

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
COMMITTEE BY DEPUTY T.M. PITMAN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 5th JULY 2011**

Question

Given that the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel are about to undertake a review relating to wider related issues did PAC ever examine the report written by BDO Alto into the management of the Historical Abuse Inquiry expenditure; if not, why not? Further still, would the Committee undertake to scrutinize the expenditure incurred by the Wiltshire Constabulary in their investigation(s) surrounding the inquiry - including Operation Blast - and submit a report to the States outlining its findings?

Answer

Both the PAC and the C&AG received copies of the report written by BDO Alto into the management of the Historical Abuse Inquiry expenditure and in July 2010 the C&AG published a report "Historic Child Abuse Enquiry – Public Finances Law 2005". Weaknesses in the current Accounting Officer arrangements had been identified prior to the publication of the BDO Alto report and this led to the recommendation by the C&AG that an independent police authority be established – a view supported by the Public Accounts Committee.

This was progressed by the Minister for Home Affairs following consideration by a Working Group that included Deputy Pitman.

The Proposition P192/2010 – Jersey Police Authority: Establishment was lodged by the Minister on the 21st December, 2010 and debated on the 2nd February, 2011. It was unanimously passed with 48 votes in favour, no abstentions, and no votes against.

The Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee was interviewed by the Wiltshire Constabulary as he had made an official complaint concerning the former Chief Officer Graham Power and would therefore be conflicted in any such investigation of the BDO Alto findings. However no other politicians or independent members on the PAC proposed a specific review at the time of the BDO Alto report's publication.

The matter will be discussed at the next full Public Accounts Committee meeting in July and it is not possible at this stage to confirm whether a report with, or will not, be undertaken. However the Public Account Committee would be pleased to hear from the questioner what meaningful benefit to good government may be achieved by carrying out another review which will ultimately be funded by the taxpayer. It should be noted that the BDO Alto report received widespread publicity, including a great deal of published detail. Therefore it is not clear to the PAC what could be achieved by a further investigation.