



Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny

Panel

Government Plan 2022 - 2025

Witness: The Minister for Home Affairs

Friday, 15th October 2021

Panel:

Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier (Chair)

Senator T.A. Vallois

Witnesses:

Deputy G.C. Guida of St. Lawrence, The Minister for Home Affairs

Deputy L.B.E. Ash of St. Clement, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs

Ms. K. Briden, Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs

[10:00]

Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier (Chair):

Welcome to the first public hearing for the Minister for Home Affairs on this year's Government Plan. We will start with the introductions. I am Deputy Robert Ward and I chair the Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Senator Tracey Vallois, member of the panel.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Deputy Gregory Guida, Minister for Home Affairs.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

Deputy Lindsay Ash, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Kate Briden, acting director general for Justice and Home Affairs.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

If we get started. First just some general questions really to start. Can you confirm the amount of departmental base budget that you hold responsibility for, Minister?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

About £55 million, including the police of course.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Including the police. The next question I suppose leads on to that, how is that base budget broken down between the various services that fall under your remit?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The Home Affairs directorate is a reasonably small budget with £2.6 million and then you have all the services. So the police will be the largest of these with a little bit more than £25 million. Then you have prison with £10.4 million, £10.5 million, customs and immigration £5.6 million, ambulance service £5.8 million, fire and rescue £5.5 million, £5.6 million, health and safety I think is our budget but managed by another Minister is £557,000. The field squadron is about £1.5 million, which has just increased. We tried to keep it at £1 million before but that was way under their natural expense and we can talk about it because it is actually quite a special case and we finally put the right budget into it, so it should cost about £1.5 million every year.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So you hold the budget for ambulance within Home Affairs?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes. Did I not mention it?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

No, you did. It is just that we may ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

That was transferred at the very beginning of the term from Health and Community Services.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I had some questions later regards that. How does that budget compare to the available budget in 2021? Is it more, less, the same?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

There is a little bit of growth in it but I think it has remained very stable.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Do you have an actual figure?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I do not have the 2021 figures in front of us, so the figures the Minister has just given are the projected figures for 2022 but they do not change very much between 2021 and 2022 other than the items that are detailed in the plan.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

If we wanted to confirm the additional funding required for services in 2022 would you be able to tell us what that additional funding is? Because you said there was some growth.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, they are the additional investment items that are set out in the plan. There is no increase to base budgets for the services for 2022 in the plan. It is just the specified items that are there. I can look up the 2021 figures.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So the base budget is the same in the 2 years, so is it reasonable to call it growth?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

There are some additional items and there are some savings.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

But no overall extra spend, you are saying.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No overall extra spend.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Just a redirection of monies from efficiency savings and so on; we will talk about those later.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Sorry, I think I can give a bit more general explanation. All the departments of the government have been asked to save money year on year and for 2022 they have been asked to try to find 3 per cent of their budget, so that is the general pressure on all of our services, and that is what we are trying to do for 2022. Besides that, we would call it additional investment but very often it is just budgets that have been realigned. So a very good example was the field squadron would run about £500,000 above budget for the last 15 years just because the right budget was not assigned to it. So what we have done is say, okay, the field squadron is going to cost £1.5 million and we are just going to put that money there. That is one change.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Is that an extra £1 million in the field squadron?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

£500,000. It was £1 million and it is £1.5 million now.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

How long have they been spending over the budget for?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

We found them elsewhere. Again, it was structural.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Yes, I was just asking how long they had been spending in that way because I think there is a principle that we should be making sure we are properly funding areas?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is a funny one in this particular department, I must say. It is basically inflation from decades ago that was never taken into account. We just had this £1 million for defence every year without thinking that they are people, their salaries change very year. So finally we have - we started last year - decided no, this has to be accounted for, it has to be in the budget. We cannot find behind sofas for the money needed every year. It is finally getting the budget that we need.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Sorry, I just need to go back to confirm. It is interesting, so the base budget for the 2 years is the same - 2021, 2022 - so where are your 3 per cent efficiencies? Would the base budget not be 3 per cent less this year?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

The key thing is that the overall revenue budget for the services is not affected by the Government Plan additional items other than where specified. The base budgets are reduced by 3 per cent for the efficiencies in the areas that are set out in the Plan that are specified around increased income and reductions in non-staff expenditure across the department and the ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Sorry to interrupt but that is a really important point. The efficiencies are a combination of a reduction in expenditure and an increase in income?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, sorry; that is an important one, I think.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

The total of that effect gives us the figures that the Minister has just given for the services for next year. So they are slightly different to the figures for the services this year.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Again, in general, this Government has not tried to diminish the budget of the Government itself and we have seen it growing. But it is redirecting the money. So there has been some growth areas that were defined very early on, like health and children's services. Those are being funded. But the money is being found from the other services. Government-wide they are not savings. We are just directing the money. Inside the department it is a little bit of what is happening as well. We have £1.2 million of extra spending this year but we are finding it within the department.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So it is extra spending but it is not extra money?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes. You save from one side and you spend on another one.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

One could say that it is different spending, not really extra.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No, totally. We are trying our best to not grow the whole ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

You mentioned about increased income as an important part of efficiency so what other sources of income does the department have and what is envisaged in this Government Plan period in terms of income?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

There has been only one, and it was customs and immigration. It was basically G.S.T. (goods and services tax) on incoming goods and passport fees.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I think we have some questions on that later. I have asked the question about the expenditure coming down, the expenditure has gone up. I think we have covered that one. Do you want to move on to the efficiency and rebalancing?

Senator T.A. Vallois:

It probably leads well into the efficiency and rebalancing measures. Minister, the panel noted that the new revenue expenditure for the States of Jersey Police in 2021 was £27.2 million and was forecast as £27.4 million for 2022. In the current Government Plan the figure for 2022 stands at £25.4 million, which is a £2 million decrease in funding. Can you elaborate why the reduction of that much for the States of Jersey Police?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I think the Minister is looking to me.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, I am sorry, it is the £27 million that I am unsure about.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

We would take the top line figure for 2022 as being £25,205,000 so the total figure rather than what is shown in the table in the Government Plan is the D.E.L. (departmental expenditure limits) figure. I now have the 2021 figures in front of me, so some of that will be represented by the police's contribution to the efficiencies. So the 3 per cent reduction, which for them is £836,000. Some of it will be represented by the delivery of their 2021 efficiency commitment, which had taken money off the 2021 budget. So they will reconcile that into the 2022 budget, and that will give the total figure. I do not have a more detailed breakdown of the police budget in front of us because, as you know,

it is a separate accountable officer. We have the high-level figures for the police but we do not have the more detailed figures.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Just to elaborate slightly a little bit more on this efficiency moving from the 2021 to 2022. We can see in the Government Plan that it states an efficiency of £836,000, which you just mentioned, but the forecasting in terms of the amount that was expected for 2022, that there is a £2 million reduction, how or where would we identify that remaining efficiency or saving and what that may or may not look like?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I will answer part of that but if you can find the final figure for 2021, that will help show the difference.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The chief of police has agreed on the budget and basically because the police is a vast majority staff cost, this will come from staffing. However, there are many posts that are not filled in the police now. We are not talking about firing people, we are just talking about not hiring, and that is the project for 2022. It is something - you may have heard about this - I am a little bit worried about. We manage the front line services. They participated, they did their part in trying to save money for the Government for the last 3 years, and I think they did extremely well. But they are front line services. There really is a point where when you cut too much you cut into the efficiency and they are services that we really cannot let down. They have all accepted to do their part this time, try to find 3 per cent somewhere. Pressure is not a bad thing, it is not a bad thing for a service to try to be run efficiently but I am worried that we might go too far and I will be looking at this extremely carefully. Ambulance services, for example, I think are at their limit now so I will make sure that we do not ask too much from them even if it is in the budget; if it cannot happen it cannot happen.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

So the saving is vacancies for the police?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

For the police it is, yes, mostly.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Roughly how many vacancies are there then at present?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, I have the exact numbers for you. The officers' numbers, there are quite a lot of vacancies in officer numbers but we have decided that we wanted a whole establishment of 215, so we are still growing up to that. They come and go.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

215, did you say?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, 2-1-5. We are still recruiting towards that. There might still be some empty posts next year but we are still recruiting towards that figure. The staff, the total establishment is 121 and there are 114 now.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That is 7 posts on non ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Police staff, yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

... officer staff. And how many police officer staff are there?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

This changes almost every day because we have just recruited 10 people. Sorry, I am not sure. Yes, sorry, 202 right now and we have 9 officers in March and one in January. Then we keep recruiting.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So you had 9 in March and one in January and that took you up to 200 ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No, I think it is next year. They are planned way in advance. They need to do their training before they come in.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Just carrying on through the efficiencies, Minister. One area is to continue the best practice of reviewing and securing recurring reductions in non-staff budgets.

[10:15]

It states £406,000 efficiency. Can you explain what it means by this “best practice of reviewing and securing recurring reductions in non-staff budget”?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Hunting waste I think is something we should all be doing and any organisation should have that in the back of their mind. So there are different ways of doing things. We cannot skimp on training so all of the services need to be trained. They need to be trained in the right way but there are different ways of doing it. One of the things, it is just an example because it has been unfortunately one of the most expensive ones, but firearms training cost us about £150,000 a year just to send people to the U.K. (United Kingdom) regularly, and it is something that will almost completely disappear once we have a proper range in the Island. So we are making a large investment into the range but then those recurring expenses will not happen. There might be other ways to save in training just by doing it a little bit better.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Will that take effect next year, as an example, or when will the range be completed?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

If all goes according to plan, middle of next year.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

In terms of looking at non-staff budget because, as I understand, with the efficiencies and savings, they will basically be taken off the budget come 1st January, so we will be spending the year probably trying to find some of the pennies and things within the department to make up that shortfall. You mentioned before about the field squadron and the fact that the budget was not appropriately accounted for. How do you manage the risk of that not happening in other services? We know inflation, we know pay awards, how do you manage that risk that you do not end up having the same issue with other areas in the department like you have seen with the Jersey field squadron?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is a very fair question and we do have an example. When the ambulance service was transferred to Home Affairs the Health Department had promised £150,000 of savings and they came to us with that cut already effected in the budget. They said: “Okay, here is a transfer for your budget.” There is £150,000 savings. The ambulance service had never done anything to save that money. So it became a structural issue that we have to integrate in their budget. They have a little bit of over

spend this year so we need to find out which part is due to exceptional circumstances because operating the ambulance has been much more difficult during COVID than many other services. So we have to find what part of this is exceptional and what part of it might be structural, and then maybe we integrate this in the budget so that they have the budget that they need. Yes, we were quite aware of that. We have done it for one service and I hope that we can do it for the other services.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Can I ask the question, as we are on these efficiencies, now? We talked about the £800,000 efficiency or cut in spend. The States of Jersey Police Association - I think the letter is public - have written to say that: "We wish to express our grave concerns about this proposed cut. While we understand that all States departments have been subject to savings over the years the Association strongly believe that States of Jersey Police cannot afford to make any more cuts without putting the safety and well-being of police officers at risk and therefore, as a consequence, members of the public." Is that something you accept? Is that a concern that you had earlier?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Certainly. As I said, it is a concern. On one hand almost any organisation can shave 3 per cent off their work if they are careful, if they do not waste. On the other hand, for front line services it is dangerous if you go too far. It is something that I will obviously personally, for all the services, very carefully for the last remaining months of my time. I think they can do it. They have accepted to do it. But we have to be very careful that we do not cut too close.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Do you think it is not going to put officers' well-being at risk and the public at risk if those cuts are taken forward? Do you think the police can cope with that?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The heads of departments have accepted them so they say they can deliver them. It is just at the edge where it becomes a political matter. The heads consider they can run their organisations properly that way. Now it is a political issue to say do we want to go that far or do we actually want to maybe pad it a little bit and be safer and have the services that we need? Again, we will let them try but we will have a very close look at how it is done.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

If there is clear evidence, and there does seem to be that belief in the States of Jersey Police Association that officers are under that pressure, how are you going to monitor that and how quickly can you respond or is it a case of the budget has been set, I am afraid that is it this year?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I will put it another way. I think Len Norman's high point when he was Minister was when he basically told the C.E.O. (chief executive officer) that there were going to be another 25 police officers and that was it. Yes, sorry, it did cost £2 million but you just had to find them somewhere. If we come to that point I am absolutely not afraid of doing exactly the same.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Can I just ask whether the Jersey Police Authority, in terms of the challenge that they are creating both to you and I suppose to the States of Jersey Police, to make sure there is legitimacy in terms of the savings? What role are they playing, if any?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Interestingly, one of the reasons they asked for a larger budget was to be able to look at the budgeting of the police and they saw that they were not able to do it with the staff that they had now. They want more people so that they can be much more involved in that. I accept it totally. So we have given them the resources to do that. If they come back to us and say: "I am sorry, this is not enough" again I am sure I will find the courage to fight it with Government.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I would say it does seem clear that the Police Association believe that that is already happening. Are you meeting with them regularly to see their views? I mean obviously people at the top of the organisation who are in the meetings with budget, there is pressure on them to show they are efficient and so on, but sometimes it can be a detachment from what is happening on the front line, and those officers need to be listened to. What is the mechanism for that? At what stage do you say: "You know what, you have a point here, ladies and gents, we will act on this"?

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

Last week we went to their A.G.M. (annual general meeting), which was very full, it was very well-attended. Obviously those sort of concerns are put forward and we do listen to them. Obviously we listen to the chief of police as well. If he had to come back to the Minister and myself and said: "Look, there is no way I can make these" we would listen. In his opinion he can make these, I believe. That is what he has assured us. But we did listen to all the concerns from the police officers and have taken them on board, have we not? They were not all about staffing levels. Obviously there are other considerations of what they are looking for. But we meet fairly regularly with them and the Authority.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The letter does go on to say, and it was written to us as a Scrutiny Panel, which is why it is important that we raise it today, that you answered that the cuts have already been agreed and finalised and there was nothing you could do about it. Is that the case that these have been finalised, that is the way it is going to be, and that any knock-on effect will be into the future but cannot be acted on this year?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

That is not exactly what I told them but this is a budget we are going to present to the Assembly. So I am not changing that. Again, the heads of services have told me that they were able to deliver that. If there is a change during the year, if we see that this becomes difficult, I am, again, quite happy to ask for help and to make sure that they have the ...

Senator T.A. Vallois:

In terms of the process for that, just the process of how these budgets do or do not work, so 1st January the States of Jersey Police will have £836,000 less in their base budget.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

So if they come to you, say April time ... well, they cannot come to you really at election time, can they, but if they come to you and say: "Look, we are having serious issues" where does the money come from?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

We can agree overspend. There are ways of doing it if we find that we were mistaken and that this was not the right budget.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

So it might be looking at taking that from another department or general reserves?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

It would be a bid into reserves in circumstances that were not reasonably foreseen when the Government Plan was lodged, actually this particular part of the government needs more money, and it would have to be fully justified for a claim from reserves.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Business case through Treasury?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Assistant Minister for Home Affairs:

The same thing did happen, as the Minister alluded to earlier with Constable Norman, who did ask for more police officers and said the money had to be found and it was by Treasury at the time.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

I remember that very clearly.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So there is a precedent been set perhaps. Would it not have been best to have that money available at the beginning and then if it is savings it is a saving?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

You still want to keep the pressure. Because the police are the ones that have written but actually I think if any of our services needs help it is ambulance. The fire service is also very close to the bone. All our services have suffered from all these savings, so it is not just the police. We need to look at all of them very carefully.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

This is in terms of the increase in income, an example of increase in income in passport and customs. We note that you have forecast income of £184,000 in 2022 from a review of the forecast number of applicants for visas, et cetera. When was that review undertaken is the first question to ask?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

It would have been when we were putting together the position for the Government Plan, which was finalised in the middle of August, and therefore I think took into account the figures for income up to July this year. I would need to check that to be 100 per cent sure, but that is my recollection.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Is that simply that there will be more applications for visas this year?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

This year's increase has been a combination of increased visa applications and quite significantly increased passport applications. Some of that is a bounce back from COVID where people just

were not applying for passports. Some of it also at that point had been some people realising that they needed a passport to register for Yoti, to do their online tax application. We think it was not just passports for travel, it was passports for I.D. (identification), and the £184,000 is the customs and immigration teams profiled assumption of what the increased income will be next year and that therefore we can use that as part of our efficiency commitment, that we will make more money.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The visas, is that partly due to Brexit, a change in the need for a formal visa to actually enter? So there has been a money-making from that?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Given it is a forecast are there contingencies in place if that money does not materialise? Because it is part of your efficiency with income, if that income does not happen are you going to make more cuts elsewhere to make up for that? Balancing seems to come to mind all the time.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

We would have to balance it, as you suggest, so the initial position would be that if the department does not make the £184,000 income then we would have to perhaps increase the contribution on one of the other efficiency lines or find it somewhere else. If we really cannot do that then it would be a similar process to what we have outlined. These things are obviously monitored very closely monthly and income forecasts are monitored extremely closely month on month. So we would have a good feel for how that is going throughout the year.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I was going to ask about the timeline. So it is monthly that you would review that and you would be able to see the growth and the figure and so on. How does it link to the wider inflation strategy and general approach to fees and charges from the Government? Is this part of that? Because fees and charges are changing slightly, are they not?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. So the Government is introducing a new fees and charges strategy. I have to confess I have not got the detail of that to hand or in my head.

[10:30]

The key principle around it is that we have a very clear framework on what we should charge for a task. I think the key distinction to make on this is we are not increasing the fees, we are expecting there to be more fees paid. So the volume is going up but the unit cost for the individual is staying the same. We did put passport fees up last year in line with the U.K. passport fee increase. But, yes, this is about more volume of applications not an actual increase in the fees. So I think that is the distinction and obviously the fees and charges policy is relevant more broadly but not relevant to this particular efficiency line.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That is what I was getting at in the question really, just to confirm whether there would be more increase in fees as we go along as well. I have some more about the target operating model next. Can you elaborate, the review of the States of Jersey prison targeting operating model, there is a spend reduction in staff of £315,000 suggested. Can you elaborate on the process undertaken to undertake that review of the target operating model for the prison?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

As you know, we have a comparatively new prison governor, Susie Richardson. She started in the middle of April and she has been conducting a process since then of familiarising herself with the prison and appointing herself with all the staff and the structure. When we did the original J.H.A. (Justice and Home Affairs) target operating models, which you know we did in 2 chunks; we did the heads of service, the tier 3 level first, and then tiers 4 to 6 in the other services. We made very minimal change in the prison. There were just a very small handful of posts, by recollection perhaps 2 or 3 that changed during that process around the reducing reoffending area. Susie is taking the chance to have a fresh look at that and do what we would regard as a full target operating model process. She has been discussing that with her senior management team. She has been discussing it with the prison officers and prison staff associations, and we will be following the organisational change policy and bringing in consultation forward in the next few months with staff and what that new model should look like.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It is a target operating model 2, to some extent?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The prison staff have been through one, decided not to make many changes, but now you are going back to make more changes for their situation. Would that be the interpretation of it?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, but for the fact because so few staff were impacted in the very minor changes that were made at the time that the rest of the J.H.A. services were changing.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

There would have been reasons for that though, would there not?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, there were specific reasons for the changes in the specific areas. This is a much more root and branch review. She has some opportunity to do that because of departures; for example, the former deputy governor and a number of senior managers. So it is the full organisational change process.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Can I just get a context for the timeline of the reductions? So the £315,000 spending reduction has been identified before this target operating model has been processed, the second version of it?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, so that is a high-level assumption of a reasonable reduction that will be able to be made in the prison budget from the beginning of 2022 because of the implementation of the target operating model. We have to take that high level view in order to account for it as an efficiency and then deliver against it. It will clearly be refined as we implement the target operating model. But that will be the aim.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

To some extent, has the outcome of that not already been determined before the process starts, i.e. at the end of this target operating model you will be spending £315,000 less on staffing? The target operating model process now is find those staffing savings.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

To an extent, yes. That is what we found ourselves ... all departments have found themselves in a similar situation, I think, through target operating model processes. They are finding themselves and setting themselves an efficiency target and then using other very good reasons to get the right structure for the prison as a way to deliver those savings. As I say, it will be refined. In reality it may not be £315,000, as we work through it. It may be more, it may be less.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Where did that £315,000 come from?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I think that comes from a high-level assumption of Susie's early work of what she will be able to deliver in terms of the target operating model reduction.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

There was recently the Justice and Home Affairs general targeting operating model restructure. Was the prison service included in its initial target operating model restructure? Was that part of that wider one? It would have been, would it not?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

It was but only to the extent that there were just some very small changes to a handful of roles. My recollection is that of the total prison headcount of about 150 there were only 4 people whose roles were changed at the time when the other services in J.H.A. were fundamentally changing their models, as we briefed you on at the time.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

But you can see how, if you are in the prison service, you might think: "Oh, we have just been through one and we came to a conclusion now all of a sudden we are going to have another with the presumption of an efficiency saving of £315,000" would be a very worrying time for them.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, and Susie has been in dialogue with all the staff about that and, as I say, the associations ... we have had good, initial conversations and she is working very closely with the management team and the associations on the development of the model.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Recent news that there are officer shortages have forced a wing of the prison to shut down, even reports of prisoners being kept in their cells for one day a week because of shortages of staff. Has that prompted a need for a review of the current target operating model?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I think that arises because there are a number of prison officer vacancies at the moment. We are recruiting for prison officers and it is certainly part of Susie's overall model to make sure that the resourcing is right for prison officers but also for prison civilian support staff who play an equally important role in reducing reoffending and running an effective prison. So I think that is reflective of

the transitional period where there is a fairly high number of vacancies that are being addressed and the need for a new model to make sure it is as efficient and effective as it can be.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

But you can imagine that as a panel we would be thinking ...

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Of course, yes. Certainly, yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

... we are short of prison officers, there are issues within the prison in terms of staffing, closing a wing, perhaps there are issues within education there as well. But at the same time you are going to introduce a second target operating model which has a precursor of saving £315,000. It does seem, when you put it that way, slightly counterintuitive to solving the problems that are there.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, I think the key thing is reflecting on what the Minister said throughout the hearing is Susie, as the head of service for the prison, is confident that she can deliver that efficiency but still run the most effective and efficient prison that we need and that we all want, and that she can make sure that the front line service is delivered very well. When the proposals come through we would be quite happy of course, as we have done before, to have a private briefing to the panel on the proposals. I think that would probably be helpful.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I think what it is - the wheel keeps on going a little bit here but please jump in and tell me to shut up - when there are vacancies there is no spend on the wages for those vacancies so is that kept within the budget? If so, how is that continued? Because if the vacancies are not there and then suddenly you start to fill those vacancies you will be paying that money out. If it is not there but you are going to save £315,000 it is really difficult to figure how these are going to come together. I take on board the fact that we have not seen the proposals for the saving but it does suggest that what you would have are less prison officers.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

There are a number of different questions there, if I may just break them down and then I think the Minister wants to come in. So where we have prison officer vacancies, the money stays in the prison budget, it does not get taken out. We do tend to use a significant chunk of that money on overtime because just as in all of our services, if you have a vacancy it does have to be backfilled on a rota. We do run all the services with some element of vacancy factor now because there is some saving

in the turnover. You rarely spend a whole salary on overtime to backfill that person because it is a compound effect. In terms of the future model, as you say it is still being designed. We are trying to do it rapidly because of the concerns about vacancies and the need to move through the process. But Susie is confident that the £315,000 would come from structural changes that are recurring and sustainable but that nevertheless meet the actual high-level objective, and the one that is most important to all of us of making sure that the prison is run effectively and efficiently. So that will be and has been her commitment to the Minister, and therefore I think that is probably the bit where Gregory wants to come in.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, the new governor has come in with some very ambitious plans to change the way that you process prisoners. The ultimate aim is of course to reduce reoffending but the principle is to design a very different process of how people go through prison, especially a softer release system. So it is something that we are backing up with legislation and you may have had ... I think you have already interrogated me about custodial supervision, so that is one aspect. One very important aspect of it. Another aspect of it is the way that probation now integrates with the prison so that probation continues following somebody as they go through prison, and it is a much more managed process towards the time where they leave instead of open the gate, get them out and close the gate. They will be followed as they leave. They will be helped as they leave. In any case, it is quite exciting. It is quite an exciting project because it really changes the way that we consider prisoners in Jersey. It is her project. She really wants to see that done. What we are doing here is saying we did not change the structure of the prison radically in the first one so you still have this opportunity of changing it and making it what you want it to be. However, we do not want a more expensive service. We want an efficient service. So you are starting with this notion that when you redesign it you make it efficient. That is the 3 per cent, that is the £300,000 that she has to find. The officers' posts will be filled. Those are necessary. They are missing. She is quite desperate to get them. So those will be filled as soon as possible.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It will be an interesting process to do all of that. I am sure we will come back to it when we talk about ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is worth following. I do not know if you were aware but we had a massive event yesterday at the prison. I think there were 80 people present, something like that, and she invited half of Home Affairs. She invited half of C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills). She invited Social Services, Children Care. Everybody that had anything to do with offending, from children all the way through the prison, probation. Many people from probation were there. She sprinkled

prisoners among the group and we talked about the process of going through prison and how the actual goal of reducing reoffending, of making sure that people were reformed, could reintegrate in society, could rehabilitate, was the actual goal instead of just initially for 2 years. I must say it was quite exciting because everybody accepted that, yes, there was a lot of work to be done there. Interestingly, reducing reoffending saves tons of money. On top of being the moral thing to do it actually saves tons and tons of money. So it was quite an exciting project. We were really pleased that she is here and leading this quite hard. We are letting her reorganise the prison the way that she needs with a little bit of pressure saying: "Well, it still has to be efficient."

Deputy R.J. Ward:

There is a police improvement in supply of contract maintenance and identification of reduction in non-staff contract spend. Exciting as that sounds, that is £247,000. Can you provide details of which contracts these reductions relate to?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I do not have the detail of that at the moment. As we know, of course, the police does have a different accountable officer in Robin. He is off-Island at the moment otherwise we would have had him alongside us, I think, to give you some detail on that. So perhaps if we take that one away and write to you afterwards.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Because its spend reduction is non-staff related does it relate to outsourced contracts? This is cleaning, waste disposal, et cetera?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I would need to check because the arrangement with the police H.Q. (headquarters) is run through Jersey Property Holdings. If I can give some examples of what we would be in the main J.H.A. part of the directorate, it would be about how we consider our current contracts. Some of it will be about facilities management, but as I say that is interdependent with Jersey Property Holdings. For example, for fire and rescue, for the ambulance service, for the customs and immigration service it will be about looking at things like uniform, disposables, equipment, getting what we can, the best value, out of those contracts. We would be seeking to work with the commercial services team on that and we have done some work on that already. We have a similar line, effectively, it is just not written in the same way around continuing the best practice of reviewing and securing recurring reductions in non-staff budget and these are the sort of things we would be looking at. As a general example hopefully that helps, but we can get the specific answer from the States of Jersey Police and write to you afterwards.

[10:45]

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Minister, can you please elaborate on the plans to reduce learning and development courses and associated travel for the States of Jersey? What courses does this relate to and how is the training being undertaken without these courses?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I do not expect that we intend to cut anything out. The courses that the police undertake are absolutely necessary; there is no doing without them, but we might do them more efficiently.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

So the example you gave before about the firearms range?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Okay, so if that firearms range is due to be completed next year, fingers crossed, you have got £212,000 non-staff spend reduction in terms of this learning and development. Is that feasible for the time period as an example, considering what you are saying about the importance of that training and learning, the development of front line police in particular? Is it feasible?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The chief of police states this and he is the one who builds his own budget. You do have to remember that the police are quite an independent entity within Home Affairs, so they build their own budget and come to us to say: "Well, you are looking to save. We can save in those areas" and again there is no cutting training, but there might be ways of doing it differently, how you contract it, who you contract it to, what you do internally and what you farm out are ways of changing the budget without having to cut into training. Again, I must trust that he knows what he is doing and give it a check once in a while.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

There is a part in another spend reduction of a removal of a number of civilian posts, following the staff review and rationalisation process. It mentions that the responsibilities will be enhanced in other posts to maintain a high level of service delivery. How many posts does this spend reduction relate to? The amount is £377,000.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think that is the 9 posts that have been budgeted, so it is 9 people.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Which services will be affected by those posts being removed?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I have got some detail, because we checked this in anticipation of this question just before we came in. The police staff review, which you are aware was implemented earlier this year, did some restructuring around their staff civilian functions, and this represents leaving a number of those posts identified in the structure vacant for the time being. As the Minister says, the chief of police is confident that that can be done and its core service still delivered. For example, there are some posts being left vacant in their business support structure. They have a new head of business support and there is a business improvement manager post and some business support officer posts that they have decided can be left vacant for the time being, and this helps them make this efficiency. Again, perhaps for the full detail we can ask for Robin to write to you afterwards.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Basically, their roles would be dispersed among those who are there at the moment, so that puts extra pressure on those people working. It is a lot of money, £377,000.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. As the Minister says, we think it is a total of 8 or 9 posts that would be spread among colleagues. As the Minister says, the chief of police is confident that that is achievable and does not put undue pressure on the team. As I say, if we ask him to specifically write on that point then we can better assist the panel.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Were those staff that this affects in terms of increasing their workload and delivery of services consulted on this process?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

As far as I know, but again we would need Robin to be sure that he could assure you of that point.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, so I cannot ask you the next one, because we would not get an answer to that, I do not think.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Apologies.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

No, that is okay.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

If others have enhanced responsibilities - that is a good phrase, is it not - does that relate to an increase in pay for taking on extra responsibilities, or an increase in "reward" as it is referred to?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I do not know but we will follow that up and make sure that Robin covers that in his response.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Funding of senior posts for Justice and Home Affairs' reorganisation, no update has been provided for this project in the mid-year review. The panel understands that the funding allocation for permanent senior posts within the restructured Department for Justice and Home Affairs that had previously been funded from underspend, £314,000, was allocated to this for 2021 and a further £314,000 as far as we can see is allocated for 2022. Can you provide a progress update in this regard? Is the funding allocation for 2022 to continue to fund the posts?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

As far as I know it is done. It is now part of the budget.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Right, so that now sits in the base budget?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, it is one of those structural deficits that we just have to fix.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

What posts were they?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The director general and the group director.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Right, so they were extra posts created in the target operating model?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, about 3 years ago.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

In terms of policing the 2020 and 2023 project on policing, this project was partially deferred in a previous Government Plan and the funding reduced to £1.63 million for 2021 from £1.919 million previously estimated. Has the reduction in funding for 2021 impacted the delivery of the project's aims and, if so, how? That is about policing in general, I believe.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No, I do not think so. In fact, the fact that we increased the number of officers allowed them to do many things that they were not able to do. The fact that they reinstated the drug squad, for example, or that they have community officers now assigned to the Parishes is a great item of growth. Yes, they had cuts but on the other hand they got 25 more officers.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So you spent less but you had more officers?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

We increased their budget.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Just to note, I think we mentioned this before but just to put some detail, the 10 police officers and 4 police staff posts were deferred to 2021. To confirm, have those now been recruited or are they going to be recruited in March?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think it is March 2022. It is the new budget for recruitment. We have had one this year already.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Are those the ones that were deferred to 2021?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I think it is effectively because there has been a rolling programme of recruitment. They have to run to keep up, so there have been departures, so you never get to 215 and then you are done. There have been another 10 starting this week and then the batch that the Minister refers to is one starting in January and then another batch in March. I think that the deferral that is shown in the mid-year update and the previous updates is reflective of the fact that the aspiration up to 215 was not

delivered last year because of COVID, but then they have hit the ground running and increased it as much as they can. It is just that fluctuation in cost that we see as people start and leave, and it balances out.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

They were unable to send them to the U.K. to train so there was no point hiring them and not have them operational.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So the 215 figure is still one that is targeted and is achievable? You said you would never get to it, but obviously you do get to it?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

When you recruit new officers and older officers are retiring there is a difference in their pay, so is that accounted for in the spend? It can be quite significant, it could be £10,000 or £20,000 per officer from the top of the scale, but obviously you lose that experience.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, but we take all this into account.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So that is planned for in that figure, so it is accurate?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

The Sexual Assault Referral Centre at Dewberry House, the panel understands from the mid-year review that the pre-feasibility report for the site selection for the S.A.R.C. (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) is nearing completion. Can you update us on the progress of the site selection for this property?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

As you may know, I think we are completely happy with the site, and we know exactly what we do with it. We have a way of sharing it with Education as well, which could satisfy both of us, but

Education is still running their own process to figure out which sites they will need throughout the Island. We are reasonably happy to defer that to a government-wide decision, to see whether the location chosen is the best one for S.A.R.C. or the best one for Education. We have several possibilities. Either it will go to S.A.R.C., we could share it or they could take it all, and it is up to them now to tell us what they prefer.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Okay, so you have got a site or is it still a choice between the 2?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

We have a backup, so we have a backup in town if that is needed, it is one of the 2 last sites that we evaluated. It is not our preferred one, but it is still a possibility, so again it will all depend on what Education requires and how the whole of government decides.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Considering the ongoing rate of minimal progress of this review of Education, looking at their sites, do you believe the completion date for July 2023 is achievable?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It is difficult. Again, it depends on them. I understand why it takes time for Education to provide us with a report. It is a little bit of a shame because the new site project is quite large and it is a very significant asset for the Island, so we are quite in a hurry to see it. Dewberry House is still operational, so we can continue like that. We would like to see it done, but I completely understand why Education needs to take their time to make sure that they know exactly what they want.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

In terms of the funding that was required for 2021 has that achieved its intended aims, as was originally envisaged?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Part of it has been spent to complete the pre-feasibility report, because of the site selection process that the Minister has outlined, which we will bring to a conclusion imminently. The Corporate Asset Management Board meets again at I think the beginning of November, and the aim is to take this decision substantively to that meeting, to determine the outcome as the Minister has outlined in relation to the preferred site for the S.A.R.C. and also its adjacency to the Heathfield playing fields

and the potential of that possibly being developed as a new prep school for Victoria College, as you are aware. The money therefore that is in the plan for 2021 for the capital project has not been substantively spent. There is a significant chunk of money there and we will be building a case to say that for understandable reasons we have not been able to spend it this year, but that it needs to be available to us next year. As we know, that must go through a specified process because there is not an automatic carryover. The Public Finances Manual is very clear on that; we do not know what that process will be yet but I think we have got a very strong case to use whatever mechanism is available and make a very strong case for the project to continue but for that substantive funding to be available to us next year instead. It will have slightly affected the completion date of July 2023. I would anticipate it is more likely the completion will be at the end of 2023 now, because of this process. As the Minister has referred to, it is important to us that we get these site selection decisions right, not just for our department but across the board. As we all move through the development of the better asset management strategy in government, we are playing our part in that.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Just to confirm, the revenue that was allocated for the pre-feasibility study, is that the case that you are going to make to carry that over, or you have already made the case for the capital, so that should be in the Government Plan? I am trying to make it clear between revenue and capital.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, so I was referring to the capital. There is a separate line in the Government Plan for £150,000 of revenue for the S.A.R.C., which is completely separate to the capital project. That is about funding members of staff and it is a correction to existing running costs having been captured at £150,000 lower than they should have been in the original Government Plan of 2020. That will show as an ongoing correction for the rest of the life of the plan, but it is to pay for specified numbers of staff that are needed as part of the current operation.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

In terms of that £150,000 the mid-year review notes that continuing the funding of £150,000 is being requested for 2022 as well. Can we have an explanation of how the allocated funds for 2022 will be apportioned and whether it is still sufficient to ensure, as we have heard with the field squadron, for example, to make sure that it covers things like inflation, pay awards and those types of areas?

[11:00]

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, it is only a small part of the budget. The whole budget for the S.A.R.C. is about £550,000, which is issued by the police. It is one of their departments. As it is mostly salaries, inflation is taken into account.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

There was £355,000 allocated in 2021 for the development of the child house model. Can you update on that spend to date and the development that has taken place to develop the model and the services that it encompasses?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

It is a naming convention, I think. So, the project that we call the S.A.R.C. in the capital plan we want it to be a child house model, which is, as you know, a well-used and well-researched concept in this field. I would need to double-check, but I think that is the previously allocated feasibility money for the development of the capital project, but also it takes into account some of the staff cost of developing the concept. We have been working with the N.S.P.C.C. (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) and we have been working with Lighthouse Services and child house models in the U.K. to develop the right design for the capital project. I need to double-check how it all lines up in the plan.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Talking about another sort of centre, I visited one in Camden, which is a S.A.R.C. but it is also much more than that, and they have pulled together all of these different organisations. It is quite incredible.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, and that is what we are trying to emulate here.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It will be a victim centre.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, and £355,000 you are allocating in 2022 as well, a similar figure. What will that cover and is it sufficient to meet the aims for that significant project?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I think it is sufficient. I think it will cover the development of the model, but I need to double-check that and follow up with you afterwards, to make sure that I am clear exactly on what is on each line. It has developed into the plan in a slightly unusual way.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

You have got 2 tranches, one in 2021 and one in 2022 with the same figure. Has the 2021 been spent or will that be carried over and added to the 2022 figure?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

We try to avoid saying “carryover”, of course, but that is what we would like to happen.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Forgive the bad use of terms. It is just the reality of what it is.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

It is what it is but obviously ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Has there been resourcing needed to develop the S.A.R.C.? I think you have already answered that question. There was £1.8 million for the capital project. Now it is £882,000. I think they are talking about the S.A.R.C. there. There is a significant reduction in 2022. Is that because the money for 2021 which does not seem to have been spent ...

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, so that is ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That is what we were talking about earlier, so what you are going to need to do is to make the case to keep that capital project money with the money that you will be hoping will be further down the line, so it would not be as much. Okay, that makes sense.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, so the new business case for the S.A.R.C. reprofiles the funding into how we would now expect it to be spent from next year onwards. There is a small amount of money that we have not spent this year that we would like to also be able to spend next year, but that new profile is the one.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So the capital money from those 2 years with the disruption is to build the physical structure for it to exist, and the other monies that we are talking about, the £355,000, and the £355,000 is the revenue to resource it?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay. Can you confirm whether funding for the Women's Refuge development sits within the Government Plan and if it is not there, why is it not there? We were told that that is going to be developed.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I am not sure it is Home Affairs.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I think we have touched on this at a previous hearing. I think my recollection is it sits under Health and Community Services, but I will check.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Sometimes it is difficult when these things cross.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

The Combined Control I.T. (information technology), the project was partially deferred in the previous Government Plan due to budget constraints and the funding of £2 million was allocated for 2021. Of the funds allocated, can you confirm the spend to date and the breakdown, if possible?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

I can, but you will have to give me a minute to look it up, because it is not in our immediate brief. There has been some spend as we have progressed the project, but the substantive capital amount was for the purchase of the combined control computer-aided dispatch system, and we have not yet committed to that purchase. We were just about to go out to tender for it, so it would be likely that that substantive purchase will fall in 2022 and that non-carryover, carryover process that we have alluded to already, I will need to make the case for that money to be available next year instead of this year. I could not tell you the exact figure.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

So it will be a carry forward of the capital?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

So it would be of a similar figure, or you might have to tweak that, depending on the outcome of the tender?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, so the expenditure this year so far has been about the project costs and the telephony improvement that we are making. There is a new Mitel phone system in the room - we have paid Mitel and J.T. (Jersey Telecom) for that - and also a new system called the Integrated Communications Control System, which is effectively the users having proper headsets that mean they can deal with the phone and the radio at the same time. We have paid for that. This year's expenditure is around that technical improvement and the project management costs and then I would expect the substantive capital expenditure to now fall next year once we have been out to tender and appointed a supplier.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

In terms of some of the improvements that have been able to be made with the money that has been spent so far, and recognising the more substantial side of the capital project for next year to be carried forward, does that have any effect whatsoever on your ability to make some of the efficiency savings? I am trying to see whether there is an invest to save incentive.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, there is, but it is the people's model, so right now it has 3 services running emergency calls from the same room; well it changed during COVID but that is the idea. What we want is one service taking care of all the emergency calls, so when that happens and you need the computer-aided dispatch system to do that, anybody will be able to take any call and work on it. That allows for efficiencies and they can be on both sides. One of them is that you can reorganise shifts so that you need less people to do the same work, but also the work can be better. That is the next step, but the big hurdle to get to that is to find that computer-aided dispatch system and apply it here.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

So once that is tendered, brought in, finalised it is possibly going to be on an efficiency line for the next Government Plan?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

I am just trying to understand the investment and then the outcomes in terms of these capital projects. It is a useful example.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

In this case we are talking about efficiencies in the service that is rendered, rather than trying to find a little bit of money. The money will be minimal, I think we found £50,000 or something like that, so it is not about trying to save £50,000. It is trying to have the most efficient system possible.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Okay. That is where we get a bit confused when we call “savings” efficiencies, and efficiency is efficiency, so ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think in general we are trying to run a good government, rather than trying to save money but when we need to do new things we have to make sure that we are not wasting it anywhere else.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

We do anticipate consulting staff on the people model at the beginning of November, so we would be very happy to offer the panel a private briefing, as we have done with T.O.M.s. (target operating models) and staffing models before, if that is of interest, to brief you before that goes live.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

To check then, when the computer-aided dispatch is fully integrated as a percentage how far along the line are we with that process? Are we 50 per cent of the way?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No, we are going to tender, so we know what we want, but we have to find somebody to supply it.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, and when that is all in place can you see that you will be employing less people?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I think we are moving around a few roles, but again the savings are not significant.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

In terms of the ambulance and fire headquarters the Government Plan 2022 notes this major project is scheduled to commence in 2022 with an allocation of £500,000. We understand that the capital funds will be allocated for pre-feasibility work and the project built in subsequent years. Can you

outline how the 2022 funds will be apportioned and what is going to be achieved with them, effectively, by the end of 2022? That is that £500,000.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Pre-feasibility. First, this will work only if we have the Rouge Bouillon site, because that is the site that we have designed for and that we are ready to start. If it comes anywhere else then the budget will have to change, because we will have to start from scratch and try to find a different way of doing this. If we do have the Rouge Bouillon site then that is just pre-feasibility.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

How close are you to that Rouge Bouillon site being agreed?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

It all depends on Education.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Can I confirm? You have got design, if you get that site, so depending on what happens with the other review that is going on, so in terms of the end of 2022 with that £500,000, what does that pre-feasibility do? What is tangible? What does the public see for that money?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

If I am not mistaken it takes us to a planning application.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

That would be more likely to fall into 2023, that stage. So the strategic decision for us, part of building the Government capital plan proposal that you now see in the Government Plan, is that because it will take some more time, hopefully not too much more time, to resolve the outcome of the school review and therefore conscious of the proposition that went through before the summer recess have a clear answer on what the use of that site should be, we would not be able to undertake too much work next year because we need certainty around the site. As the Minister says, there will be some further work that we can do in terms of feasibility, but I would expect that we would not be able to get into the full feasibility and design stage that we need to do until 2023, which is where the bulk of this work kicks in, the bulk of the money kicks in, and that we would then be looking to do full design and planning in 2023. We profiled in the £500,000 for next year to see if there is some more work we can usefully do on the current design, but conscious that if we did need to change site we would have to start all of that from the beginning and we would not have wanted to do nugatory work next year. We also want at least part of that £500,000 to be used for feasibility and potentially, hopefully, delivery of a real fire facility. One of the essential parts of this project is that

we increase and enhance the training facilities for firefighters. It is a little bit like the firearms range example, we have to send firefighters to the U.K. to do that training at the moment in hot fire conditions, they have to do it regularly, it is now every 2 years, we are behind. We have got firefighters going off to do it right now but in the future we would want to do that on the Island. Our hope is that because whichever site is chosen, whether it is the current Rouge Bouillon site or a different one, that has inherently got to be effectively round the ring road or somewhere in St. Helier we probably would not build a real fire facility there because of the nature of the facility. We would be able to build that as a standalone facility somewhere on the Island not yet identified and that we could potentially make an investment next year of some of that £500,000 for that facility. It would have to be standalone anyway and we do not necessarily need to wait until the full H.Q. project is delivered in a number of years' time to deliver that immediate improvement to our training. We have left ourselves some flex in how that money would be used.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

That is helpful to know because I was about to turn around and say: "Why do you need £500,000 then if you might not be ..." but that is understandable.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

It is an opportunity cost we may be able to spend to improve a different part of the project.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

I apologise. I had forgotten about that.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, we have left ourselves some flex.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So it is £500,000 for a feasibility on Rouge Bouillon, but it might not be? It might be on something else?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

It is quite dynamic because of the factors we are all well aware of. I understand there is good progress on the school review and we are due to be updated on that by C.Y.P.E.S. colleagues in the next couple of weeks in advance of that Corporate Asset Management Board in November having a substantive update on progress. We are to an extent in their hands and the position of this project in the plan is aimed at being conscious of that and making sure that we are good and corporately sensible about this project. It is still extremely important to us; it is one of the Minister's

highest priorities, but it needs to be right, taking everything into the round from the estate strategy point of view too.

[11:15]

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, so there is a lot to be decided before we get anywhere, to sum up?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Shall we talk about the army and sea cadets headquarters? That is linked as well, because they are there at the moment.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

The funding for this area is £494,000 for 2022. Exactly the same question as the ambulance and fire; how is that allocated and apportioned, so that we understand the project? I think that is probably the best way to ask that question.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes, it is very similar. It is also something that needs to be resolved by about 2024. That is how it fits into the schedule, so this is to keep it going next year. We cannot talk about the details because of commercial confidentiality but we are hopeful that we do have a site selected and that we will be able to do some work on it next year.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Does the school review get in the way of this one?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

So far no. So far Scott has not seen it yet, so we will wait and see. It should be all right. It is commercial so there are issues ...

Senator T.A. Vallois:

So the £494,000 for next year is the feasibility for that potential site?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. It builds up in the plan to a total of just under £3.5 million for the delivery of the new H.Q. I guess as the leaders of this project what we are is an interdependency for the school review question and the ambulance, fire and rescue headquarters question, because whoever develops that site will need the sea cadets to have moved first, so it is incumbent on us to make sure that that happens, and then unlocks that side ready for demolition and building of whatever the right answer is on that current Rouge Bouillon site. There is a real imperative to get this cadet H.Q. project delivered because of that, but also because of the history, which is well-versed. We are very committed to it. We are meeting regularly with the cadet leaders and we are just about to go into more detailed specification and pre-feasibility of what the facility would look like. As soon as the site that we are hoping will be agreed is available we will be able to develop that further, so I am as confident as I can be that we will be spending that money next year as intended and that this project will ...

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Much closer with this project than with the ambulance and fire?

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

More confidence in the site selection and things like that?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Yes.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

I dare ask whether any discussions have taken place with the likes of Ports of Jersey and the La Folie site and the areas around there? It has historically been discussed, but it is worth asking the question because the Ports of Jersey are of course arm's length of the States of Jersey.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

What is that formula? I can neither confirm nor deny.

Acting Director General, Justice and Home Affairs:

We are in discussion with Ports of Jersey and that has been very constructive so far.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Okay, that is helpful.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I am just going to jump ahead for a second, because we have 10 minutes left. There was just one really important one. It is about Brexit transition, but it basically says “fund as required” and I just wanted to ask you as to what “fund as required” means because we have spent a long time talking about figures, but “fund as required”, that term comes up a number of times in the Government Plan in other areas, so I will not vex you with those, but what does that mean and where does that come from?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

There is still, I suppose unfortunately so long after it has happened, quite a bit of uncertainty about where Brexit is going to go. Of course, customs and immigration are directly in charge of the way it is managed. We are completely on top of things right now but if they change there might be some very big expenses occurring. Right now we are in a system that does not have tariffs, but depending on what happens in Northern Ireland next year we might be in a system that does have tariffs. We might be in a system that completely eschews the Trade Co-operation Agreement, so unfortunately there is no figure we can put on it because we have no idea of how bad or good it could be.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

But it is to maintain those posts within the Brexit transition department - I do not know what it is called - wherever it is based, but then have that contingency for if there is more law advice needed on that type of thing? It is going to be about tariffs, is it not, whether they are introduced, which seems to be increasingly likely in some areas, which is a bit concerning to say the least? That makes sense, but it is just the “fund as required” process that I think may be clearer in some others in the Government Plan, if I am honest. If we go back to the Jersey Police Authority and additional funding.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

We touched on it briefly before, but I suppose just an explanation or understanding on how the figure of £101,000 came up. The £101,000 for 2022 that is proposed for the Jersey Police Authority, how was that ...

The Minister for Home Affairs:

The C. and A.G. (Comptroller and Auditor General) did a report on how the Jersey Police Authority worked, which was extremely useful because it is a relatively new thing for us. To be truly independent they needed to be a little bit stronger. They made a business plan which was, to say the least, extremely ambitious, which we pared down a little bit and kept the most essential parts of, and the most essential parts of it were “must have”, to have people able to work on this and quite a bit more training. We have accepted that and that is the money that you see there. You know how

they are formed, you just pick up people who want to help and there is a job. There are a couple of elected members in there, and they are supposed to run the police, or at least supervise the running of the police. To learn how this happens in other jurisdictions of course would be extremely important for them, but this is expensive and they have to do it, and once they do that they need to be able to supervise. One of the problems, for example, was that they did not have the facility to supervise accounts. To do it properly takes a lot of work and basically you would want somebody dedicated to looking at it. Those are the sorts of things we will give them this time.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

I suppose it is trying to turn the money into outcomes and what that looks like and what that means. A Jersey Police Authority may not be exciting for a normal member of the public hearing about it, but it is £101,000 of public money. With that money being spent, is it strengthening for the police, for that challenge between both yourself as Minister and the police? It is just an understanding.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

First, I think that being part of the Police Authority is quite an exciting job. It is unpaid, but I would recommend it to anybody who was interested. I am quite happy to see parishioners come up. They supervise the police. The police must be separated from the Ministry. We have an influence on the budget, an influence on the very high level of general direction, but we do not run the police and we cannot interfere with the running. The J.P.A. (Jersey Police Authority) can supervise and tell them what to do, but to do that you need to be well-informed and you need to have the resources. We are talking about more than 300 people whose agency you need to supervise, so it does take resources. I think the budget that we gave them is about one-third of what they asked for, so they were quite a bit more ambitious when they came to us.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Sometimes it is good to be ambitious, is it not?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

There were good reasons. It was a very good plan and quite interesting. I will not go into detail but it was interesting. It was not just random figures. They wanted to do something with it, but it was a lot of money, so we reduced it to what we considered would still make them more effective at their job.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

In the final 5 minutes, we mentioned before regarding the increase in money for the field squadron. I think you have answered most of it, but there were just a couple of things.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

One interesting thing about the field squadron is that I understand that we are the only area in the U.K. that pays for defence that way. Guernsey just sends a cheque to the army. That is what they do. So we are the only one to have had an agreement where if we kept a field squadron in Jersey and paid for it that would be considered our contribution to the defence of the United Kingdom. It is quite unique and special to us.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It is a complement of a minimum of 68 people and a capacity to train 12 recruits annually in the intergovernmental agreement established in 1981, so these funds are to maintain that, but because it is a 50 per cent increase in budget, what has been happening in the previous years? It is a sudden increase.

The Minister for Home Affairs:

No, again we spent the money last year and we spent the same money the year before. It was just not in the budget. Nobody has stopped and thought: "Well, that is what it cost so that is what we need to put in the budget." We probably needed to be shown that this was not going to change. That was really what we needed to spend and there was no way ...

Senator T.A. Vallois:

So you were hoping to find that extra money from other areas in the budget, so technically having to cut or make efficiencies in other areas to make up that budget?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

That is right.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

So at least if it is recognised as a number in here then it is paying for what it costs?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

Absolutely, it is a recognition of the cost, and it is an accident. I think they just did not take into account salaries' inflation, so they thought if they give £1 million every year for ever it will be fine. It is people, and salaries go up every year, so there should be an inflation and they just had not done that 10 or 15 years ago.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

In the last few minutes, I do not know if there are any other questions you want to ask?

Senator T.A. Vallois:

I think they answered that fairly thoroughly.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

If there is anything you want to ask us we will give you a chance to ask questions as well. It is always a good thing to do. Any other comments that you want to make?

The Minister for Home Affairs:

There are a lot of changes, a lot of projects and I welcome your input. I think you are extremely important. You help us debug the things that we do and we have been quite ambitious. We have taken a lot on, so keep doing your job, keep asking us. You will find things that I have overlooked, so I recognise that and think it is very important.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, I think that is a very important thing for us, because that is what we try to do. I think in the briefings that we have we often uncover small areas that another pair of eyes looking at is very important, particularly with the Government Plan. We will continue to look at the numbers and so on. I suppose that is about it from us. We have been quite thoroughly through everything and I have just looked around to see if we have missed anything, and I do not think we have. It is just about smack bang on 11.30 a.m., which is not bad, which is good timing, so if there is nothing else to say thank you very much and I will call the hearing to an end. Thank you very much.

[11:27]