

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Response of States of Jersey Police to Police Force Association – 13/07/2017

In answer to the questions raised by the Police Association, via the Scrutiny panel, this week we can provide the following answers.

On the subject of consultation, a timeline has been developed from a range of sources which show that the Police Association have been engaged after the date in May which they report to the Scrutiny Panel.

Date & Time	From	To	Summary
02.06.2016 11:08			Association shares views (attachment 1) regarding de-skilling Officers thereby reducing backfill capability
06.06.2016 13:08			Acknowledges views and shares with TW
06.06.2016 – 11.07.2016			Association views shared. Advice given & proposed response drafted by several parties
11.07.16 AM			Response letter (attachment 2) addressing points raised by the Association in attachment 1
14.07.16 05:02			Acknowledgement for the response letter (attachment 2)
No further correspondence received from the Police Association regarding Law Amendment No.2. Further correspondence was in relation to States of Jersey Police Force (Performance and Attendance) (Jersey) Order 2016.			

We are unable to establish whether the Police Association have received any further drafts of the Law Amendment No.2 since June 2016. The only addition made to this Law since this time was the section relating to Independent Custody Visitors (ICV) which does not impact members of the Police Association. Additionally, no queries have been made in relation to ICV in the Association's recent correspondence with the Panel.

Resilience

Civilian colleagues already have a very valid and productive part to play in Policing, not just in Jersey but across the UK. Indeed we already employ civilian investigators in areas such as Financial Crime and High-Tech Crime and have done for some time. Amendment 2 would give the Chief Officer the option of giving those officers some police powers, as set out in Schedule 2. The Chief Officer has a responsibility to maintain a Police Force which is both efficient and effective and this underpinned by the number of police officers and support staff available in order to deliver policing services to the Island. This responsibility is overseen by both the Jersey Police Authority and the Minister for Home Affairs.

Policing in Jersey requires officers to take on several skills because of our size and location. For example, the areas of Firearms, Public Order, Road Collision Investigation, Police Search Team and others are all known as 'virtual teams' meaning that there are either no members of staff permanently dedicated to that area of business, or the staffing is significantly reduced on a day-to-day basis, whereby the team can be formed when the need arises in response to incidents. The search team already includes a member of civilian police staff and shows how a mix of police officers and police staff can meet operational needs.

At this time the Senior Management Team are comfortable with the skills mix and number of officers available to serve the public and there are no plans to begin wholesale civilianisation of existing police roles. However, this area may be revisited in the latter part of MTFP2.

Aging Workforce

Amendment 2 seeks to enable the Chief Officer to use civilian staff to fill the roles of investigating officers, Detention Officers and Escort Officers. It is reasonable to assume from the question raised by the Police Association that their focus relates to Escort Officers and Detention Officers. Escort Officers are located at the Courts and are responsible for prisoner movement and handling. This is a front line policing role. At present this area of work uses between 4 and 5 members of staff depending on demand; 2 police officers are attached to this unit and 3 members of police staff. Whilst one of those officers at the Court is later in service the most recent officer to be placed there is in his early 30s.

Detention Officers are otherwise known as gaolers and work in the Police Custody Unit at Police Headquarters. This post is filled by trained officers who work on the rotating response shifts; it being a responsibility of the Duty Inspector to ensure that this post is resourced from within their wider team numbers. This is also a front line post. Taking both this and the Escort Officer roles into consideration, it is not a policy position of the States of Jersey Police to lodge older officers in these areas. All officers are expected to be fit to perform the office of Constable and whilst reasonable adjustments can be made, these roles, subject to Amendment 2, are not reserved for the more mature officer.