



Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny

Panel

Quarterly Hearing

Witness: The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Wednesday, 9th October 2024

Panel:

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Chair)

Connétable M. Labey of Grouville (Vice-Chair)

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade

Witnesses:

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat of St. Helier North, The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Ms. K. Briden, Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs

Mr. R. Smith, Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police

Mr. N. Fox, Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office

Mr. M. Cockerham, Head of Service, Customs and Immigration

[09:30]

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Chair):

Welcome to this quarterly hearing of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. Today is 9th October. I would like to draw everyone's attention to the following, the hearing will be filmed and streamed live. The recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States

Assembly website. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, should be switched to silent. For introductions, I am Deputy Catherine Curtis, the Chair of the Panel.

Connétable M. Labey of Grouville (Vice-Chair):

My name is Connétable Mark Labey. I am the Vice Chair of the Panel.

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade:

I am Deputy Helen Miles, Panel member.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Deputy Mary Le Hegarat, Minister for Justice and Home Affairs.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Kate Briden, Chief Officer for Justice and Home Affairs.

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

Nathan Fox, Associate Director of Justice Policy.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Morning, Chief Officer Robert Smith.

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

Mark Cockerham, Head of Customs and Immigration.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you, everyone. Deputy Porée cannot be here today. So if I start with some of the questions, we have a question about attacks on frontline staff to begin with. Minister, during the 22nd August hearing, it was indicated that a media campaign regarding attacks on frontline staff would run in autumn of this year. So can you tell us what progress has been made on this since the last hearing?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, of course. It is, as you rightly say, planned to have a campaign in the autumn and that will happen imminently. The campaign is about raising public awareness in relation to the increasing trend of violence and aggression towards States of Jersey ambulance and service teams. This campaign seeks to highlight the impact of such behaviour on emergency responders and ultimately on the community's ability to receive timely and effective care. The goal is to foster a culture of

respect and support for those who are on the front lines saving lives. It is very important to me that the emergency services personnel can work effectively without fear of violence and aggression. I am concerned that incidents appear to have risen this year. We previously provided the Panel with information which had come from a F.O.I. (Freedom of Information) of such incidents and just full information of the public. There has been none as to the end of August on the fire service and States Ambulance, up to 14th June, was 7, Customs and immigration up to the end of August was 5, and the States of Jersey Police up to the end of July is 39. As I said, obviously that campaign is imminent and I think it is very important that we do that work to turn the trend.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, definitely. I do not know if you wanted to add anything to that, the police chief, or about attacks on Customs?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Regrettably, those numbers are now up to 46 police officers assaulted this year. In 2019, for the whole year was 23. So I am fully in support with the Minister. State of Jersey Police has a new head of communications and we have already discussed what we will do in terms of a media campaign, joining up of course with J.H.A. (Justice and Home Affairs) colleagues as well, because it is across the board, all emergency services. But I am concerned about the number of assaults and that there is an appropriate deterrent if a police officer or any member of the emergency services is assaulted. The final point is, frankly, the number of spitting incidents. So far this year we have had 15 spitting incidents. Police officers are being spat at. One recently spat in the face. That has an enormous impact on those individuals, not least of which one officer, and it is going through the judicial process so I will not provide too much detail for reasons you will understand, is now going through a course of tests to check that they have not got anything infectious. So, I know the Minister is very keen on this. I think that we need to do more to, not only explain what is going on, but also that there is an appropriate deterrent if an emergency service worker is assaulted while in the course of their duty.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thank you.

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

Just briefly, I mean we are fortunate in the sense that the number of incidents are significantly lower than the States of Jersey Police. They tend to be in controlled environments such as the harbour and the airport, so they are easy to deal with. That said, it does not mean that they are acceptable. Certain, but not the situation the police are in.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Just as a backup, Minister, I was alarmed to see the U.K. (United Kingdom) figures as well that do not seem to have changed a great deal and it is concerning to the Panel very much.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, I think it is something that really needs to be highlighted, but also the consequences of those actions need to be dealt with effectively.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes. So, if I now just ask a question about the ambulance headquarters or the ambulance, fire and rescue headquarters. So can you provide us with a status update on the feasibility work for this, whether it is on track to be completed by the end of the year for example?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Obviously I think we have already discussed, and the Council of Ministers has prioritised discussions in relation to Gas Place, because obviously, as I said in relation to fire, this is about a puzzle. There is obviously still good alignment between all of those parties that are involved, so obviously Education, myself, and the Minister for Infrastructure. The long-term capital plan set out in the budget or the Government Plan highlights investment in Rouge Bouillon from 2028. What has happened effectively in relation to capital projects, and I know we are going to talk about that later, but just to explain, is that we have looked at things that can be achieved in the next 2 years and we have obviously realigned some things which are going to take longer. So, considering realistic estimates on delivery capacity in Government and the construction sector to commence this programme of work, so that is why it has been pushed back. We will be working with Jersey Property Holdings to ensure that the current buildings are appropriately maintained in the meantime, because obviously both fire and ambulance are deteriorating buildings and they need maintenance, so that needs to be done. Further feasibility work will be undertaken in the remainder of this year in order to understand the programme and costs of the proposed solution. As discussed previously, I will be very happy to offer the Panel a briefing as and when those discussions have been completed, so that you know what is coming forward. As I said, all of these things need to obviously be communicated to staff in those areas as well.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, that is great. Thank you. So do you have any idea of a date when the feasibility work would be completed, if not by the end of this year?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

It is aiming for the end of this year, because it is using some funding that is only available in this year. It has started, the project team, very small project team, met with the ambulance chief and the fire chief on Monday to talk about the more detailed work they need to do and, as far as I know, they have a plan to complete by the end of this year, which would mean we can come and brief you in the new year and also brief staff on what the feasibility study says.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you. All right.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Excellent. Thank you, Chair. We are going to move on to questions about the Justice Policy, if I may. Minister, in your follow-up letter to the Panel on 3rd September, you noted that there is no evidence of significant or problematic waiting times for court processes. However, from the data that was provided for adult remand court, there has been an increase in time of offence to the charge from 168 days in 2023 to 327 days in 2024, as well as an increase in the time between the charge to the first appearance in court from 22 days to 147 days. The Panel would like more information regarding any steps being taken to reduce court waiting times or the duration defendants are waiting before their court next date.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Obviously the Panel are aware that I have no jurisdiction over the operations of the court as it is a non-ministerial function, independently of the Government, so I am not closely involved. However, I do meet with the representatives of the court on a regular basis and they keep me informed about the challenges and key issues that they observe. Obviously, it is something that I can discuss with them, but, as I said, I have no jurisdiction over that particular part.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay. Thank you very much. In which case, yes, that bypasses that. Can you please provide details on what roles Justice and Home Affairs plays in determining budgetary matters related to legal aid?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. Recently, as I said, I have continued to meet with the legal aid team and they and I have discussed various matters in relation to legal aid and we will be reviewing, obviously, the various criteria in relation to qualification of legal aid alongside any increases that need to be made. It is an ongoing project and I am, alongside them, reviewing where we are with the legal aid system.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Do you intend to play a larger role in determining the legal aid budget in the future?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

That is a difficult question really. I think it is more about it is their budget, if you like. The budget for that part is not held by me, but what we have been discussing is, as I said, you obviously have criteria for people who are able to claim it, how much, repayments, et cetera. So I am working with them on that particular element of it, but the money is not my money, I believe it is the Treasury that provides that funding, not me. So I think that is where we can have a look at how we think the system should move forward because obviously you cannot have a system which stays still. So we need to potentially look at how things are and the criteria is looked at.

The Connétable of Grouville:

It would be interesting for the Panel, I am sure, to have any information you can provide us on how legal aid is determined.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, of course. As I said, obviously, depending on those reviews that we are currently looking at, then obviously that will be provided.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you very much.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Just to clarify, as Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, that is in your role, you cannot have any influence over court processes, and I mean the general processes like court delays?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No, because I do not hold authority for that. It is the courts that hold the authority for that. Obviously, as the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, I can raise concerns with them, but it is them that run the court system, not me. They are a non-ministerial, so that means they do not have a Minister. That is because the courts have to be independent.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I do understand that, but then there is the processes overall as well rather than the individual what is happening; so you can raise concerns?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I can raise concerns with those individuals that regulate the courts. But I cannot say: "You have got to have a certain time scale". Because it is not my department and I do not run them.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Does the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs sit on the Criminal Justice System Board?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, but it has not sat. The Criminal Justice Working Group is sitting regularly, quarterly, with subgroups now that have been reformed, and that is at the working level where these sorts of concerns would be discussed and be able to be addressed.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Who is involved in setting the strategic direction then of the criminal justice system work?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

So the System Board is not sitting at the moment.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So when is the System Board likely to sit?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

This would remind me that it would be sensible for the Minister to write to the Bailiff to ask.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Good, that would be interesting.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay. Thank you. We are moving on to the subject of Youth Justice Strategy. In the previous hearing, you noted that the Youth Justice Strategy was being finalised. Can you provide an update on when this will be completed please?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yeah, I met with the B.A.S.C. (Building a Safer Community) coordinator and Chief Officer of J.H.A. in August to discuss the final draft of the Youth Justice Strategy. Both have spent time working with the key action stakeholders, associated executive leadership, heads of service, Children's Commissioner, and the safeguarding accountable officers, to understand the feasibility of delivering the current proposed strategy with any additional resourcing allocated to it, which is the current situation. Having now worked through this, we have agreed a way forward which will see the Youth Justice Strategy presented as a more strategic vision on the system which is aligned with the B.A.S.C. framework and Children and Families Plan.

[09:45]

The strategy focuses on a children-first approach, which is what it should have always been, and sees the key drivers of success as ensuring that the Youth Justice System enables a partnership approach to encourage children in law-abiding and positive behaviours. Children are diverted away from the formal criminal justice system at the earliest point with appropriate support. Children who are engaged in serious or persistent conflict with the law go on to achieve positive outcomes and children, families, and communities, and victims recover and move on beyond the impact of the harm they have experienced. A private briefing to scrutiny is booked for the end of November when we will discuss the strategy in more detail before it is formally published. The B.A.S.C. Youth Justice Partnership Board is currently being formed from an existing group to drive the delivery of the strategy and the already formed B.A.S.C. data partnership with support for this group. This will be coordinated by the court, the B.A.S.C. coordinator, and accountable to myself through the B.A.S.C. governance framework. So that is something that you will be briefed on at the end of November.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay. Thank you. We are quite intrigued by the timeline. So it does not sound like it is going to be that much longer.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No.

The Connétable of Grouville:

The Panel would also like more information regarding the new Youth Justice Strategy. How will children be protected within the criminal justice system under the new strategy, do you think?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think that the important thing is that, when we look at how we are going to deal with youth and young people, that our focus, as I have said, is always on that young person. I think we need to really look at what starts before youth effectively, and we need to start our programme of work long before we end up with young people diverting into certain behaviours. So I think that is what needs to be looked at. It needs to start and see what things we can put in place to assist us moving forward so that we can divert before and assist and help families before we end up in this situation. Because I think that is what is critical. It is about starting from the beginning as opposed to trying to rectify something that is already happening. So I think that is quite clear and I am working very closely with the Minister for Children and Families on this particular project. Obviously, he is also my Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs as well, but it is critical that whatever strategies come out in relation to youth justice is a programme that starts earlier doors.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is good. Can I just say we need to try to keep our answers and questions concise because we have not got a lot of time.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, that is true. So are we expecting an update before the end of quarter 4 this year?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Absolutely.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay. Moving on then from that one, in your response letter from 3rd September, you indicated that early intervention strategies, particularly around youth crime, were being adopted in an effort to remove inefficient or reduce repeat issue incidents. The Panel would like further information on this.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Sorry, say that again?

The Connétable of Grouville:

It is about the repeat incidents, in other words reducing repeat incidents.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think the answer to reducing repeat incidents is by starting the programme, as I have said already, earlier and then dealing positively with those young people and their families earlier, so that we can prevent that development going forward.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, it is about early intervention.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Everything is about early intervention.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Which was my next question. Are the repeat offences graded as to how severe the intervention might be?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I do not think we are at that point, to be honest. I think that is a difficult question. The thing is that incidents will always be graded because some incidents are fairly minor and you can deal with those individuals at a lower level. But I think when you have got serious incidents, you are going to have to consider how you are going to deal with those individuals. Because you have to also be aligned to the fact that the defendant might be a young person, but quite often so are the victims of those particular events, and we have to look after and manage both sides of that equation. So it is not only about the offender and how the offender is dealt with, but we need to positively deal with those victims and ensure that those victims are getting the care and everything that they need as well. So we must never forget that there are 2 sides to this particular event. It is the perpetrators, but also the victims, and it is not only young people that are the victims, it is other members of the community as well. So we need to positively deal with every aspect of those things.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Victims, sure. Thank you, Minister. I think that is my section.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So, on a different subject now. Minister, as the competent authority for fuel, electricity and gas, can you please explain how you are informed and kept up to date on gas risks around the Island?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Okay. As you are aware, my role is in relation to the sort of outage, when there is a disruption. So that is where the emergency comes into it. The other time it sits with a different Minister. But we are continually updated and better prepared. It is a continual event where we meet in relation to our resilience and other events and the Chief Officer for Justice and Home Affairs probably can provide a little bit more on that.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

So, Emergencies Council meets periodically where Ministers have mainly been updated over the summer on the work we have been doing on gas contingency generally. Council of Ministers is due to be updated at the beginning of November on the substance of that work, which mainly revolves around scenario planning for what happens if we have another outage. It is almost exactly a year since we had that one in October last year. We have done a lot of lessons learned work as a result of that and come up with a new gas response plan, which builds on the lessons learned from lots of incidents, not just the gas one, particularly in terms of community support, information of what utilities are where, and where vulnerable customers are, and in particular also working with Jersey Electricity on what their part would be in helping us cope with a gas outage of some sort. There is also work on what the corporate structures look like, which we could perhaps tell you in a private briefing another time rather than in a public one, for reasons I think you will probably understand. But the Ministers are updated on that pretty regularly as well. The mainstay of that work is under the Minister for Infrastructure, rather than the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, but the senior officers work collaboratively on it.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so that new gas response plan, that is already complete?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

It is very nearly finalised, yes. They are not publicly published plans because they have got a fair degree of sensitive information in them for responders to use. But certainly I am sure we could share it with the Panel in confidence.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you. So you have answered my next question I think about what you are doing to prepare for a crisis. This would be in the plan. What is currently being done to ensure Islanders' safety? Is that covered by the plan or is there more needed?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

So the safety work is more a separate strand from that really. The duty there is with the risk owner. So the Island Energy Group, we are in very close contact with them. There is obviously still the investigations in relation to specific incidents underway, about which again we would not talk publicly. The Infrastructure and Environment Department are also working very closely with I.E.G. (Islands Energy Group) where they are doing road works, for example, so there is a big programme in Bath Street at the moment, which is winding us all up, but is there for a reason to make sure that those connections are safe and sound to new developments, et cetera. We are also aware that I.E.G. are doing a remediation programme to make sure that, where they have disconnected, those connections are fully safe and are further away from properties than they have been previously.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks. Are there any updates that you can share with the Panel regarding the tragedy at Haut du Mont?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

That is probably for Robin.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

As you will appreciate, and as the Chief Officer has just alluded to, we are at a delicate period with this because matters are with the Law Officers Department. But, as you will have seen in the media last week, the majority of the file is now with Law Officers for them to consider any charging decisions.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you. Helen?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. I have some questions about the Article 36 suite, place of safety, and it is just really, Minister, if you can give us an update please. This is great news.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I am very excited and I have to say this, I know I have to be quick, but part of that Article 36 bed was as a result of the Health Panel from 2018 to 2022 and the extra funding that was given. But I can happily say that, as of September, it is now opened, although it has not been used yet.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Which is a good thing. I know there are people in this meeting that have had a long history with this. Certainly the introduction of the suite has not been quick, but we accept and understand that we now have an Island facility that I think is world class. I am pleased to say, as of yet, we have not needed to use it. There have been some incidents where there have been some additional complications with the individuals concerned, which has pre-empted them from not going to the suite, i.e. to the hospital instead. But that facility provides us with the very best care for people who are patients, who are not criminals. That said, for example, as of today we have had so far 654 mental health related incidents. That is around about 70-odd a month, but that is a drop of 17 per cent. I think that the mental health suite will be used. Of course it will be used. But the demand we have, which are not all Article 36, which require them to go in there, is still quite a significant demand, albeit it has dropped significantly, largely exclusively as a result of the relationship we have with Andy Weir and his mental health team.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. Has staffing the site up, I mean you have not used it yet I suppose, but are you expecting that once the suite starts to be used, it will have a positive impact on the resources of States of Jersey Police?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

That is my expectation. There is a very detailed and agreed M.O.U. (memorandum of understanding) between us and about how we will deliver effectively the detainee or patient into the suite. It is my expectation, and I am confident it is Andy Weir's expectation, that there will be staff there. Otherwise it will sort of nullify the reasons why we have got a suite.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

And there will be staff there 24/7?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

That is my understanding, Deputy.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, thank you. Are States of Jersey Police monitoring how the suite is being used?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

The M.O.U. is incredibly detailed. In fact, when I saw a copy of it, I was astonished about the detail within it. Suffice to say that within that is about how we will collectively monitor together its usage and its benefits, et cetera.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That is all good news. Thank you. My next set of questions are around the role of the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs in relation to corporate parenting. So, can you explain to us whether your responsibilities are similar to or different from other Ministers when it comes to being a corporate parent?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think obviously, from my point of view, I think the Corporate Parenting Board, both mine and the Minister for Children, our responsibilities, I would say, are probably higher than those of other members of that board, because of course, from a corporate parenting perspective, the Minister is obviously responsible for the children, particularly those under the care of the Government or under his Department. But of course from my perspective as the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, and having responsibility for the Police, then obviously those young people are going to come into my domain more likely than they are to others. So, from my point of view, I think my responsibilities are greater. I mean, obviously, Education is probably another one that is quite high, as is Health. But I think the thing in relation to the Corporate Parenting Board, I think my responsibility is quite high, with the Minister for Children and Families, because we are responsible for the young people, but particularly those that come into the care of the police and to ensure their welfare, so I think my responsibilities are higher, if I am honest.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Do you think the States could improve at all as a corporate parent and, if so, in which areas?

[10:00]

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I would not like to be specific about areas as such, but let us make no bones about this, I think we can always improve. I think there is always an ability for us to improve how we deal with young people and my view is, in relation to being a corporate parent, is that we need to ensure the best outcomes young people. Being a corporate parent is like being a parent for your own child. You need to make sure that you treat them with dignity and respect, but you also need to make sure that, when you are doing things, that you are considering their welfare at all times. Because I think sometimes that is not always the case. So I think it is very important for us to ensure that we all work together on that scenario, but also linking in very closely with the new Children's Commissioner as well, because I think, for all of us, we will always need to work on this. It is never going to be perfect because, let us be fair, that does not happen but I think it is very important and obviously

Robin is part of the corporate parenting board as well and we all contribute to that, but I think we can always improve. I do not think we will ever be in a perfect situation.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you. Just a specific question. Does the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs keep specific records of individuals in care?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Not that I know of, but I think obviously the Minister for Children would have and that person is my Assistant Minister, so hopefully ... and can I just say, that is why we felt that it was quite beneficial for that link, even though obviously he has got a very high profile portfolio as well. We thought there were benefits to that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. Just moving on to an update on the V.A.W.G. (Violence Against Women and Girls) report, can you just give us an update as to the status of the V.A.W.G. report recommendations tracker?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Blimey. Okay. Yes. Have you seen the tracker?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

No.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Right. Okay. I do not think there is probably any reason why we cannot confidentially send it to you because obviously there are 77 recommendations and there are timelines that literally go from now all the way through until June 2026. So I am conscious of time. If you are happy we will provide you the update in confidence, if that is okay.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. I am going to hand you back.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Sorry, it might also be worth adding that we have pencilled in a session on 21st October ...

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Which some have already accepted.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

And that is trying to get Constable Shenton-Stone's proposition for annual reporting to line up effectively with the Government Plan cycle, so more to follow.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you for the letter as well, which gave us an update on work.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. Just remind us and we will always try to do that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. I have some questions now about the work permit review. Minister, what update can you provide in regard to the revised work permit policy?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

There has obviously been more information in relation to the employers and employees. What is in the policy and, forgive me, you may already be aware of this but we have moved from 12 months to 6 months for somebody to be able to switch employer because we felt that that was quite a valuable part. We are providing clarity on maintaining and accommodating dependents without recourse to public funds, so there has been a look by the department to ensure that somebody who is able to bring their dependents with them are able to maintain a proper ... that those dependents can be well looked after. Sometimes somebody might come in with a job at a certain salary but they may not be able to pay for all of the on costs, if that makes sense. We have provided more signposting and links to information about living, working and access to healthcare in Jersey. I think what the panel's view was that there needed to be a little bit more information so that when people decide whether to come to Jersey or not it was clear about what was going to happen. The thresholds have gone up to £30,000. We have adopted more of the standard occupational classifications so that we are more aligned with the U.K. There were some classifications that were not in our work permit so some of the classifications have changed. We are enabling those on skilled work permits now to also take supplementary part-time employment of no more than 20 hours a week and as I have already said in relation to the temporary and skilled work permit holders they must advise their employers of their intention to seek supplementary part-time employment. Sometimes they may have to ask permission of their employer but that is only if that contract says that, but it is about advising them. As much as anything it is about so that the initial employer knows that they are working other hours as well and obviously from a welfare point of view that is quite critical. We are

still doing ongoing work in relation to the timescales of when they can ... the length of time that people can be here then they have to leave and all of those sorts of things, so we are still reviewing all of that and I do not know whether Mark can add anything to that really.

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

No, I think you have covered it, Minister. Briefly, it is probably worth saying that the framework, the roots in terms of construction, agriculture and hospitality, have not changed. It is more the emphasis on the welfare of the employee and the information that is available. That is really the fundamental changes that are taking place. We are heading for about 3,500 work permits for 2024 which is an enormous increase over previous years. It is important that the employees can be sure what information is available, particularly around healthcare and employee rights.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Are there any plans for a place to go, a help desk, an area of information specifically about work permits?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think the information is provided on the websites in relation to immigration for people when they are not here, but in relation to people that have arrived in the Island we are now signposting them to C.L.S. (Customer and Local Services) and so there is a help desk in C.L.S. The websites have been updated so that information should be better provided. I mean, obviously there are still things that need to continue to make sure that that information continues to be updated and that people have got access to that information.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, and if they look at the website they will be able to see that there is a place they can go to speak to someone at C.L.S.?

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

That is not on the website as such. What we are finding is I have mentioned the volume that we are dealing with. The issues that do arise particularly around the employer are comparatively small for that volume of people, so we generally find that when we do get cases that come to our attention as in immigration they are not necessarily immigration-related issues. They are more employer issues so we direct them to C.L.S. or indeed J.A.C.S. (Jersey Advisory and Conciliatory Service) if we feel that is appropriate.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I was going to ask why has the policy been delayed but is it because there are still the timescales being looked at?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. The delay initially was because some other members of the Council of Ministers wanted to just ... there were certain elements of it that we still need to iron out, is a good way of putting it.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. During the drafting of the new work permit policy were local stakeholders consulted in the development of the communications?

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

Just to emphasise it is not a new policy as such. The framework is pretty much unchanged so it is more tinkering with the terminology that is used. To answer your question, yes, the Chamber of Commerce, Jersey Hospitality Association, Jersey Business, these sorts of organisations have been consulted along with some of the representative groups such as Friends of Africa, Caritas.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. So have any migrant workers on Jersey been able to share their views and been involved in the drafting of policy rather than groups?

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

Not individual workers, no, as such. We have looked more towards the industry bodies and the representative groups.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Is there any plan to try to survey them and find out their thoughts?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think via our interaction with people like the Friends of Africa and there is the group in relation to Kenyan work permit holders and Caritas and others, and I have got scheduled in to meet with Caritas in relation to this, and are meeting regularly now with the Salvation Army as well. The thing is that we need to begin to understand and so I think that if they have got any issues they will go to those organisations. I think that is probably a good link for us to have because that way we will get a better understanding.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Chair, before we move on, Mark, I would be intrigued and I wonder if the public would be as well. The increase in the permit holders to 3,500, which industries are primarily engaged in this, do you think?

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

It is mainly hospitality but I think the thing to emphasise is that quite often Brexit is cited as the reason. It is partially the reason but it is not the whole reason. What we have seen is enormous change since Covid in terms of migration patterns. I think a lot of European workers that used to come to the Island have decided not to as a result of leaving but also as a result of cost of living and wages, so what we have seen, as you probably know, is a move for the Island to go further and further afield to bring in workers. That is, I think, collectively the reason for the increase, but it is mainly hospitality, to answer your question.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I now have got some questions on the E.T.A. (Electronic Travel Authorisation) scheme and I wonder if you could give us an update regarding the implementation of the policy and when that is likely to happen.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Obviously E.T.A. is being rolled out by the U.K. in phases. The E.T.A. for the Gulf States is now live. The rest of the world excluding the E.U. (European Union) will come online in quarter 4 of 2024. U.K. nationals will need an E.T.A. from Q2 in 2025 and the Crown Dependency schemes will be launched in quarter 4 of 2025. Obviously J.C.I.S. (Jersey Customs and Immigration Service) continue to engage with the Home Office in relation to the implementation of this. I think just as a point, the E.T.A. is not an immigration permission but a permission to travel. It is aimed at non-visa nationals who do not require a visa to enter the common travel area as visitors. It must be applied for before travelling using the E.T.A. app or webpage. Customers will be required to provide their details and answer some security questions. There is a fee of £10 and E.T.A. will be valid for 2 years. What I would like to say in relation to the Electronic Travel Authorisation is that I think what this will do is from my perspective as the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs it will make our borders a lot more secure. Obviously you will know who is travelling and also there will be far more detail than what there is now. I do not know if Mark has got anything to add to that.

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

No, just to emphasise that it will definitely increase border security. As the Minister said it is not an immigration permission. It is permission to travel and obviously preventing people from travelling at the point of departure, getting on the plane or the boat before they even arrive at the border having

been screened through various security checks has got to be an advantage. This is the way the world is moving. Obviously we see the equivalent in Europe with the E.T.I.A.S. (European Travel Information and Authorisation System) scheme. We know that places like America have had their E.S.T.A. (Electronic System for Travel Authorization) scheme in place for a long time but countries all around the world are moving to this system now.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So how is it going to impact the *carte d'identité* scheme?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The thing is that when the system is rolled out it depends whether that card is workable with the system that we have. If it is not workable then it is going to be difficult to do something about it from the point of view that it is an electronic data system and if the card is not conducive with that system then I do not know if Mark wants to talk more about the relationship that they have had with the U.K. in relation to the system.

[10:15]

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

I think there are 3 big barriers to overcome for the scheme to continue. The first is obviously from a policy perspective if for example Jersey was to be the only place in the common travel area that was to allow people to come in without a passport that could be an issue, not just for the U.K. but for us as well. I think cost could be quite a consideration as well. Tinkering, if you like, with U.K. systems could be extremely expensive and then finally obviously there is the security aspect of allowing people in on an identity card as opposed to a passport. I am not saying from my point of view that it cannot continue but I think it is going to be quite problematic.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

We know that there is an issue over French people having passports in that there is a very low take-up of passports in France. Have you had any conversations with either the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development or the Minister for External Relations to liaise with the French about raising the uptake of people using passports?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

In the last 24 hours I have had a meeting with the Minister for External Relations. I have had a number of meetings with the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development and I have highlighted the fact I thought that it was important for us as a jurisdiction to discuss with central government in

France, because obviously we are working with the people in Brittany and Normandy, because those are the people that are probably coming to Jersey on the day trip, so I think it is important to speak to the central government in France as well. I have done that. Also, on my visit to the J.C.I.S. in recent months I watch people coming and going and there is a mix of both passports and I.D. cards that are used by day trippers. It is interesting because I believe and I could be factually incorrect that the new French Consulate said that French people do have passports, so I do not know what facts are correct. I do not know how many people in France have passports or not but I think the question to ask is that we as travellers when we go to the U.K. go on a plane. Do we take a passport or do we use our driving licence? We use our driving licence because it is a less expensive item should we lose it, to replace. I think more work needs to be done in relation to how many people we would lose. I believe the data, and it is off the top of my head because I have not got that particular data, but I believe from my recollection there were 17,800 that came in on I.D. (identification) cards comparative to over 30,000 that came in on passports last year or the year before, I believe. I think the thing is that there is obviously ... it would be a bonus if you can continue that but if we cannot then we will not be able to and I think we need to identify that. We need to work to see if we can rectify the position and I fully agree with you in relation to that that work needs to be done to see what happens in France and the rest of Europe. I also would make the point that if you have somebody living in France whose partner is not French and has another European I.D. card they cannot come to Jersey so they would have to travel with a passport. I think the dynamics ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That is the way the current system works already, is it not?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, that is the point so I think that it is a difficult one to push into the circle, if that makes sense. I think there is more work that needs to be done but we have got hopefully still a little bit of time.

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

Just really briefly what we definitely have seen at the borders is more and more French day trippers coming in on passports as opposed to identity cards. Just a natural progression.

The Connétable of Grouville:

May I ask a supplementary? I have got a very large event happening next year with a lot of people coming from France. The Jumelage games in June. Do you think there still is a barrier for French people to gain a passport as opposed to the E.T.A.? Is it easier to get the E.T.A. so that we can pass that information on?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Sorry. An E.T.A. is not a passport.

The Connétable of Grouville:

No, no, but it is an alternative, is it not?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But you need a passport to get an E.T.A.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

That is what the problem is. So if you have not got a passport, if the I.D. card does not have the same sort of numbering as a passport, then you will not be able to get an E.T.A. You will not be able to get an E.T.A. and you will not be able to travel.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you very much for explaining that.

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

But the I.D. scheme is still in place until next September.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. We are pushing it as far as we can.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I think it is the last topic of the day.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It is, yes.

The Connétable of Grouville:

A real friend of mine, considering the rally is on Friday. It is about speed cameras, which we playfully used on the rally. Minister, can you please provide an update on what has been done in regard to speed limit reductions? Will speed cameras in high traffic pedestrian areas be used?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Obviously we are proceeding to implementing and I will ask Robin to speak in a minute in relation to the use of speed cameras on a limited basis. This sits with the Minister for Infrastructure because they have responsibility for the roads even though we obviously have responsibility for the policing of those roads and the budget has now been released and it has gone through its necessary checks and balances, namely the procurement and tender processes and they have been ... that Minister has been working hard to move this along as quickly as possible. The supplier has received the official order and are now in the process of fulfilling that and I think it is 12 weeks.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

First of all, I am grateful for Scrutiny's continued interest in things speeding, whether they are speed cameras or otherwise, because it just reflects what we have said before, that that reflects the Island's view of concerns around speeding that continue. Of course we know that our honorary officers, honorary colleagues, do an awful lot in the parishes to try to reduce speeding. We are now much, much closer to getting a speed camera, just the one. It is a really good example of how collaboration can work between 2 ministries. Also the Chief Officer, Andy Scate, has been involved in trying to become more familiar with a procurement process, I will say no more than that, but there are some proper checks and balances that need to be held evidently. I understand that. Yes, we have now got a lead-in time of 12 weeks and I am grateful to the Minister for Infrastructure and indeed the Chief Officer where there has been genuine collaboration. We will focus on the high harm, high risk locations. We have good data now where we will deploy a camera into those locations properly calibrated. Yes, in the next few weeks, maybe first deployment will be in the early part of January 2025.

The Connétable of Grouville:

It is very good news, Chief Officer. From my own point of view personally as a Connétable and I am sure all of my colleagues that may be listening will be pleased for me to represent them, I would say that 60 per cent of all the issues that we have in a parish relate to speeding. In fact I had a surgery yesterday with my colleagues and again we had many issues about speeding and associated with many of the problems about personal security et cetera is related to the older generation and how they get in and out of their properties with speeding. We were thrilled at the Comité des Connétable to be given a presentation on this mobile camera. A bit alarmed about the cost but it is very important to us on our main roads because speed cameras have limitations about how they can be used, so we are very encouraged by this whole process.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, so just to confirm that it might be January 2025?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

That is when we see the first deployment.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Will the public be given some information about what to expect with the process?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

The best way to do this is explaining it to Islanders, explaining what we are going to do and involving Islanders in the process. It is not about trying to catch the baddies all the time. It is about an education process, which I think would have much more value than a camera, but the camera is expensive. The camera is latest technology but I would hazard a guess preventing one serious crash will easily pay for that camera, let alone the public tragedy or whatever that would come with it.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Has there been an assessment of the administration costs of dealing with the people that you are going to catch?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

As I think you know very well, Deputy, the easy bit is the camera. The hard bit is what goes into the back end and that is how would we deal with the administration costs and all the rest of it. The answer to that question is yes. We are jumping into the darkness a bit with it but we will be calibrating the camera to such that we will just get the more extreme or the more concerning speeding rather than a few miles over the limit, as it were.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Do you anticipate that there is going to have to be any changes to the Road Traffic (Jersey) Law?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

It is too early to say. What I would like to be able to do is use the camera with our I. and E. (Infrastructure and Environment) colleagues maybe for the first 6 months and then say: "Well, what have we learnt?" Have we seen a reduction in speeding?" Bearing in mind it is just one camera and we would have dozens and dozens of locations. I would again with the help of Scrutiny, and the Ministers, see this as a learning process to see how we might be better able to do it in the future.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Can I just ask one final question? Is P.C. (Police Constable) Flats still around?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

P.C. Flats continues to be very flexible. He never goes sick, never takes leave, and is regularly deployed.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Because I have not seen him for a while.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I can arrange for him to be near your house.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I think the Scrutiny Panel should treat him out for a meal, Chief Officer, because he is looking very thin.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

It can be arranged.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Unless there is anything else anyone wants to add I think we are done, finished. We are just about on the right time, so thank you very much, everyone. Thanks very much.

[10:26]