

4.12 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of the Chairman of the Privileges and Procedures Committee regarding the progression of complaints received relating to the alleged secret recording of a Minister's comments:

Could the Chairman report what progress, if any, there has been to date in resolving the complaints received by the Privileges and Procedures Committee regarding the alleged secret recording of a Minister's comments?

Connétable J. Gallichan of St. Mary (Chairman of the Privileges and Procedures Committee):

I would like to repeat what I know I have said before in that I do not consider it to be appropriate to make any public comment on any complaint which might be before the P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee) at any time; certainly until the investigation procedure has been completed. What I would say, speaking generally, is that all complaints are dealt with in accordance with Standing Orders and in as timely a fashion as possible; although P.P.C. sometimes does have to liaise with third parties and, of course, the Member concerned, which can lead to delays beyond the P.P.C.'s control. Any person who has made a complaint to P.P.C. will have had an initial acknowledgement and if any contact subsequent to that is made, the committee will advise if the investigation is still ongoing at that time to the applicant.

4.12.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Supplementary, Sir. Could the Chairman confirm that she is entirely happy with the procedure for investigating complaints; that it is operated in a highly expeditious fashion and that complaints are treated with the urgency that they require?

The Connétable of St. Mary:

I am satisfied that P.P.C. acts within Standing Orders as they are currently drafted. As I believe we have said before, we are constantly reviewing Standing Orders to see how our procedures could be refined; although, of course, these matters need to be brought to the Assembly for amendments to be made. But, as I have said, we deal with all complaints according to the Standing Orders as swiftly as is possible in each case.

4.12.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Perhaps a final question; could the Chairman outline the steps she will be proposing in order to ensure that these matters are dealt with in the most sensitive and expeditious manner possible?

The Connétable of St. Mary:

As I have said, this is something that is under consideration by the Committee.

4.12.3 The Deputy of St. Martin:

The Chairman will recall that, after a complaint was made against me some months ago, I did make some suggestions as to maybe how this procedure could be improved. Has the Chairman given any consideration to my thoughts and indeed would she be considering maybe setting up a working party to look at ways in which we can tighten-up procedures for dealing with States Members who may fall foul of the Discipline Code?

The Connétable of St. Mary:

I can only say what I have already said; that this is something that the P.P.C. is looking into and we will follow its deliberations in due course.

4.12.4 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Could the Chairman clarify how long has this complaint been on the books, so to speak, and are there any time limits that the Chairman needs to work to, to get this brought to a conclusion?

The Connétable of St. Mary:

As I said, I do not intend to make any public comment. I never make any comment regarding complaints which may or may not be before the committee. However, as I have said, we work to Standing Orders. There is no actual time limit but we always try to resolve matters as expeditiously as possible.

4.12.5 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

How long has this complaint been on the books with P.P.C.?

The Connétable of St. Mary:

No comment.

The Deputy Bailiff:

We come on now to question 13 which Deputy Trevor Pitman will ask of the Chief Minister.