



Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny

Panel

Quarterly Hearing

Witness: The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Thursday, 22nd August 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

[13:58]

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 22nd August. I would like to draw everyone's attention to the following. This 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. So, just beginning with introductions. I am Deputy Catherine Curtis, the Chair of the Panel.

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

My name is Connétable Mark Labey, and I am the Vice-Chair of this Panel.

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade:

I am Deputy Helen Miles, and I am a new member of this Panel.

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.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Robin Smith, Chief Officer of Police.

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

Mark Cockerham, Head of Customs and Immigration.

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

Nathan Fox, Associate Director for Justice in the Cabinet Office.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thank you everyone. We just have one hour and 30 minutes for this hearing and Deputy Porée wanted to be here, but she cannot be here today unfortunately. So if I start with some questions. The first questions are about health and safety legislation. Minister, the panel understands that the Government is reviewing certain health and safety legislation to make sure it is fit for purpose. While responsibility for the Health and Safety Inspectorate falls under the Minister for Social Security, it sits within Justice and Home Affairs and results of any changes may have an impact on front line emergency staff. Could you tell us about that work?

[14:00]

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

That is correct. The Minister for Social Security announced that she would be reviewing the legislation in relation to health and safety, and the review has only just started. I believe you may very well have been provided with the principles of that review. The review really is to ensure that it is fit for purpose and that the law is implemented and policed effectively. It is too soon to say whether there will or will not be any changes obviously to that legislation and whether there will be

any impact on front line staff. It is, as I said, difficult at this stage to actually say whether there will or will not be, depending on the changes. What I would like to say to the panel is the fact that myself and the Minister for Social Security will be liaising with each other over the legislation and there will be some discussion, although that has not happened as yet due to obviously the summer period and people having taken holidays, but we will be collaborating in relation to that legislation.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, that is great. Do you know how long this review process is intended to take?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

From my memory, it is going to be taking place fairly soon, so it will be anticipated that it will conclude in the spring of 2025.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can you give any details about specific aspects at the moment?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Unfortunately not. As I said, the legislation sits with the Minister for Social Security, and it needs to be reviewed in order that the decisions can be made as to if it is fit for purpose, and then any changes that will be necessary, obviously we will discuss from the point of view whether any of those changes will have any impact on any of the emergency services to which I have responsibility.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I think this is the last question about the actual review I have. Please can you describe the criteria that will be used to determine if the current laws are fit for purpose in protecting both emergency staff and the public?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The legislation is to protect health and safety and welfare of people while at work. That is also obviously to ensure health and safety of members of the public and compliance with any of the legislation, and whether or not sanctions within that law should or should not be sanctions either for individuals or corporate bodies. So those elements will be looked at. As I said, I will work closely with the Minister in relation to any impacts that it will have on the emergency services moving forward, if there are in fact changes made.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, great. Still on the subject, but not about the review itself, has Justice and Home Affairs taken any action to provide further health and safety guidance or training to front line staff as a result of recent events or as a consequence of the decision to review the health and safety legislation?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Nothing specifically, as a result of the recent cases, changed the way that we generally manage health and safety in the department or in the ambulance service. What we have done is sought to reassure staff in relation to their insurance arrangements and any indemnity arrangements that are in place, so they mainly apply to issues such as medical malpractice or clinical decisions rather than in the event of a criminal prosecution, as we saw in the recent case. The key thing that is allied to that is, of course, reassuring and assuring staff that we have got clear policies around violence and aggression as well, which I suspect you might have questions on later. So there has been no specific change to the way we generally manage health and safety in the department as a result, pending the outcome of, as the Minister said, any review.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So at the moment that is a no, just to check that everyone knows what is already there?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So what policies are currently in place with regards to health and safety for front line staff in Justice and Home Affairs, particularly in relation to incidents of violence, and also how many incidents of violence have been recorded so far this year? So when they are working.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

I have not got the figures in front of me. We have had a number of press and freedom of information requests about the number. It is a comparatively low number of reported instances of violence and aggression. I think the latest request is actually asking across a whole range of services, including Health and Community Services on which there has been some media coverage which wrapped up ambulance, but also across other Justice and Home Affairs and other services. So it is probably wise if we write to you with the very latest figures that we will be compiling for that freedom of information request. In terms of policy and procedure, we have clear policies in place for staff that if they are under threat and they are being treated with violence or aggression by a patient, they can withdraw until such time as it is safe for them to give the care that that person needs. They clearly cannot give care while they are being treated in a violent or aggressive way. We will be running a media campaign ... we have done it before, but we will be running a media campaign in autumn

putting the spotlight on that and highlighting that. It is as simple in some ways as help us to help you and do not treat our staff inappropriately. You will be aware that H.C.S. (Health and Community Services) have just run a big racism campaign as well, which is allied to this, and have also increased their focus on violence and aggression. The top line message is that there is zero tolerance to violence and aggression, and that really backs our staff in saying if you encounter that behaviour you can withdraw. But the important thing is that there is then a dynamic risk assessment and if the situation changes then they need to go back in and provide care to the patient.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, and if a member of staff has been attacked by someone that they have been trying to help - if that does happen - is there a clear structure for what they do from that?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, so obviously in the very immediate position they would be treated, supported by their immediate team, it would then be reported to management. There is a system called Datex, which is the governance system in H.C.S., and ambulance also use it for the reporting of any incident. There are a wide range of things that need to be reported. Violence and aggression is one, and we will then provide appropriate support ... investigate that incident and provide appropriate support to the member of staff. We have not been quite as good at investigating those as we should have been and there has been some press coverage on that. That is partly because we did not have the staff structures in place to ensure that we were doing that in a consistent and well-resourced way, which we now have. So that has changed as of about 2 or 3 months ago.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thank you. You will be able to send us the numbers in writing?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

The latest stats, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Which would be the incidents of violence recorded so far this year for front line staff and also for the States of Jersey Police?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, that is covered in ... you may not have seen it, Robin; it is covered in the latest freedom of information request, so the teams are literally working on gathering it in the next few days so we will send you those.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Can I also make a point, obviously if a member of any of the emergency services is assaulted then that matter will be investigated and those people dealt with as well. That is a very important point to make.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thanks, great. All right. How will the Government engage with staff about any changes to policy or legislation, if that is to come about?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think it will be necessary ... if the legislation is deemed to need changes then there will be a briefing to yourselves obviously but also as well to the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel alongside emergency services. Anybody that will be affected by any changes that will be made will be briefed on those changes in order that people are fully aware as to what their responsibilities are and how the legislation has changed, if it does.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks. Just some more questions now about the ambulance service; more general questions. Minister, could you tell us what your priorities and plans are for the States of Jersey Ambulance Service?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Obviously the ambulance service had a review recently and there is good progress being made in relation to the implementation of those findings of that peer review undertaken by the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives. The final stages of the implementation of those findings, the demand and capacity review, are underway and hopefully will be completed by early 2025. In relation to plans for the service, as you will be aware, there have been increased levels of 12 additional posts to assist in meeting the additional demands of the service and 6 posts were newly funded, and 6 were transferred from the intermediary ambulance crews. Additional patient transport resources now include a routine stretcher transfer resource to take further pressure off the emergency service during the day. This is working well. Despite absorbing a significant range of calls, the service is still under increasing demand in relation to emergencies. The implementation of the new management and support structure agreed in late 2023 is almost complete with the final management post having been recruited, and starting next month. It is also looking potentially to look at all of the rotas in order that ... potentially to introduce a 1900 to 0100-hour team because

obviously that night time can be quite a challenge as well. Obviously, they will be coming forward. They are preparing for the regulation of care, and that is also progressing well. They are in dialogue with the Jersey Care Commission, who will be providing feedback. I think it is important to acknowledge that the ambulance service does still have, as we said, a very high level of calls. What we would ask is, is that those calls for those services are ... when somebody is considering it, that they are emergencies in order that we can actually allocate our resources to where they are the most needed.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

My next question was going to be: can you advise what work remains ongoing as a result of the previous demand and capacity review and the A.A.C.E. (Association of Ambulance Chief Executives) independent review? I do not think ... that was what you were laying out, is there anything else to add?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No, not unless you have got anything else, Kate.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

There are some more technical things around the A.A.C.E. review in terms of certain types of management practice and paramedic practice, but other than that we have made good progress particularly on the structures, as the Minister said, so we are pleased with that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, and you think this will be completed in 2025 you were saying?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I just have a question now about the number of staff because I have actually found this quite confusing looking at the change in all your plans over the last few years. So in 2023 the demand and capacity review had indicated there was a shortfall of 13.2 full-time equivalent employees. Can you provide details about the current number of full-time employees in the ambulance service and also how many current vacancies there are?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, you can see me just flicking to it. So the current staffing level is 82 in total. I do not have it broken down more into the number of paramedics and technicians and emergency care assistants

here, so we can write to you on that. There are very few vacancies in that. We are fairly fully recruited so, as the Minister said, most of the new posts created by the demand and capacity review and the Government Plan investment are filled. We have got one more, which is a U.K. appointee just due to start. So if you are happy for us to do, we will take that away and we will write to you afterwards with the exact figures.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, please. If you could also tell us what roles the vacancies are for, that would be great.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thank you. I think that is over to you, Mark. Unless anyone wanted to add anything else, over to you.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you very much. Minister, I would like to ask you some questions, if I may, on the combined fire and ambulance station. You previously advised the panel in May that you were meeting with the other Ministers in June to discuss the future of the combined fire and ambulance station and Rouge Bouillon School site. What can you tell us about the outcome of that meeting, please?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The Council of Ministers are still prioritising the discussions in relation ... it is a bit of a puzzle. Gas Place is part of that puzzle. As you rightly asked, we met and we are pretty much aligned; myself, the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning. We are pretty much aligned but, as I said, it is part of the puzzle and what we need to do is we need to be able to work out which part comes first and decisions need to be made about Gas Place and then once those decisions are made the rest of the puzzle can follow. The long-term capital plan as set out in the Budget, which obviously we will probably talk about in the weeks coming, highlights that the investment for Rouge Bouillon will be in 2028, and that is considering realistic estimates on the delivery of capacity within Government and the construction sector to commence this programme of work. We are working with Jersey Property Holdings to ensure that the current buildings are appropriately maintained in the meantime. Obviously what you can appreciate is, as I said, that because it is part of a puzzle we need to be able to have a decision made about one part in order that we can then facilitate the things that follow.

[14:15]

So realistically to say that it is going to be done sooner is probably not going to be an option.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Can you clarify within that framework whether a decision about location for the new station has been made.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

As far as I am concerned, the current thinking is that the location will be in the similar location to where they are now, as in it is unlikely that they will move from that location, but we do have to manage where, as I said, the school at Gas Place, alongside what happens to Rouge Bouillon, because as you will be aware there is a proposition that was brought forward that nothing can happen with the fire station until such time as a facility for a new school and the organisation of Rouge Bouillon School is done. I think realistically, as I said, they will maintain their location, but that is what is on the table today, that they will remain in that location. But obviously, if something else comes to the front in the next year, 18 months, then that may change. But at this present time, I can say that they are likely to stay at the same location.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I just interrupt there?

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, of course.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

When you say "stay in the same location", do you mean the ambulance on the ambulance site and the fire on the fire site, or are you still talking about a combined location?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

It is unlikely that they will be combined unless things change.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So we are no longer talking about a combined fire and ambulance, we are talking about 2 separate?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

It is more than likely than that is what is likely to happen.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

And you did say not until 2028?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, because, as I said, of all of the dynamics of it actually happening, but of course it is not just about modern buildings, it is actually about having facilities that are suitable for the modern day as opposed to what the facilities that both those entities currently have. So that is what is likely to happen.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Would it be fair to say therefore, Minister, that there is no current timeline for this project?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I would not like to say that. What I would like to say is that before ... certainly there is going to be more feasibility work done during the remainder of this year in order that the programme and the costs and the solutions can be worked up and completed. What I would like to see, and I think my other 2 Ministerial colleagues would like to see the same, is that within the next 12 months that we have ... I would like to see it quicker than that, if I am perfectly honest. I would like to see it by the end of this year, but that may very well not happen. But what I would like to see, following that feasibility work, I would like to see a clear plan. Obviously, when we are creating a new facility, we do have to be minded to what the capabilities of the Government as a whole is and what our resources are to be able to facilitate having different projects moving forward to this kind of scale alongside any construction that is going to be required. I would like to be able to say that within the next 6 months to a year that it would be a clear picture as to what is going to happen next.

The Connétable of Grouville:

What role will each department have in the development of this capital project?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Well obviously the fire and ambulance fall under the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs and obviously the Minister for Infrastructure has responsibility for Property Holdings and all the property which comes under the States of Jersey under the Government. Obviously, because it involves a school on the site of the fire station at the moment, that has to include the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning as well. So the 3 of us have to have and have had those discussions. I think we are all of the same or similar views as to what needs to happen next. I think that once a final decision can be made about the start of the process, if you like, then that can then move forward. It is just the decisions made. I think all 3 of us have to be involved alongside, obviously, Education, as in the head of Education, and also both fire and ambulance as consultation. Because, of course,

if you are building a fire station or a school or an ambulance station, then you need to have some input from the persons who are going to be using those facilities.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Of course. I just wanted to ask another couple of questions based on ... have you identified any risks or obstacles that you perceive for either of these services in the near future?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

In relation to what?

The Connétable of Grouville:

In relation to these 2 different sections, these 2 different properties, as it were.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Do you mean the structural? I think Property Holdings will have to maintain those buildings for as long until such time as they are given a new facility. Obviously that technically is dead money so that is why this needs to be expedited and done as quickly as possible. It is like with everything, the length of time taken to deliver new buildings that are required has a serious impact on the money that we are wasting. So from my perspective, that is why it needs to be done sooner rather than later. Because obviously, in relation to the current site for the ambulance, one would assume that that site could potentially be demolished. I do not know because I do not know the facts and figures about it, but obviously the fire station is different because it is a listed building. But all of those challenges would be as they are now, but the facilities need to be safe and secure for those people that work in them. As I said, that is the biggest concern and that is why we need to get this done quickly.

The Connétable of Grouville:

That was actually the purpose of my next question, was to maintain the safety and appropriateness of each building and you are assuring us that that will be the case.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Of course that has to be the case because we cannot have people working in an unsafe environment.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Can I just come in briefly? You will recall that there is quite a significant investment in the ambulance station maintenance in the current Government Plan which is kicking in this year. So J.P.H. (Jersey Property Holdings) have made some really good progress on that. The consequence of this

scheduling is that we need to look at what the equivalent needs to be for fire and rescue. It will be less - it is a more sound building - but there will need to be investment. I think the other following thing I would just add, Minister, if that is okay, is we will do some further feasibility work on the concept of separate facilities in the next few months because we have, of course, up to this point pursued a joint facility, so it is a shift in strategy. When we do that, we would be very keen to come and give you a private briefing on what that looks like. Obviously specifically you have got both interests, with school and Home Affairs, and we will do that as a joint briefing with C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills). The departments are working very effectively together now on what the strategic solution should be here. Once we have done that, we will also be communicating more with staff, because we have not done that recently because we have been considering what the strategic position is. We will do that probably in the beginning of the new year, once we have done the feasibility work.

The Connétable of Grouville:

On our visit to the fire station there were a few limitations that were put to us about the building and the size of the entrances at the front, so we are concerned about the safety of that building.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. We manage those operational constraints and have done for many years. There are more infrastructure issues at ambulance which have, at least for the next 5 years, been met through that Government Plan money, which is good.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you very much. Thank you, Chair.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

On to me. I have picked up Deputy Porée's questions here because she is not able to be here today. So a couple of areas from me. First of all modern day slavery and then moving on to the Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce. In terms of the modern day slavery legislation, which was a key priority and a goal for you, can you describe what those priorities and goals are of the modern day slavery legislation that is being developed, please?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. Officers are currently working to develop the modern day slavery legislation. A key question for us in relation to that legislation is the function of the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority in the U.K. (United Kingdom) without introducing additional and expensive bureaucracy. That is a part of the legislation because the U.K. legislation is quite good legislation and would work quite well for us. But of course what we have is that they have ... well they have the Gangmasters, but they

also have the Anti-Slavery Commissioner. But what we need to be able to do is try and find a way forward that we can have those same checks and balances, if you like, without having huge great big organisations to be able to look at those things and having more bureaucracy and more expense, because obviously what we see is a lot of things are on big scale whereas we are at a fairly small scale. So, as I said, we are looking at the U.K. model of modern day slavery but we need to try and work out how we are going to monitor those people who are recruiting people, bringing people into the Island and all of those sorts of things in order that we can make sure that it is manageable for Jersey without being overly bureaucratic. I do not know if Nathan has got anything more.

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

I think that is entirely right, Minister. Ultimately the Gangmasters Licensing Authority in the U.K., has a budget of about £6.2 million, and the Anti-Slavery Commission has a budget of about £630,000. I am not sure how many employees the commission have but the G.L.A. (Gangmasters Licensing Authority) has about 72. We know from painful experience in Jersey that does not scale. You cannot divide it by population size and say: "Well, that is not much of a cost here." It is inevitably going to be more expensive per head to try and manage these systems. I think we need to take a realistic view about the harm and effect of modern slavery and the way our employment law works around an absence of a Gangmaster's licensing law, and say: "Is it the right vehicle to try and meet the harm?" Most of the modern slavery law is something that Jersey could quite easily replicate. It is the usual thing; there are defences, there are rights, there are evidence-gathering powers, there are enforcement powers and there are duties. It really is the system of how you manage the entities operating in the space. That is the piece we are working on at the moment. The rest of the U.K. law is quite easy to follow. We have a working group, we are going to be meeting in Q4 this year with J.C.I.S. (Jersey Customs and Immigration Service), and the States of Jersey Police to be invited, and C.L.S. (Customer and Local Services) in for the employment side, policy officers and hopefully L.O.D. (Law Officers' Department) advice.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So when are we likely to actually see the policy then if you are meeting in Q4?

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

We are hoping, because of course the question remaining is how you manage the entity in the space, and the rest of it does not have that many options. We will be able to bring something to the Minister before the end of the year.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is there a suggestion that we will not end up with a modern slavery law, but we will end up with legislation ... amendments to other statutes that might have the same effect?

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

Ultimately, how we manage bringing the policy into law is a discussion we are going to have to have with the drafter. But I think modern slavery law is envisaged. It is what the Minister has indicated.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Have you had any consultation with the local recruitment agencies around Gangmaster licensing at all?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Not at this stage, no, but that was the intention, to actually do that. We were just looking at what the alternatives were, but we obviously need to go to those organisations to ensure that everybody is actually aware what modern day slavery actually entails, but also to make sure that we can actually identify if this is happening. So we will have to go to those recruitment agencies, particularly those that ... it is not obviously all only overseas workers, but in particular to ensure that where those people are being recruited that they are being recruited in the right and proper way and they are not being brought in under the law of modern-day slavery.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

At the last panel meeting you referenced that there were some interlinking themes between modern day slavery and violence against women and girls. Can you tell us a bit more about how those 2 are interlinking?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Obviously in relation to ... one in particular I think has been highlighted was where people have come to the Island and then found them in certain types of domestic situations and what we have been able to achieve through some work with J.C.I.S. and them highlighting a very good piece of ... a good opportunity for us, along with Social Security, to be able to implement people who have not been in the Island for the requisite period of time being able to receive 13 weeks of funding in order that they can get out of that situation and move forward. We have had positive feedback from some agencies in relation to that where they have had people that have been in the Island and have been able to leave the situation that they are currently in and be able to go and move forward. We do still have some work to do in relation to what happens after that 3-month period, and that is an ongoing thing.

[14:30]

That also includes the housing situation as well as that. So we are working with the policy officers from Housing and the Minister for Housing as to how we can work and move forward with that as well.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Excuse me, if I could just add, just thinking about the timeline, you have been talking about policy by the end of the year. I assume that consultation with recruitment agencies and so on would have to be happening around now to be able to manage that timeline.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I suppose I have not really thought about the timescales, if I am perfectly honest, but we would obviously have to have consultation with them. We are not in a position to ... as I said, they are looking at the options but I think you have got to look at the ... I suppose it depends which way you are going to put the cart before the horse. We have got to look at what the potential options would be and then we can consult in relation to them because at the moment we do not actually have an option as to how we are going to deal with that. I think we are not going to be going down the route of Gangmasters, so I think what we need to do is look at potentially what we could do and then we can consult with those groups, and then potentially they will be able to give us feedback on what they think of what we are considering and whether they have got any additional ideas in that space. I think it is a bit maybe the cart before the horse or either way, but I think it is important that we try and work out potentially for ourselves what the opportunities may be and then to consult with them and get feedback from those other agencies to be able to establish whether or not that is workable.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That takes us on to the Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce report. Can you provide us with an update on the recommendations from 2024 to 2026 and where we are with those please?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

There is obviously legislation development, which is including the domestic violence, non-fatal strangulation, sex offences and the stalking offences, which is all progressing.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

When you say "progressing", have you got an idea of a timeline on those?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The team have met with the L.D.O. (Law Drafting Office) to establish whether they have got the timescales. The funding, there is £50,000 in 2024 and £50,000 in 2025, and so therefore they have ... at the moment I am right in saying they have got the capability to be able to move forward with the drafting. I do not know whether that is the exact timescale for that.

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

We have not got detailed timescales sorted out yet. We have provided scoping instructions to the drafters so they can work with us in indicating when they might be free during the year.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Scoping instructions as opposed to drafting instructions?

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

Really it is just a scope. So effectively the pieces you have are stalking law, non-fatal strangulation piece, you have the changes to the domestic abuse law, and you have some cyber-related offences about cyber flashing and sharing internet images. The plan at the moment, the drafters ... we have talked about with the drafter, is to deliver instructions for at least the first 2 parts, which would be ideally non-fatal strangulation and the image offences and the cyber flashing before the end of this year, with the hope that when our dedicated drafting resource kicks in at the start of 2025 they can immediately work on that with very rapidly delivery. The stalking law is the longest piece, it is the most complicated, and trying to find ways to deal with online stalking, what rights you have in the digital space, especially in a small jurisdiction where we cannot threaten a multinational. "Threaten" is the wrong word, but negotiating power is weak when it comes to multinational entities. So how do you act then if you have a multinational entity hosting intimate images of you? If you write to the courts you might get a very good outcome, but it will take a very long time. So how can it work with local providers, how can it work with international entities and take some rights to be able to address that harm? There are questions around that, which puts the stalking law on the longest timeline, intended to be delivered before end of 2025. The rest of it you should see arrive during the course of 2025, but, as I say, we have not yet hammered out that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Because you mentioned that you have a dedicated law drafting resource.

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

We will have one dedicated drafter.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That is going to be hugely beneficial, is it not?

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

It is the magic.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Absolutely, that is a really good move, is it not? Thank you. In the panel's last hearing, you confirmed that there was an allocation of £309,500 for the delivery of the taskforce recommendations. Can you give us some specific detail about how that funding has already been spent in 2024?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Some of the money in relation to 2024 will be spent on the independent reviews of S.O.J.P. (States of Jersey Police) and the L.O.D. We have identified an independent reviewer in relation ... and I have had a conversation with an independent reviewer, and that is in relation to the L.O.D. and there will be a consultation with officers and that individual in early September. Then a roundtable discussion will follow on from that to finalise the approach and the framework for the review and the initial starting of the work. From then there is money in 2025 in relation to the family court review and that piece of work I still need to speak to a potential reviewer for us. That is following from the first review of the L.O.D. because, as I said, the money comes back but we want to be able to establish so that we get the right thing going in the right direction for the first review and then we will bring in the second review because of course the money for the family courts is in 2025 not in 2024. In relation to the States of Jersey Police, they are going to be using the H.M.I.C.F.R.S. (His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Service), and it is now shifted from October, November time into quarter one of 2025.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Sorry, can you just translate H.M.I.C.F.R.S., just for the benefit of the public?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Sorry, you might have to.

Chief Office, States of Jersey Police:

It is the longest mnemonic in the history of inspectorates. It is Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, and relatively recently they added the Fire and Rescue Service. The Inspectorate is a better way of saying it.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, I knew what H.M.I.C. meant, I just could not ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So they have been in to review your practice this year?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No, next year. They will be coming in in quarter one. There was a hope and anticipation that it was going to be this quarter but unfortunately it is now going to be in quarter one.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So is all of the £309,000 then gone on the pre-work for the criminal justice review?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No.

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

The breakdown costs in 2024 are behind the data analyst to try and synthesise information from the justice system. In most cases it is already held but not brought together to try and get a profile of the information in the area around the extent of violence against women and girls in Jersey, which was the taskforce's recommendation. We have over 50 per cent of the project cost with the criminal justice review as the Minister identifies this year, and 50 per cent coming next. We have a nominal component of 2 policy officers charged within that value. In fact, it has turned into a more shifting group of some policy officers, some interns, some assistants have come in and out throughout the process.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is that funding going to be ongoing for 2025, so you are not going to lose any of those officers and you can keep your data analysts?

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

The intention at the moment is to lose none of the staff into 2025. Their cost might be baselined into the departmental budget.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, not specifically around the separate law stuff?

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

That is right.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

In the States Assembly, you said that you were meeting with a barrister from the U.K. to discuss the reviews in relation to the Law Officers' Department and the courts.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Correct.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You have just mentioned that there is some work going on there. Can you provide any further details about exactly how they are going to review the Law Officers' Department?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

What will happen is that there will be a terms of reference, which I think has been actually worked up by a member of the team. What will happen is that we need to actually ... I have had, as I said, the initial consultation with that individual and then they will base their review on the terms of reference that we provide them. We still need that individual to meet around the table with the team, as in Nathan's team. Then we also need them to meet with all of the stakeholders. So once that has been facilitated in September then we should be able to move forward with what that review will entail because ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Can you just tell us how the individual was chosen to undertake the review? Did it go out to tender or did we advertise for the role?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No, it was somebody that is involved in the U.K. within the space of domestic violence and also is a magistrate in the U.K. They were identified as a possible person that would be able to do the review for us.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is that by the Law Officers' Department or by Justice and Home Affairs?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

It was actually identified ... somebody was identified by the L.O.D. but the meeting was with myself only, not anybody from the L.O.D. So it was an individual that was identified from the point of view of the skillset that that individual had. There were other things that we potentially could have done but obviously we are constrained in relation to costs so we looked at that opportunity. I had a discussion with that individual and then, as I said, the team will then meet with that individual and

then see what the plan is to move forward. It will be a separate individual who will be potentially identified to do the family courts but what we need to do is we need to be able to do an end-to-end service review starting with the police and then through the system through to the L.O.D., so an end-to-end facilitation of what the service is providing and any loopholes or opportunities that we think we need to develop.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But the L.O.D. and the Court Service are an independent service, so presumably there has to be some agreement with them for this review to take place.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, that is correct. There has already been a meeting with the Family Court Service and they are already fully aware and they are supportive of an independent person.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That is family court. But the broader criminal justice system review, how are we making sure that the nuance of the Jersey system are not lost in this review if we have a U.K. reviewer doing it?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think the thing is, is that with any review you are not going to be able to get probably somebody within Jersey to be able to do that review, and the people that come in to ... obviously the police will be done by H.M.I.C. ... I will use H.M.I.C. They will do the review of the States of Jersey Police, as they have always done over the years. They have done reviews of different things within the States of Jersey Police. In relation to the L.O.D., there are differences, I do accept that, but obviously what you do have is you do have U.K. judges coming to Jersey and sitting in our courts, you do have people coming into the family courts as well from outside, so I do believe that it has to be ... it also has to be independent because I do believe that if you do not go to somebody outside of Jersey then there will be the thought that it is being done in-house and that we are not actually taking it seriously, which I think it is important that we do and it is seen that we are having a proper review done and that it is being done by somebody independent.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, thank you. Last question from me is: can you just tell us how you are tracking the progress of the recommendations for the V.A.W.G. (Violence Against Women and Children) report?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I have a very good person in the department, and it is not Nathan.

Associate Director, Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

We have an itemised tracker for all 77 recommendations.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

What level of oversight is there from yourself and the Council of Ministers on those recommendations?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I meet regularly with the person who is tracking them all. I am chased on a regular basis to make decisions about certain things, so I am keeping a track on what is going on and what is happening. I have been briefed recently to indicate ... because it is not all under me. There are all of the other departments as well, and so I have been briefed and I am regularly briefed at least once a month, it might even move to fortnightly if there is a need, about what ... like Health and Social Services are doing, Education and all of the other Ministerial departments that have got responsibility for some of the things coming under the V.A.W.G.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is it ever put on the agenda for Council of Ministers?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, it is on the agenda and obviously it comes in the C.S.P. (Common Strategic Policy) so it will always be discussed because it is within the C.S.P., so it will have to be always up there.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Lovely, thank you.

[14:45]

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

If I can just ask a question from what we have just been speaking about that has come up from that. This barrister is not going to be the same person who reviews the family courts?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So can I just ask how that person will be chosen?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think it will be somebody that will be identified. It will probably be through somebody in the senior roles within L.O.D. from the point of view that they have got those contacts. Also, as I said, part of the group that now meets regularly in relation to the family courts and those processes, they come in and out from the U.K. as well, so it is not only local people that are actually working within the family courts. But I think it is important that whoever we identify has the necessary criteria to be able to make those reviews and to highlight any things that we need to actually improve on?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you, Chair. We are going to move on now to questions about Building a Safer Community strategy. Minister, the updated Building a Safer Community framework was launched in June and one of the action areas identified was about leadership and support infrastructure, which included a reference to political will and leadership across Government. Can you tell us about any priorities that have been identified by the political oversight group?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

As you rightly say, one of the priorities is for us, and will happen soon, is that we will get full staffing within that section. We were one staff member short and hopefully that process will be completed by the week commencing 2nd September. The governance of the Building a Safer Community strategy will go through the Safeguarding Ministerial Group with a co-ordinator and chief officer for J.H.A. (Justice and Home Affairs) all sitting within that group. Obviously the priorities have been, and we have already achieved this, was going into the schools because we had missed or lost that opportunity in recent years. So they have already delivered 3 pilot sessions within the schools, which of course involves all of the emergency services, all of the J.H.A. team; prison, immigration and customs, police, fire and ambulance, and so that is what is also key because all of those services are being able to contribute. It has been a huge success and the lessons learnt are being fed back in and colleagues within are also involved from the Youth Service as well. At the moment obviously one of the priorities is getting that in because you are talking to what is now year 8 in relation to their actions and consequences; fire safety, looking after their friends, exploitation and all of those sort of areas. All of those things, I think particularly in relation to young people, it is exceptionally important that we provide them with skills and understanding of the consequences of some of the things that may or may not happen. That for me is one of the high priorities about Building a Safer Community because you need to start with young people in school moving forward. Obviously the youth justice strategy is being finalised and I will be reviewing the latest draft, which goes back to 2019 alongside

the co-ordinator of B.A.S.C. (Building a Safer Community) and the chief officer in the next a couple of weeks. I think that is probably it.

The Connétable of Grouville:

The political oversight group, as mentioned in my previous question, is the makeup of that group the people you have just described or is it more from the Assembly? How is it made up and how often does it meet?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No, the oversight group, as I said, will go through the Safeguarding Ministerial Group, which I chair, and then all the key players will be part of that group. The structure will be, as I said, a Safeguarding Ministerial Group, then with a co-ordinator from B.A.S.C., the chief officer for J.H.A., and therefore all of those people will be part of the accountable group. All of those will be members of those. It is not, as far as I am aware, going to be on a broader spectrum to involve other States Members but of course what does happen and has already happened, I think as Deputy Miles will say, is that there has already been something looked at in relation to matters that happen within the Parishes or issues that need to be looked at in relation to a holistic approach. This has been successful in the past and I think it is important that all States Members can be involved with Building a Safer Community because it is not just about Justice and Home Affairs, it is about the community as a whole being involved. I think if you can get the buy-in from the community for anything then it is going to have a really significant impact on being able to make things ... changing things and changing culture potentially. I think it is very much you ... it is a priority to be able to look at things and look at issues as a collective and to be able to work out what is the best solution to be able to ... they used to call it problem-solving policing, but I do not think it is problem-solving policing. I think it is problem solving by the community as a whole because it is not just policing. It is about the Youth Service and all of the agencies but also about elected members within the Parishes as well, and the community groups within the Parish as well can certainly have a significant impact in improvements.

The Connétable of Grouville:

There seems to be an awful lot of buy in from an awful lot of agencies here. Do you feel that there are departmental boundaries to overcome? Can you describe how that risk would be addressed?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The thing is, from our perspective, I do not think there are boundaries as such. I think you will get buy-in. As an example, the Youth Service have always bought in, have always facilitated as much as they could activities. Of course Building a Safer Community is not all about young people, it is about population as a whole. But the Youth Service have always bought in. In the past you have

had all of the agencies being committed to ... as an example, the Violence Against Women and Girls; the Minister for Infrastructure has agreed funding for lighting in Snow Hill. So that will improve the whole of that area. The thing is that departments all have to buy in and be accountable, and I fully appreciate that we do not necessarily have legislation in Jersey but I also think that because we are a fairly small community of 100,000 people and we do not necessarily have different authorities fighting over different money, I think because we are a collective it is a lot easier to be able to manage it. From my perspective, I do not see it as a problem of a buy-in and certainly I have had no negativity or not buying in from any of the Ministers in other areas.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Obviously part of this is going to be education, we believe firmly. What are the plans for educational programmes for children and young people as part of the universal prevention aspect of building a safer community?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

From the point of view, as I said, there has already been those inputs into schools, there is already that part of the educational programme. Effectively that is the buy-in from the education and the education programme. At the moment, it is focusing on your year 8s going into the schools and providing them with all of that. But it is about the involvement with the teachers within that programme as well, which was not probably so much in the previous reiteration of when it was Building a Safer Society, there was not so much involvement. But certainly in this one, the actual teachers are providing inputs in relation to the young people, in relation to ... from the one I went to, in relation to vaping, for example. I think there is the buy-in from the schools in relation to that. Certainly from the point of view of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, he was saying to you that life is about ... it is not only when you are in school but you are learning all the way through your life. I think that there is that link. I am quite confident that Education is fully on board with this. In the past there have been a lot more inputs but I think it is a case of starting here and seeing what we can develop moving forward.

The Connétable of Grouville:

At our last hearing you mentioned pilot educational programmes at Les Quennevais and Le Rocquier Schools. How will the feedback from those be used?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Those feedbacks have already come through positively and then of course if there is anything that comes back in relation to the feedback from those areas, whether something needs to be changed or altered or reconsidered, then that will be done at that stage. With everything, with every programme, you need to constantly monitor and you need to constantly move it forward. So you

must not stay still, you must continue to move forward and continue to update it. I think that was probably why in a way we lost Prison! Me! No Way! because we had actually ... it probably had run its course and had not been developed further forward. As a starting point, there have been significant changes to the education programme that is now going into schools; there have been significant changes to what it was previously and one would expect that moving forward that that would continue to evolve because things will continue to evolve potentially. You may no longer have an alcohol problem, do you know what I mean? Things will continue to evolve and you need to keep any of your training programmes updated and progressive moving forward.

The Connétable of Grouville:

When will the youth justice strategy be published?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The work is still ongoing in relation to the youth justice strategy. As I said, I have got a meeting, I think, in the next week or so with the head of Justice and Home Affairs. So we need to have that meeting in order to look at it, so that we can move it forward as quickly as possible.

The Connétable of Grouville:

And how will that align with this particular strategy, the safer communities?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Obviously, the youth justice policy will be worked alongside the Building a Safer Community officers, so they will be part and parcel of that process. As I said, we will be reviewing it and I am due to meet with the co-ordinator and the chief officer next week, so that will start moving forward and looking at what we need to be doing in relation to a youth justice strategy.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Can you describe to us as well please how you and the officers, Government, et cetera, take due regard for children's rights as part of the drafting of the youth justice strategy?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Interestingly, I have already had a couple of meetings with the Children's Commissioner along with the Minister for Children and Families. Any strategy that we bring forward have been seen and discussed and shared with the Children's Commissioner and head of Children's Services, the Minister for Children and Families and obviously this panel will also be briefed on that as well. But obviously it is something that ... because you obviously have got the rights of the child, and it is important that when we bring legislation to the Assembly that it is ... we have C.R.I.A.s (Child Rights

Impact Assessment) we have to do now for any piece of legislation and if you are affecting the rights of children then you need to be speaking to the Children's Commissioner.

The Connétable of Grouville:

And you will be speaking to all the relevant agencies and stakeholders?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

The Connétable of Grouville:

That was my next question. Thank you.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, absolutely.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I just remind everyone, we have only got about half an hour left and we still have a lot of questions, so we will try and keep our questions and answers brief.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I just had a couple of questions about the resilience strategy, and it was: can you just give us an update please on the civil contingencies and resilience law?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Did you want to do this?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

I can if you want, yes. We have briefed the Chief Minister and the Emergencies Council on the reasons for new law and the emerging proposals. They are keen that we do it in a proportionate way so it is appropriate for the legislative capacity we have, and that the capacity that all partner agencies have to carry out new duties is realistic and can be funded and resourced appropriately. So, that is the space we are in with policy development.

[15:00]

We are planning to work that up into the next stage to present to the Chief Minister and the Minister within the next month or so and then consult with Jersey Resilience Forum delivery group partners, so that is the widest construct of resilience partners - that will be about 40 organisations - to get their

input into the high-level policy and design. The aim remains to bring forward through the legislative process the new law, hopefully by the end of next year, and then have implemented the first tranche of changes as a result of that by the end of the following year, 2026. The first tranche of things to focus on - you will have to bear with me because where I have printed it out, I cannot see that it is in red very well - is risk anticipation and assessment, business continuity, community resilience, warning and informing, collaboration and information sharing. Duties placed on the core bodies is what the new law is all about and they would be the first things that we would be focusing on. There is yellow and green to follow that I can perhaps update you on in writing afterwards, but that is the brief update.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you, and can you just tell us as well about any actions that are arising out of the Crisis Resilience Plan. I think that was published last year in July.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

We just really wondered whether there is any urgent action still outstanding on that.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

There are actions outstanding. I would not necessarily say that they are urgent actions outstanding. We are slightly overdue in publishing an update to that. It was published originally end of July last year substantively as the response to the independent COVID review. Passage of time has meant that a number of those actions have either been completed or have moved on really quite significantly. So, of course, one of them is the development of the new Resilience Law. We will be publishing an update to the Crisis Resilience Improvement Plan, but I would propose that is the last one. It was never really envisaged to be an annual reporting cycle. That will tie up the actions that are finished and be clear about where things are still in flight, where the responsibility for them now is and where information about the actions being completed in the future will arise from. So, it will fall into various Government departments and other work essentially. That will be done probably within the next one to 2 months.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you. The report published in June by the Comptroller and Auditor General on the critical infrastructure and resilience, particularly around energy, was clear the capacity in Government to manage resilience is currently very limited and that the Community Risk Register is

not an effective tool in its current format. I think the question for us is how are you going to address that? What actions are you going to take to move forward?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Do you want me to carry on? So, we have adjusted the resourcing in that area slightly since the C. and A.G. (Comptroller and Auditor General) did that review. We now have 3 extra assistant emergency planning officers; 2 have been in post since the beginning of June and one has just started. That has very significantly advanced our work on what we were calling the Community Risk Register, but we may now call the Jersey Emergency Risk Register to just try and be a bit clearer about what it is about. We are anticipating bringing that forward to the next Emergencies Council meeting, the date of which escapes me, but I think it is the middle of October, and once we have done that, we will be able to publish. So, there will be a publishable version and an internal version, as you would expect, and my proposal would be that we, at your invitation, come and give you a private briefing on that so that we can talk you through it in some detail in terms of approach, and that will also then help us meet that recommendation of the C. and A.G. that we really must get that done because it is a platform for lots of other things, including the new law, and drawing everyone's attention to the need for all the different areas that own risk, because of course it is not just Government, to be treating and tolerating and mitigating that risk appropriately and really owning it.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you. Minister, as the competent authority for fuel, electricity and gas, can you explain how you have been briefed about your responsibilities in that role, please?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. Obviously as you are aware, my role really when it comes to this piece of legislation just is in relation to an emergency, so effectively when an outage happens or if there was ... basically in a crisis. I have been briefed that if there is a crisis then obviously it rests with me. Once that crisis has been averted, therefore it then moves on to the next individual, which would be the Minister for Infrastructure. I am quite confident that I know what my responsibilities are in relation to those and obviously it falls to me because it falls into the domain of the emergency services and any response that would happen to those type of emergencies.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Because we did notice that the report, 118 of 2024, which lists the competent authority powers of Ministers, is not included in the list of Ministerial functions. We were just wondering whether that was deliberate or whether that was an oversight.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

I would need to check.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

If you could put that in writing.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. So, it is not in the responsibilities anymore?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

No, it is not included in the list of your Ministerial functions, so we were just wondering whether that was deliberate or whether that was ...

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Not to my knowledge.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. We thought maybe something had changed.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Oh, that is good. That is news to me.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

We would need to check because the primary legislation obviously takes precedence over that. Not takes precedence but it is ...

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

It could be sitting with somebody else.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, the law is still there, but we will check.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. I will hand you back to Catherine.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. So, I have got some questions now about the police budget. Minister, yes, we have looked at the revenue heads and expenditure and noticed that over the next 4 years the budget seems to

drop every year. Could you provide us with some background to the proposed decreases over these next 4 years?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The States of Jersey Police, as you know, have received significant support over the last 2 years in relation to the emergency major incidents, which have been critical to ensuring the appropriate responses. In relation to the budgets, they still remain as a challenge to us. This is recognised by the Council of Ministers and also yourselves, as you have alluded to in the past. What we have been able to achieve with the work from the Head of Department and others was that the saving requirements that were put on to all of the departments under J.H.A. have been significantly less than other departments. The savings are less but, as you rightly point out, the budgets are not increasing over the next few years. From looking at the savings, I think what it is, is that obviously there was money put into the budgets in relation to the extra needed to fund all of the extra pay increases that were there, and so that looked initially like there was extra money, but there is not. I think I will just ask Robin to be able to clarify a few of these figures because obviously he has been around a bit longer than me.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Yes. Essentially over the last 4 years, there have been additional funds come into the S.O.J.P. budget, but as part of our collective responsibility, I think through all departments, we are also driving savings as well. Ultimately as we have driven savings, as new money has come in, we have effectively given money back as part of savings. We are not quite standstill, but we are fairly close to that. As the Minister rightly says though, we have ... both in this current Government and indeed the previous Government, there has been a recognition that States of Jersey Police is probably as busy as it has ever been. We are currently investigating 15 homicides. That is 10 from the tragedy of Haut du Mont, 3 from the sinking of L'Ecume II and of course the tragedy of Charlie and Dean Lowe, the double fatal crash. That has been an enormous ... 3 enormous investigations. So, we have been very well funded effectively from day one, from the 8th and 10th December 2022 and onwards. That funding has continued not only last year but also into this year and also into next year. Because it is not just the funding of those very, very large investigations, very complex investigations, it is also that we pull officers and staff from other places to go into that and that leaves us a gap to deliver what we often describe as "business as usual". In many ways we have driven savings but, to be absolutely transparent, we have received additional funding from Government - the last Government and indeed this Government - in recognition that this is unprecedented in the history of States of Jersey Police. In many ways I could say that that has insulated the impact to a degree. We of course have to properly account for that. The final point I would make in terms of the savings for back end of this year and into 2025, the Minister is correct that those savings were reduced. In fact, I think they were reduced across the board for, I think, what was described as front

line services, which we are grateful, but they are nevertheless savings in addition to the work we have to do. As you have heard me say before, and it is particularly the case for States of Jersey Police, around 90 per cent of our budget is people, so inevitably if we are trying to drive savings, more often than not it will be people and trying to drive efficiencies with people. So, we have identified our savings for 2025 and that is 2 members of police staff - not police officers - and for 2026 as well, as well as a small reduction in our Digital Forensics Unit where we did have some growth but some of that growth was reduced. In fact, it was reduced by 20 per cent and I am hopeful, in the conversations that I have had with the Minister and indeed a brief conversation with the Chief Minister, we have talked about these things and he is mindful of what he describes as front line services. So we will look forward to meeting I think we have got later on this year, Minister, to talk about the budget for 2025 and into 2026.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you. With your reference to how the budget for police is very much to do with the number of staff, are there 215 police officers at the moment?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

There are not.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Because that is what was planned as a minimum number, was it not?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Yes, the number of 215 was originally quoted back in 2019/20 when the late Len Norman secured an increase in funding, and that number was at 215. That number over those years has reduced. Originally that funding went into community policing and to the Drug's Unit and a number of other things. We have made some efficiencies with that so, for example, where we have had police officers doing a police staff role, I have effectively cashed those posts in. For example, we had a sergeant doing duties. The challenge I put to my staff is: "Do you need a warrant card to do that job?" You still need a degree of resilience because we police an Island where we cannot easily get mutual aid in the event, and we have seen in recent times the importance of maintaining a degree of police numbers. So, the number is not 215. The current affordable number is 201.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Do you think that is sufficient?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

With the funding that we currently get in support of Operation Spire, Operation Nectar, the funding is sufficient, but once that funding ... because that allows us ... that insulates us to deal with the business as usual. We are just as busy as we always are, but we have got the additional challenges, and my hope is that challenge will become less and less, particularly as we move into next year, depending on how the investigations go. There will be the discussion to be had with the Minister, as she has indicated and indeed the Chief Minister has indicated, later on this year to talk about into 2025 back end, and into 2026.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, to follow on from this possible resourcing pressure, in the police's annual report for 2023, it states that: "This year's Force Intelligence Bureau operations have predominately been tasked to Jersey Customs and Immigration Services due to resourcing pressure linked to major incidents. States of Jersey Police has not had a proactive capability for most of 2023." We are just wondering what impact this might have had on any outcomes and what is the oversight for these operations between police and customs? How does that work?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I will start with that, Mark. So, we have a joint team, we work very, very closely with our colleagues at J.C.I.S., as you would expect, because we fight the same fight, and we have slightly different powers, and we have similar skills.

[15:15]

There is an inevitability given the demands that we have had, as I have already indicated, over the last 18 months that we have increasingly spoken and liaised with our customs colleagues because a lot of our intelligence function and the resource that is in that bureau is diverted into other matters, the matters I have already spoken to. So, I am not remotely surprised by that. I am not greatly concerned by that as long as we are making sure that we are keeping on at a safe ... particularly with intelligence relating to drugs, organised crime and exploitation. Mark, did you want to add anything from your side of things?

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

Very briefly. I think if you look at the results that have been produced, which manifest themselves in the results, particularly around organised crime, they have been very good, and you look at other indicators like the street price of drugs, which is a good indicator of availability and the intelligence that is available. I think it paints a picture that the effectiveness of the joint unit is good and also the external inspection that takes place from the Office of Surveillance Commissioners, which again painted a very positive picture of how the unit is operating and what it has produced.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I would also like to make a comment in relation to that, is that what I have seen since being the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs is the actual real close working between Customs and Immigration and the police. Even though that has always been the case, I think it is probably far more evident now that the relationship is working very, very well and there is a lot more training, a lot more working together. They always did work together, do not get me wrong, it has always been part and parcel but what I have noticed. Having had the inputs, is that that is working exceptionally well. It is good to know that when there is a need for some staff to be diverted from one that the other one can pick up that diversion.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you. I just have a couple of quick questions more to do with the Parish police forces. So, Minister, can you advise if there is any central financial support from Government to support the Parish police forces with their operational requirements? For example, we understand that Parishes have been told they have to purchase a laptop for each centre near at a cost of around £1,000 each at the moment, so we are just wondering about the support for the Parish police.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, the laptop item has been around for quite a while. I have had consultation with the new chair of the Chef de Police and, basically, we have asked them to update ... because there had been a previous application which had not gone right through to the end of the process and so what I have asked them to do is to update that application because there are funds in the C.O.C.F. (Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund). However, like with anything else, they have to make an application to those funds, and they are one-off things; so it is things that are a one-off. It is not something that is continuous. I have asked them to update those processes. I have also spoken to somebody at the States of Jersey Police about the elements in relation to what is necessary because I think if you look across the Island, off the top of my head, there are roughly 60 Centeniers. Is there a need for each Centenier to have a laptop? Do all Centeniers go into court? Because I believe they cannot share the laptops, so there is lots of work that is being done in order that we can facilitate being able to support them with that purchase of that laptop. In relation to Government, there is no funding from Government and obviously there cannot be any funding from within the States of Jersey Police, because obviously they are under their own funding pressures. But I think their ... as I have said, I have had a brief meeting with somebody from the States of Jersey Police. I intend to get a group together in order that we can try and work out how this could be done, but as I said, with budgets as they are, it is quite tight. I just think that we need to have some sort of ... I am not saying a business case, but we just need to know exactly what is required because certainly from my experience or knowledge is that not everybody will necessarily need a laptop, and I just wonder whether we are

almost providing too many, if that makes sense? I have just asked the person who has taken over responsibility to come back to me with a new set of data really as to what exactly they need so it can be moved forward.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. That person who has taken over responsibility, that is a ...

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

It is a Chef de Police who ... they are the chair of the Comité des Chefs.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Centenier John Camara from St. Peters.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Correct. I was trying not to use his name.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

At the moment there is not any funding apart from maybe an application to get funds from the C.O.C.F.?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thanks. I just want to ask about the Roads Policing Unit. Are there any plans to reintroduce the Roads Policing Unit?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Can I just briefly say something here before Robin does? We have never really had what I would call a Roads Policing Unit apart from probably 2 officers. Roads policing has always been done by a cross-section of the States of Jersey Police in relation to ... used to have a Motorcycle Unit, but I think there seems to be a misconception that we have had in the past a big Roads Policing Unit. That is not the case. I think what you will find is that people were allocated to do roads policing on a day-to-day basis. We have only ever had 2 that were dedicated to roads policing, and you had a road safety officer, which was a civilian staff member; but over to you, Robin.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

No, that is useful. Thank you, Minister. It is absolutely true to say that all things roads and road safety is easily, if I look to my inbox, within the top 5 and probably within the top 3 concerns for Islanders. It is a regular occurrence. Speeding, we have seen a bit of an uptick in recent weeks around drink driving, not quite as much what I would describe as anti-social driving although I have just had a little look, and we have got a couple of incidents or people calling in over the last day or so. My point is, first of all, a recognition that anything that is roads policing or roads is a major concern and always has been for Islanders. Now, the Minister is right in terms of what is the history in terms of having some form of dedicated unit. I am not in favour of a dedicated unit, but I am in favour of people assembling, doing particularly well-focused intelligence-led operations to focus on individuals, roads, et cetera. In terms of the wider strategy, as you may know, Inspector Callum O'Connor who leads on roads policing and he has been very visible - very visible - over the last year or so in looking at how we gather better stats called the "fatal 5". That is the fatal 5 behaviours, so careless driving, et cetera. He has been doing some really excellent work with I. and E. (Infrastructure and Environment) colleagues to look at how we can gather better data with which to better deploy and including researching opportunities of having very mobile, small, discreet speed cameras, some of which he has shared with some Parishes, and we wait to see that. What I can say with absolute confidence that a near-on daily basis, officers in our response teams and our community policing teams who do what they call impact days. You will have seen quite a lot of social media when they did the last impact days because it also included people cycling irresponsibly. They have seized one of these scooters. They arrested the individual. He went to Parish Hall. So, just to reassure panel members, and in particular those people who are listening to this, that it is a near-on daily deployment to deal with issues associated with the safety of our roads.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Can I also say that in relation to the officer mentioned by the Chief, is that the Minister for Infrastructure and I consult regularly in relation to roads policing matters but also he has been consulting with the dedicated inspector in relation to roads policing because obviously he holds the legislation, not me, so we have regular consultations in relation to it, and that will continue in relation to some of the things that clearly the public are concerned about.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you. Helen, do you want to ask your question now?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes, thank you. It is just about the appointment of chair and members of the Jersey Police Complaints Authority. You have recently lodged a proposition, I think we are debating it at the first

sitting, which you asked the Assembly to approve the appointment of the chair and member of the Jersey Police Complaints Authority. In the report accompanying the proposition, it points out that Mr. Stephenson is the current chair of the Jersey Appointments Commission and potential conflicts of interest with this role were considered by the panel and the Minister who were content to recommend his appointment subject to agreed mitigations. Could you tell the panel what the agreed mitigations for this proposed appointment are?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

You want me to? Yes, it is reasonably straightforward in that what we have agreed with the potential candidate is that he would not sit in his Appointment Commission role on any appointment of any future chief of police, deputy chief of police or equivalent senior police officer. I had forgotten to put it in the briefing but we have also extended that to the director of the Criminal Division, which will be recruited imminently and with whom the chair of the J.P.C.A. (Jersey Police Complaints Authority) needs to work very closely. It seemed to us that that would be sensible mitigation but, other than that, there would not be conflicts in relation to the roles. It is worth being explicit that the reason that that is conflict is because of course the chair of the J.P.C.A. needs to oversee any process that involves the chief or deputy chief as a result of a complaints process.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, Mark, do you want to ...?

The Connétable of Grouville:

Immigration and border. Minister, please could you provide the panel with an update of the future passport and future border immigration system.

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

In terms of the future border immigration system, there is most certainly going to be a lot happening in the next couple of years. I think probably the first thing to mention is that some of the introductions in the Common Travel Area may appear cumbersome, as it were, to the travelling public, but I think it is important to remember that there are 2 distinct advantages from the digital initiatives that are going to be introduced and the first one is the security of the border. It will greatly enhance the security of the Common Travel Area and by doing so it will increase the security of Jersey's border as well. I think the other thing is it is the customer experience, ironically considering what I previously mentioned, is that it will be the ease at which people can apply for permissions electronically as opposed to paper-based systems. I think if you look outside of the Common Travel Area, there are

very similar initiatives being introduced in Europe and even globally and certainly we are liaising very closely with the Home Office. Their intention is to make the best of technology and even introduce things like contactless corridors and facial recognition, which might seem a little bit science fiction but it is happening in the Middle East at the moment. That is the eventual hope which would mean that not only have you got enhanced security but you have also got ease for the travelling public as they walk through immigration controls. The first framework we are likely to see will be towards the end of next year, 2025, with the E.T.A. (Electronic Travel Authorisation). This is not an immigration permission but it is effectively authority to travel, so people coming into the Common Travel Area that do not require a visa can make electronic application and by doing that it will wash their details through Home Office security systems and it will either grant permission to travel or if there is an issue, it will be referred to J.C.I.S., and then we will make the decision there.

[15:30]

The advantage there is that, in effect, the permission is either granted or not before the person gets on the aircraft or the boat as opposed to at the moment where we have situations where, for example, somebody comes off the boat in St. Malo and there is an issue in terms of they are subject to deportation orders, for example, and then we have to deport that person back to their home country. In theory it will mean that that will not happen because the person will not be able to get on the aircraft or the boat in the first instance. That is one of the initiatives. The next is e-visas. At the moment when somebody is issued a visa, it is a wet ink stamp in a passport or a *vignette* and the move to electronic visas, which are deemed to be more secure. In terms of future border immigration systems, those are the 2 main things that are going to be implemented, but as I said, the longer-term vision from the Home Office is to move to things like facial recognition and contactless corridors. In terms of the future passport project, this is led by the U.K. H.M.P.O. (His Majesty's Passport Office). We are a stakeholder together with Gibraltar, Isle of Man and Guernsey. As you know, we have our Jersey-variant passport, so the move for this is, again, for a complete online application. The current system called Gypsy, is coming to the end of its shelf life so this will replace this system, and we are working closely with H.M.P.O. with a view to getting a full online application and service, as it were.

The Connétable of Grouville:

We obviously now know the extension of the *carte d'identité* is going to be the end of September 2025. Can you advise what discussions you have had with the U.K.'s Home Office in relation to the long-term viability of the scheme or is that now going to be completely scrapped as E.T.A. is brought in?

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

We have been liaising very closely with the Home Office since it was introduced in April 2023, so I think it is fair to say that there is some concern about French nationals coming in and using our identity cards, but we have reassured the Home Office that in terms of compliance, we are on top of it. In theory, an identity card is more prone to forgery than a passport. A passport is a more secure document. However, this scheme has been very successful since its introduction and we have had virtually no compliance issues and, in fairness, that has been largely down to the ferry companies as well which have been very much on top of things. So, the introduction of the E.T.A. towards the end of next year does pose a significant threat to the continuation of the scheme by virtue of the fact that to apply for an E.T.A. you will need a passport in order to do so. It is quite obvious where the barrier is there, so we are ... the work is ongoing with the Home Office in terms of whether there is a workaround, if you like. I think there are 2 issues: one is a policy issue, is that we would be the only place in the Common Travel Area that would allow for that to happen, and the other is a technical solution. Our experience of working with the Home Office on systems and the E.T.A. system will be significant, to say the least. We worked with them with the Settled Status Scheme, and we are working with them, as I have explained, with the passport project. Tinkering, if you like, or having workarounds with these systems is incredibly expensive. I mean we are very fortunate that with things like the E.T.A. scheme and Home Office systems, we benefit from that security and that intelligence effectively free of charge, so if we want to change those systems, you are potentially looking at a significant expense.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay. Thank you very much.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I just ask, when you mentioned about this move to complete online applications, as people applying for renewal of passports, when do you think that will come on?

Head of Service, Customs and Immigration:

It is due to start very soon, in the next month or so, and it is envisaged the project will probably run for 2 years. So towards the end of that ... I am not saying that that would mean that it would not be possible for anyone to apply sooner than that, but it is likely to be towards the end of that 2-year period.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you. We have gone just over our time, and we still have a few questions. I do not know if anyone has got time for some more now or we can send them in as written questions.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Written, if that is okay.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes. Okay. All right then. Thank you all very much for attending this meeting.

[15:35]