

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS
BY DEPUTY T.M. PITMAN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 20th NOVEMBER 2012**

Question

- (a) Further to the announcement on 16th October 2012 by the Chief Minister that the States of Jersey Police had concluded their investigation on re-zoning of agricultural land issues and concluded that there was “no evidence to support the allegations” would the Minister state what form the police investigation took and inform members whether -
- (i) key witnesses were interviewed by the Police;
- (ii) an investigating officer was found to be in e-mail correspondence with one of those allegedly involved in the alleged offences?
- (b) Is the States of Jersey Police aware whether one of those who made a statement to the police in what he believed was his public duty is now being subject to threatening letters by one involved in the alleged allegations and, if so, what comfort does he believe members of the public can have when reporting what they consider to be criminal actions or wrongdoings if intimidations of this type are allowed to take place?

Answer

The investigation was undertaken by officers of Detective Inspector rank reporting directly to the Deputy Chief Officer who was also involved in meetings with a number of witnesses. Legal advice was sought and obtained from the Law Officers’ Department at various stages of the investigation and upon conclusion.

- (a)
- (i) Yes, key witnesses were interviewed. This formed a part of the investigation which also saw the police search email accounts and obtain documents from different witnesses in order to reconstruct a detailed history of the relevant land transactions.
- (ii) Yes, email correspondence had been entered into by an investigating officer with a person alleged of offences; communication between the police and subjects of investigations is not unusual.

(b) A number of people who made witness statements in this case did not provide those statements to the police. Rather, witness statements were made and then kept in a private safe. The police had to ask to see these witness statements when alerted as to their existence. In response to the police request, the witness statements were sent to the United Kingdom. As a result, it took the police a long time to obtain copies of them. This caused significant delay to the investigation.

The States of Jersey Police is not aware of any witness in this case being subject of threatening letters or similar. Should any complaints of such activity or similar forms of harassment or threat be received, the States of Jersey Police would investigate fully as they would with any other such complaint.