have canvassed our membership and asked them: "Please respond to us about any issue." So, in effect, yes, we have asked all of our staff.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

But not since you have received the responses here?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Since our canvass we have not gone out and asked again.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes, that is what I am asking, given that it was an issue raised in the responses.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

It was an issue raised that we then addressed with Mr. Taylor and we satisfied ourselves that the issues raised all complied with current doctrine.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

But just to confirm, since receiving these submissions the Police Association has not actively gone and sought the views of frontline custody staff. Is that correct?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

No, but what we have done is we have made this document available to everyone so that they can read it, see the answers, and if they are not satisfied with the answers or the stage we are at now then they can revert back to us. So they will have sight of all the answers that have been given and that has been posted on our website for all of them to see.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I think what we have been concerned about is we understand obviously that in some of the meetings that have taken place, consultation meetings, they seem to have been quite high level rather than lower ranks. Our concern and the reason for speaking to you is making sure all ranks of officers have had an opportunity to speak. The same applies with the custody, I think, as well. We wanted to be assured that those that are dealing with it on a day-to-day basis and have to deal with all the issues and the problems had an opportunity to put their views and have been consulted. That is really where I think I would like to see it, to know whether those officers have had input into the day-to-day running of the custody - I have been in there so I know how difficult it can be at times - and what input they have had in terms of how it has been arranged and what they felt about the arrangements in the new plans, for example.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I take that point, but I have to revert back to we have canvassed our membership about all aspects of the build. Some of them have come back about custody issues. We have sought to address or get answers to those issues and we have now posted that back to them and if anyone comes back further saying: "Well, that still does not answer what I was saying" then that is the process we are in at the moment.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

If I can explain a bit further. Our membership knows that we represent them in all matters in relation to their welfare and efficiency so if they have any concerns they know to approach us. We are there, we are available, we are in the station almost 24/7, or one of us is. So if they have concerns they can approach us. We have also posted the latest set of plans in relation to the new building in what is the central part of our police station, what we call the report writing room. So officers are fully aware that these are the plans, these are what we are going ahead with, and if they have any concerns they should approach us. All the concerns we have been approached with obviously you have been notified of by us in our documentation.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Would you not accept, though, that some police officers are concerned because they are not on a transfer to another force, they are going to work under the same management team, and if it becomes knowledge that they have complained ... I know from my personal experience as a police officer you know that in 3 months time or in 12 months time you may be looking for promotion or a move to another department, so there is a little bit of reluctance maybe by some of your members. I do not know, I cannot put those words into your mouth, but some members of the police force must be concerned about making public representation criticising.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

That is why we have sought the process we did that any responses that they gave us we assured them that their names would be kept from those responses.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

And they have been.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

And they have been. So there has been.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

It is full and open consultation as best we can get.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Just on custody, one of the concerns was the length of the corridor in custody, I think, which you have commented on. It says that your committee voted in or accepted what was being proposed. There is no real explanation as to what the thinking was behind accepting what has been put forward by management. Can you give us an overview of what you felt was acceptable about what seemed to be an issue with your officers? It is on the second page, the second paragraph.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

During our process of speaking to the project team and senior management, that was an issue that was brought up by I think it was one member. We have been reassured that it has been designed in and the project team tell us that they have seen it in at least a custody suite in the U.K. (United Kingdom) that it is something that is designed into a custody suite that if you have a prisoner that is non-compliant or violent bringing them into that area or they become non-compliant or violent that it is wide enough. We are satisfied that it is wide enough for 3 people and there are holding cells that the violent detainee can be put into along that corridor prior to getting to the charge desk where there may be other people, other detainees, that are compliant. So you are not going straight into a charge desk area with a violent prisoner where there are other detainees and then you end up with a further confrontation. So we are quite satisfied from a security point of view that it is appropriate.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Our current custody suite has a corridor that is longer than that and narrower than that already.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So it is an improvement on the current one?

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

It is an improvement on what we have got.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

A vast improvement.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Anything is.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Just one on the custody suite, something that was brought up, something that you have not commented on here, was the corridor that leads down to I think the yard at one end which seems to be another long corridor. I know there is access out into an exercise yard. Were there any concerns over that, the way that has been designed in? It seems a long corridor with almost like a blank entrance, unless that door has an easy accessibility to the outside area, if something kicked off down that corner, for example.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

No. The corridor that the concern is mainly about is they call it the 13-metre corridor. As a committee, we have had the explanation from the project team and we are satisfied that that is designed like that on purpose. Also it is the same length as, say, one of the cell passage corridors. There are several corridors leading down to the cells. It is the same length so you are going to walk down other corridors of equal length within the custody suite. We find that it is something that is not untoward.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

If I can just move you on to the location of the forensic garage in particular. Obviously it is a concern that has come through and while we have heard that there is potential and it would work that ... Well, can you clarify the position where you think a separate facility for the forensic garage would work and also whether you have any concerns that at this time a site, as I understand it, has not been identified?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

We are satisfied. There is a site that has been identified.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I beg your pardon.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I am led to believe, and I may stand corrected, that this was going to be at a site in La Collette.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes, and I believe that discussions with T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) are still ongoing at the moment.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

All right. Well, if it is this site in La Collette that has been identified to us, we have no concerns with it being there and we do not see that it would be problematic with it being there. We have been made aware that the management of C.S.I. (Crime Scene Investigation) have been consulted and are happy with the agreement. I am not an expert in C.S.I. and their working so we have to take some sort of faith that if the management of C.S.I. say that is not a problem or an issue then that is where we are with it. There is no police officers that currently work within C.S.I. so, while we have included it, it is the welfare and efficiency of police officers.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I have been told there is one.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

There is possibly one.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

But no concerns raised.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you. I will be careful about how I delve into this then. Therefore you do not see that there will be any ... no, you have covered that. I beg your pardon. It has been a long subject which I have to get my head round. Just talking then on office accommodation. Natural light, I believe, was flagged up as a concern to do with perhaps this might cause a difficulty in working conditions. Did you put that forward and what was the response?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Yes. That is in relation to custody specifically. We did and there is Home Office guidance in respect of the use of light tubes and the guidance, as was then, was that

light tubes can only be used, as I believe, in conjunction with natural light, so a combination of the 2. When we put that to the project team, we have been provided with initially an email from the Home Office in effect stating that the new technology, which is Heliobus technology, if the facts and figures of that lighting system can be verified then the Home Office have changed their stance and say they would be satisfied with that use of lighting. We have asked for information and documentation surrounding that data being checked. We have been supplied with that just recently and we say if the Home Office sign it off and agree that this new technology is indeed suitable lighting for that custody suite then we would have no objection to that.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

There is one comment made by one of your members. There is not only a case for detainees here but there is also a case for staff and one of his comments was: "I personally believe that proper, direct, natural sunlight is more important for staff than it is for the detainees."

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Equally for both, I would say.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Well, equally for both, but staff are there all the time. Detainees are only there for a very short period. Again, have you got any welfare issues or issues for your staff in the fact that it may be now Home Office compliant but it does not follow Home Office guidelines?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

If it is to the satisfaction of the Home Office that people can be detained in those conditions and staff can work in those conditions ... because the Home Office also in their initial guidance allude to staff working. If the Home Office say that this technology is acceptable and meets the required standards then the Police Association will accept that.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Even though it seems to be a bit of a fudge of a solution, that because of the change in the design of the building they have had to build above it and this is something that has come out of that.

[14:30]

This seems to be, from comments that are made, not a perfect solution but it is a solution that you are prepared to accept?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

If it meets the required standards, then we would say yes. If they are saying that this is acceptable for people to work in these conditions and this technology will provide the light necessary, and equally for detainees, and that is signed off by the Home Office then we would say, yes, we are satisfied with that.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Satisfied but it is not a perfect scenario? It is not a perfect world.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

No, it is not. If it meets the required standards then we have no objection to it.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you. Also we believe that some concerns were raised over open plan offices. While accepting that this might just have to be a cultural change that members may have to accept, they do make the observation that this might cause problems with things such as confidential phone calls and files, et cetera. I wonder if you could just tell us where you see what the benefits and disadvantages are of moving to an open plan working office space?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I think open plan working aids communication within a team, from a personal point of view, instead of being tucked away in many different offices. So there is an advantage there. It is about the size. If there is enough room for everyone to work there then I have no problem with open working as long as there are facilities for rooms that you can go and make private phone calls in, have meetings, staff meetings, give appraisals. Originally there was not a patrol sergeant's office identified. We have raised that and we have now been assured that space is going to be made for an area where patrol sergeants can give appraisals and deal with people. As long as there is provision for people to have their private phone calls away from noise and there are breakaway rooms there, clearly identified on the plans, then we are satisfied.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

From the original plans going back to Summerland, I think the first areas considered were going to be about 12 square metres and that has been halved. It is within Home Office guidelines admittedly but 6 square metres seems to me to be quite a small area. That space there is 6 square metres. Does not seem a small space to you to work in?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

One man's working space ... you are asking a personal question.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

It is subjective.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

It is subjective, yes. They are saying it is over the actual guideline by 2 square metres. We have to take a view on this and say if it is within the office space guidelines that are given for these working conditions then we, the Police Association, accept that it is compliant. We all want big offices, do not get me wrong.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Absolutely.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

We want a big palatial police station with parking for all and sundry and big offices for everyone, but we have to take a view on it and say if it meets the required standards then it is acceptable. We would deem it as acceptable for our officers.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Some officers did comment that they had issues about confidentiality when they are working. I think one of the phrases is they have got a breakaway office or somewhere they can go and use if necessary. Again, is that acceptable for officers, that they feel that they may be squeezed into an area where they need to break away all the time because they cannot get the space and confidentiality that they need?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I think if you look at the design and layout of the office spaces that we currently have, officers work in batches around desks and do not have that privacy that you mention now and they go away to other areas to conduct those inquiries. So, to have everyone in an individual secure, private area I think would be unrealistic.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Again to sum up, you think that what is being proposed is an improvement on the current working conditions?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

No, I would say it is akin.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

One of the main concerns about privacy was raised in relation to the patrol sergeant's office. Patrol sergeants may deal with disciplinary matters, may deal with complaints against police and that sort of thing and there was a general concern that that should not happen in the public forum of a general office. That is one of the major issues that we addressed quite early on with the project team, who accepted that and made provision for a patrol sergeant's office. That was where most of the concerns related to in relation to privacy. At the moment we all work in large offices with numerous people in one office and if they need to break away they break away. We are used to it, it is how we work.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

I think probably members expected the all singing, all dancing new police headquarters. You are now saying they will be working in something similar or akin to what they have got size-wise.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I think if you go to any office in town the majority, where they work in a team, are open plan and the team works hand in hand. I may be missing the point but it is a similar setup to what we already have. If you went into the Criminal Investigation Department and saw it, they are working within an open plan office, in effect, and in groups of desks.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

It is similar to what you have got but what you have got now is not good enough. You have 3 buildings at the moment. You have got Summerland, Police HQ and the Old School. It is all going to go into one building and you are going to be similar to what you have got now.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

We would not expect every single police officer to have an individual office. That is just not going to happen.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

No, we can understand that, but I do not know if your members heard Deputy Martin's proposition in the States, if they read it, but I think every States Member wants the best for the Police Force and I think every Member wants a new police station. What they do not want to do is to spend £19 million to £20 million and have something that will just be suitable for the time being and then we have to look at something in 5 years or something like that. So, I am sure you have got that back to your members that States Members are not trying to hold this back, definitely not, but they do not want to waste money.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Now, perhaps I am being a bit simple here, but the comparison to the police office work to general office work surely there has got to be a difference in the sense that in normal office work someone may not end up being charged and only end up with a custodial sentence or something like that. Surely if it is confidential work and papers and things like that there is a difference and the requirements are going to be different, so the analogy of comparing while office workers have to be able to deal with this it is different to perhaps the requirements of the police, or perhaps I am wrong. Can you just explain?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

No, I do not see that, Chairman. You work in that team and say, for example, it was the C.I.D. (Criminal Investigation Department) there is nothing they cannot discuss openly on their cases or if there is stuff they cannot discuss with another officer because they just go away and do it somewhere else. If you look at the actual police constables' area, that is very transient, they are coming and going so that would be like hot-desking. So there are permutations on it. The C.I.D. will be one thing and

they will all very much be in their desks in that open area in general discussion and that is sometimes how good policing ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Would you not agree that there are some benefits to working in that environment at times where officers can interact with each other and you do not want to be shut away?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Some of the best cases have been solved because someone walks past and overhears someone chatting about a case and goes: "Well, hold on a minute, I remember ..." and there is an epiphany or what have you, so I encourage that environment.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Which goes back to very old method of policing, as it were, yes.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Exactly, yes.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

It is all about teamwork and each team is in office because they work together as a team. They work on each other's cases and they help each other out. They would need to be in the same office to be able to do that. I do not think there are any concerns in relation to the fact that they are in an office. I think there was a concern at one stage that 2 offices were joined together that should not be and that has now been addressed. The project team as one particular office needed to have 2 separate wings to it and that has been addressed anyway.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

There is a quite a lot of use of the word "flexible" in the new plans in terms of use of office space. Is that something that you currently do as well when you have the opportunity presumably where you would be working on a specific case and you need to get certain groups together?

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So this new building will give you more opportunity to do that type of flexible working?

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I think one of the real pro points was that you can change the design entirely because of the flexibility, the way it has been designed for running computer cables, electricity and what have you. That is something which we find ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Is of benefit to your office?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Absolutely, yes.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

A similar thing on the notion of space and, while appreciating that currently the number of police officers are declining, though the number of people necessarily in the building perhaps in civilianised roles may move the figures around, shall we say, it is easy to say: "Well, we are reducing the number of police officers and therefore we need that space" but you may be increasing other headcount elsewhere. But bearing that in mind, if I highlight one of the concerns from one of the responses: "The building cannot be extended and therefore I do not see it will be fit for purpose for the length of time stated for 20 to 30 years. I suspect it will be outgrown after 5 years." We note that you have raised this matter and can you just explain what the response was and your reasoning?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

The footprint of Green Street once it is built and the walls are there it does not get any bigger and we accept that. We were at the recent meeting where there was the presentation at St. Paul's Gate. It was mentioned and I do not know what the provenance of it is and whether it has been given any longer term thought, but it was mentioned that Green Street car park at some stage will have to come down. I may be wrong. This is only what I heard.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I can confirm that the Minister for Home Affairs has suggested that in the States and that is on the public record, yes.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Yes, and there was a suggestion that that would afford an opportunity for some kind of expansion should it be required or identified at that time, so that is one option. But we fully understand and accept that once it is built within that footprint, bar the car park coming down and the opportunity to expand there, if that did not exist then the building will not expand. The only way is up and I think that has been discounted.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

It has already gone down.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Yes, so that has been discounted to go any further. So, yes, we accept and take the view that without the potential for the car park at the rear then it cannot get any bigger.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

But you see some expansion in the flexibility of the building? I mean, that is the suggestion, that the building is the size it is but there is scope within that building currently?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Internally we accept that things can be moved and changed, but it will never get any wider.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

There is a 10 per cent figure being bandied about as to the expansion. You accept that there is that amount of room in there?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Yes, if they are saying that they have designed it with the 10 per cent and the figures say that there is that 10 per cent movement then there is 10 per cent expansion as long as the calculations are correct.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Well, the 10 per cent would be that the office space gets smaller by 10 per cent to allow for the people ...

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Well, something is going to have to give at some stage.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

If you looked at the British Council Offices Building Regulations, it turns around and says the square metre for each person in the building should be 4.3 metres squared. We have 6 metres, so effectively there is a 30 per cent capacity straightaway. Well, 20 per cent capacity straightaway if you were to take it to what are the minimum requirements.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

You talk then about you cannot extend the building though and accept that really unless there are major changes. I cannot see anyone taking it forward to go over the cemetery and I hope that never happens. So what is the Association's view of having a second building and using one as a headquarters and have the other police station built in town? We were talking earlier of Bath Street now. You could have a police station in Bath Street on the site, could you not?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I have worked previously in split site police stations in the U.K. I would not personally go down that road. I would try and build everything in one spot predominantly. It is a matter of distance, I think, because we spent many, many times and much of our day just transiting between one, especially if you are dealing with prisoners, exhibits. You then have to go back to get something; if you have not signed something in custody, you have then got to go back custody to sign that and it is a nightmare. That is my experience of it, a complete nightmare, split sites, unless they are very, very close.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

I think your comments are very useful for us.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Can I say something slightly different and something that to quote your words in your response was not acceptable, and that is there is no direct access from the inquiry desk to custody to facilitate the movements of persons arrested at the desk without

going outside and, as you say, there is a quantifiable amount of persons arrested under those circumstances. Can you explain what you mean by that, your concerns and have you spoken about solutions for it?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Yes, this was raised at our meeting with the project team and it evolved during that meeting. It was one of our committee members turning around and saying: "Well, I have got an issue with this." So my immediate impression and I think the whole team's immediate impression was, yes, it is unacceptable that people come to the front desk for whatever reason, end up being arrested and then to walk them back out and around down to the side and into custody that way there is a massive officer safety implication, especially if they have come in compliant. To our mind that is unacceptable.

[14:45]

For where people are arrested at the desk there needs to be a safe passage through and into custody that way. That was taken on board by the D.C.O. (Deputy Chief Officer) and they are looking at rectifying that and overcoming that.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Yes, that is currently a situation that does not exist. There is a facility in the current space you can go through.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Yes, they can come straight through, and quite rightly so, and at every police station I have ever worked at you can do that.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So, that is an issue that the management team are currently looking at to rectify?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Our view is that that has to be rectified.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you. Again just to make sure that we have covered it, the issue of storage space because while there is a move perhaps to use more modern office desks -

back to desks - hot-desking arrangements perhaps also the introduction of more electronic methods when out in the field in Jersey, the issue of storage space seems to have been raised as a concern. I believe you are now content with what has been presented to you. Can you just explain what has been presented to you and why you are now content with it?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

There was an issue about storage space for exhibits, property and operational use. We have looked at the plans and we satisfied ourselves that the property arrangements within Police Headquarters are sufficient. In fact, they are an improvement on what we have and then we do have external storage requirements currently which are in the Summerland site. However, we have just seen those start to empty and get smaller and that is through the management of information and the fact that that is predominantly now going to electronic form, and I think that is the trend elsewhere as well. So, our storage requirements and bulk storage requirements in respect of that are reducing and continue to reduce. However, if this La Collette building is a realistic prospect, we are satisfied when given the size of that building that there is storage capacity there as well.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Just going back to the forensics it is a comment that was made in one of the submissions you had from one of your members in terms of the location at La Collette and if I just quote from them: "Separate to the plans themselves, any of those buildings are going to be within the blast site of La Collette." Having all your equipment down there, it is a major fuel farm down there, do you have any concerns that you will not be able to access equipment if there was a major incident at La Collette?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

The area that has been identified to us at the moment is outside the blast zone and we also checked this and we are satisfied it is outside the blast zone.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Access will not be an issue for a vehicle?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Access will not be an issue at all and we have been reassured that the construction of that vehicle is of a higher level of concrete to that area of the blast, so we are satisfied with that. We manage the access on any major incident.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I think the reasoning was there is only one way in and one way out to La Collette. There is a funnel point. It is a little bit away from the fuel farm, I know, but it is quite near the incinerator and I am not saying that there is an issue with that, but ...

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

We do take your point and there is a funnel point. It is a small funnel point to then travel along to get access to the mentioned building, but it is outside the blast zone. In a perfect world we would like it further and further and attached to the police station really.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Are there any further questions? Just one before we move into the private session, to the security matters which would not be appropriate to discuss in public, one final point for me - and I believe it is an operational issue - is the issue of despatch during say an emergency where either there is a junction, that there is a roundabout and it could potentially be a very busy time, maybe not expressed to your membership, but certainly we are getting concerned that operationally there might be an issue of if there is emergency police having to despatch from that particular site. I wonder if you have had an opportunity to consider that and if you could inform us about the Association's views, please?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

The majority of our calls are despatched to vehicles that are already on the road, however there is a percentage that will have to deploy from Police Headquarters. We have been shown the plans surrounding the road outside the proposed site. It far exceeds what we have currently got. It is a far wider road and it is by a roundabout which we are already by a roundabout. It is going to be a far easier road to despatch from Police Headquarters than we currently have and if we can do it where we currently do it, which we do successfully, then I cannot foresee we will have any problems doing it at that site. It is a lot tighter where we are. I think you have got some information.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Yes. At the moment we are not allowed to do emergency exits anyway from one of our current car parks because that has been prohibited by our term policy. The other one we do. The number of vehicles that use La Route Du Fort compared to the number of vehicles that use Rouge Bouillion ... I have not had the figures for La Route Du Fort, but I imagine the Rouge Bouillion figures are far, far higher. There has been an estimate conducted just recently and I think in a month period. I think there were 242,000 vehicles passed by Rouge Bouillion Police Station; that is including both directions. I cannot see that being a figure that would be similar for La Route Du Fort.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

The other thing you have got, I suppose, if you look at the other way for the tunnel where you cannot drive up on the cones on either side of Rouge Bouillion as you can in Rouge Bouillion. At 5.00 p.m. the tunnel was probably going to be blocked solid, probably in both directions and certainly in one direction, where you do not have that in Rouge Bouillion.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I think the majority of our deployments, though, do not take place from the police station. The majority of our deployments take place ... if we are looking to send someone to an emergency we are not going to try and find someone in an office and say: "Can you find a car, please?" We are going to find somebody who is on the road already in a car.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

That tunnel will be blocked at 5.00 p.m. every day. Whether it is a car coming from west to a job out east they are going to have to negotiate that tunnel. If they are already out, say if they are in Georgetown and we despatch them, they have still got to get through that tunnel at 5.00 p.m. any day of the week, so that is a continuing thing that we deal with on a daily basis, currently negotiating the tunnel on a police response. It is life for us.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

The same as Fire and Ambulance, anything they go to out east they go through the tunnel.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Except, and I do not have the percentages, I would imagine in excess of half of the calls were going to be to the west of the Island because you have got the biggest parishes and you have got the airport as well. Just size-wise, but also population-wise, St. Clements is probably your popular carriage ...

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Most of our cars are normally deployed and are normally deployed to areas of high population, so most of our cars will probably be on deployment, on patrol, to the west of the tunnel anyway because that is where they naturally patrol. So when you are sending somebody you are sending somebody who is already out and the likelihood is we will pick units who are already through the tunnel.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

A lot of calls will be to town, the majority, and that will not involve the tunnel.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Could I just ask one question. President, I know because we have met in the custody suite and I know you have got a lot of experience within the custody suite, just regarding the Honorary Police because they have not been consulted fully and I think I know how important ...

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

They should be.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Well, that was one of the questions, should they have been and do you think it is important that they have got some dedicated certainties around the custody suite to deal with the very difficult job that they have to do at times?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I think they should be consulted and I think it is something that may be in the plans to consult because the plans are at a certain stage and these are not finalised plans. So I think along the way as the plans develop and they go to a different stage then there is different consultation periods. I would sincerely hope that it was never the intention not to consult the Honorary Police and I do not suspect that to be the case. I do take your point because when you come to the custody currently you have to

use one of the side rooms to review paperwork. So there is a back office, I am led to believe, behind the charge area in the plans for the proposed custody suite and I cannot see any reason why the honorary centeniers that are attending cannot use that office to review the case papers and it would be far more comfortable than where they currently have to sit.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Really it is just a case of how important a role they play.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Yes, I think they need to obviously be on board, and I am sure they will be, but I think there must be provision for them to review paperwork somewhere. There are some consultation rooms within the proposed plan, so I think there will be more room for the centeniers.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So, there is opportunity for improvement then?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Yes. No, I think there already is space there for the centeniers to come in and do their job more efficiently than they have been with the current custody suite.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

It is not only that. I suppose there is parking for the interpreters and doctors at the police station?

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I believe there is provision for that already made inside the existing parking arrangements on the basement.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Yes, there is for F.M.E.s (Forensic Medical Examiners), interpreters and centeniers. I think there are some dedicated spaces for them. However, with the police fleet being out on the road that would create more spaces for them to come and go and use while the police vehicles are out on patrol as well.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, thank you. One final, final question from me. It may not be directly in your remit, but I would imagine it would have some implication about visitor access to perhaps a reception desk and whether your Association has considered that at all?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

We have restricted our remit with operational matters with regard to police officers and matters of public access, public parking et cetera. It is not something that we have engaged in.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Except you might be called out when there is a row of cars parked in La Rue Du Fort they have come into the police station. We have heard a story that La Motte Street has got a public building that has not got a car park and they have just got a row of illegally parked cars outside there all day.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I think the matter of public parking - I am not being disrespectful - is not something we are going to be drawn on that. It is for other people to determine.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, thank you very much. Just before we go into private session, I would like to give you the opportunity to make any comments or statements or anything which you feel that perhaps you would like to re-emphasise to the panel. Perhaps you feel we have got the wrong end of the stick somewhere along the line, so we would like to give you the opportunity. Perhaps you could also tell the panel what the Police Association's stance on the proposed site is currently.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I think there has been clarity about what we have discussed so far, so I do not need to say anything.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

There is going to be another consultation with our memberships in a few days' time where they are invited to come and look at plans and have a drop-in session again. It seems that most of the objections raised thus far have been addressed through basically asking questions and seeking clarity. Perhaps a lot of the concerns raised were through a lack of knowledge on behalf of the officers who were raising a

concern and it is a concern that can easily be addressed by asking the right question and obtaining the answer, and that is what largely the process has been. So, rather than demanding fundamental changes in their concerns, their concerns have largely been questions through a lack of knowledge on their part and once the answer has been obtained people are satisfied.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Just as an example of that in regard to the lights - sorry to go back over old ground but it has just prompted me - the officer that raised the issue of the lighting in custody, I have had occasion to speak to that officer and give them some initial feedback and show them some of the documentation that we have been supplied. That officer gave me the impression and said if the Home Office say that that is okay then they were satisfied with that. So that is just some more feedback.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Then to just push you on that final point, can the Police Association give their stance on the Green Street site as proposed and whether they support it?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

If you were to ask the question if we were to move in there tomorrow could we operate efficiently and would it affect the welfare of our officers, which is where we are coming from, we believe, yes, we could walk in there tomorrow and we would carry on. The States of Jersey Police would be efficient, we would carry on and there would be an improvement in some areas. It would be business as usual.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I appreciate that and the panel appreciates that the Police could operate at that site, but I am asking you directly do the Police Association support moving on to that site?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Without an alternative site which is bigger and better and a realistic site being offered to us and if you were to say there is this site and that one, we would choose the bigger and better one, but we support it because we know we can work from it.

[15:00]

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Can I ask you one question? How would you feel and how would your members feel if this was delayed another 4 or 5 years?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I think, depressed.

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Our current accommodation is ...

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

If this goes for another 5 years with the current building and the current set-up, we would do it, of course we would, but ...

Vice-President, States of Jersey Police Association:

The current facilities we have are woefully substandard.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Custody is the main issue, and we are going over old ground. Custody is a critical area of the Force and it needs to be addressed.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Does it affect your members' morale having to work in conditions like that?

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

I think you can sometimes become accustomed to things, can you not, and there is an element of that. We turn up and we ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Get on with it.

President, States of Jersey Police Association:

Morale is good, but we want it better. If you never mentioned the new police station then the membership would carry on. They would plod on and do their job, but there is hope for a new police headquarters and then if we wait another 5 years then we will survive and the job will get done undoubtedly, but ...

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay. Well, just before we move into private session, may I thank you for the evidence that you have given us today and may I ask that members of the media and the public clear the gallery.

[15:01]