



Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Quarterly Hearing

Witness: The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Monday, 28th September 2026

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Panel:

Deputy V. Li of St. Helier North (Chair)

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

Connétable D.G. Curtis of St. Saviour

Connétable T. Palmer of St. Lawrence

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter

Witnesses:

Senator H.M. Miles, The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter, Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

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

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

Ms. R. Small, Head of Jersey Customs and Immigration Service

Mr. N. Fox, Head of Justice Policy, Cabinet Office

[9:31]

Deputy V. Li of St. Helier North (Chair):

Good morning, everyone, and welcome. This is the quarterly public hearing of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs. Today is 28th September. My name is Victoria Li. I am the Deputy for St. Helier North and chair of the panel. Our remit covers 3 Ministerial briefs: Children and Families, Education and Lifelong Learning and Justice and Home Affairs. Today we would like to cover the Minister's priorities for this term: youth justice, rehabilitation, roads policing, the structure and the capacity of the States of Jersey Police, Customs and Immigration, and the Government's work on violence against women and girls. Before we begin, a few housekeeping points. This hearing is being filmed and streamed live and the recording and the transcript will be published on the States Assembly website. Could everyone please make sure your phones are switched to silent? Members of the public are also very welcome but I ask that there is no interruption of the proceedings and no filming or photography. Minister, may I ask you and your officers to confirm that you have read the witness statement in front of you all?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy V. Li:

Thank you. Now if I could ask my colleagues to introduce themselves in turn and then the Minister, Assistant Minister and her officers.

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

My name is Mark Labey. I am the Connétable of Grouville and I am the vice-chair of this panel.

Connétable D.G. Curtis of St. Saviour:

David Curtis, Connétable of St. Saviour, declaring a conflict with youth justice relating to a child, so I will avoid that topic.

Connétable T. Palmer of St. Lawrence:

Tina Palmer, Connétable of St. Lawrence.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

Christopher Rebindaine. I am the Deputy for St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I am Senator Helen Miles. I am Minister for Justice and Home Affairs.

Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I am Deputy Lucy Stephenson, Assistant Minister for Justice and Home Affairs.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Robin Smith, Chief of Police.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Kate Briden, Chief Officer for Justice and Home Affairs.

Head of Jersey Customs and Immigration Service:

Rhiannon Small, Head of Customs and Immigration Service.

Head of Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

Nathan Fox, Head of Justice Policy, Cabinet Office.

Research and Project Officer:

Ros Sharp, supporting the panel as Research and Project Officer.

Deputy V. Li:

Thank you. Minister, before we start, a word on how our panel intends to approach today. You know this format better than everyone else.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Have they changed it?

Deputy V. Li:

Until June you were sitting on this side of the table as a member of the panel and Connétable Labey was alongside you questioning the Minister. Before that you also held the portfolio yourself and with your extensive experience in Customs and Immigration and in the States of Jersey Police and Probation, you have seen the system from inside. We are delighted to have you sitting opposite in that chair. While we are interested in what you are going to do differently this time and how we and the public will know whether it has worked out, I think for this first hearing we would like to treat this as a baseline. The priorities and commitments that you are going to set out are the ones that we are going to come back to later at each quarterly through this term. You will also recognise the standards we intend to apply is by pre-measures and then evidence and also to a date, so what is going to change for our Islanders. As a panel, we also hold the children's brief, so some of our attention today will be on the young people who come in contact with the justice service. We have

a lot to cover in the next 2 hours. When a question will need a more detailed answer, the panel will follow up in writing. Minister, the Common Strategic Policy and the budget are both due to be published soon. Without pre-empting its content, can you set out for the record your top 5 priorities and the measures that you would expect to be held to account?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Thank you. As everybody knows, there is a briefing later for all States Members on the C.S.P. (Common Strategic Policy) and the budget, so I will not be disclosing any surprises for airing that during this hearing, but suffice to say my top 5 priorities in terms of legislation are the hate crime law. The consultation is nearly ready. I had hoped to have it out a couple of weeks ago but for various technical reasons it is being delayed. The post-custodial supervision law has been a running sore for well over a decade, so that is on my priority list. The resilience law, the fireworks consultation, the reform of the Fire Precautions (Jersey) Law and then scoping and developing provisions to tackle some of the elements of modern slavery that we do not have within existing legislation. In terms of my operational priorities, my number one priority is the resolution of the travel issues that have been experienced by Jersey residents who have settled status or immigration permissions. The second one is the improvement plan for the emergency services control centre. The third one is appropriate investment in the Fire and Rescue Service so that they can deliver what they need to do to keep us safe. The implementation of the tall residential buildings regulation ;those will come into force on 1st April 2027 but the law was already passed by the previous Assembly. Then a principal operational priority is the implementation of the violence against women and girls legislation that was passed by the previous Assembly. In addition to that, I have some supplementary priorities. If anybody comes into my office, you will see them writ large on the whiteboard. The first one of those is the implementation of outcomes-based accountability, so I am really glad that you asked me about how we are going to measure the impact. Our Future Jersey system is based on outcomes-based accountability. We require a lot of our charitable partners to take up that framework. Our Building a Safer Community framework has always been built on that and I would like to see outcomes-based accountability filter through everything that the Government delivers. My second additional priority is the review of the criminal justice strategy and policy. At the moment we are working on one from 2008. It has not been reviewed during that time and one of the things that I certainly was quite vociferous about during the last term is that we have developed a lot of the legislation and a lot of the youth justice without strategy. So we need to have a good look at that. It is not just about doing things right. It is about doing the right things and about certainly joining the dots. The second thing that I am going to be discussing with the Bailiff and the Criminal Justice Strategic Board is our sentencing policy. Once again, our sentencing policy has not been looked at for quite some time, our drug sentencing policy in particular. I think we are still working on guidelines from the 1990s and that obviously has a very clear impact on our prison population and the way perhaps the community has moved on regarding illegal drugs. On the Building a Safer

Community framework - and I know we will talk about that later - I am very pleased to see that resurrected and firing on all cylinders because I firmly believe that from a prevention and early intervention perspective, that will reap huge dividends for all our community, not just for children and young people. Again, tying into your question about how we are going to measure impacts, we need a really relentless focus on criminal justice statistics. We have got little pockets of excellence, nothing really joined-up, and it is very difficult to make policy when you have not got decent statistics and research. The other one I have added on there is fireworks and explosives. Again, the Connétable will know that it is a running sore. I intend to have a look at that and obviously the firearms legislation. I have already had some meetings with the Comité des Connétables about minor changes to the firearms legislation and I am very hopeful that those conversations will continue in a very positive way over the next 4 years.

Deputy V. Li:

Thank you so much. This is a more detailed account ...

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I usually do not say very much, but there we go.

Deputy V. Li:

This is great. Thank you so much for helping us really understand what your department, your Minister is going to deliver. This sets the priorities but the funding comes through the budget and we know that and we hope that you are going to be able to deliver all that you mentioned throughout this term. Which of the priorities that you mentioned just now will require new funding in the 2027 budget?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

New funding will be required for the emergency services control room improvement plan, the Fire and Rescue Service investment, the implementation ... no, the implementation is done, I think. The V.A.W.G. (violence against women and girls) implementation in particular. Over the violence against women and girls legislation, also some funding to do some work around the Family Court review. We had a Family Court review done as one of the recommendations for violence against women and girls and some recommendations in there will need funding. I think that is all.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

What is your assessment of the current condition, capacity and suitability of the Jersey prison estate? If any development is needed, will it be within this term?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

When you talk about the prison estate, are you talking bricks and mortar buildings?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Yes, the whole piece.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The whole lot. We have had a lot of investment in the prison and I think what we are going to be doing this time is just looking at what extra might be needed to bring it up to a modernised standard. So I think we are looking at the Vulnerable Prisons Unit. As a result of enhanced enforcement over violence against women and girls, we have naturally seen an increase in the sentencing of people to custody. By the very nature, a lot of those prisoners are deemed to be vulnerable, so we do need a bit of capacity for those. At the moment we are doing all right, but we will take this year to have a look to see what needs to be done and then that will be fed into further budgets.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you. A follow-on question from that: how does the current prison estate support the Government's objectives in relation to rehabilitation, reducing offending and preparing offenders for a successful reintegration into the community?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think we have got some good facilities up at the prison. We have certainly got a good education regime. The current prison governor is very specific about making sure that prisoners engage in purposeful activity that is educational and contributes to rehabilitation. I think I would also like to say that the relationship between the Probation Service and the Prison Service is very good indeed, so when people are admitted into prison, there is a sentencing plan, there is an assessment of individual need and then the prison and probation work together to prepare for release. We have recently encountered a problem over housing, prisoners' accommodation needs. I think that was in the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)*. I am really happy to say that we spoke to the prison last week and Andium have been up, other people have been up, and they have sorted out the process for prison applications. I am very confident now that rather than have to wait to sort accommodation once people are released, that can be done in advance, as it was being done before. So that is a very good news story and again it shows how co-operation across Ministries can come together very quickly to deliver positive outcomes around rehabilitation.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

That is excellent news. My final question on this subject is, Minister, your letter to the panel noted that Jersey is the only jurisdiction in the British Isles without universal, mandatory, post-custodial supervision for adult offenders. What progress has been made towards a post-release supervision

framework - and you alluded a little bit to it there - and when do you expect to bring forward proposals?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

It is one of my top 3 priorities. For my sins, I worked on this piece of legislation when I was a civil servant and it has hung around on a shelf for a very long time. It is a critical piece of legislation. It means that prisoners are released at the two-thirds point with compulsory supervision, their needs are assessed, et cetera, and also, given the prison capacity issues that we have, it also means that that is a very good thing. I am optimistic. Am I right in saying, Nathan, that the law drafting instructions are coming up to a final draft?

[9:45]

Head of Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

We believe so. We have made the drafting time in 2027 and we believe that is right.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

So I am definitely hoping we will have something to bring to the States in 2027.

Deputy V. Li:

Thank you, Minister. I would like to turn now to youth justice. The youth justice roadmap published in June 2025 set out the reforms we will be delivering by 2030 and also it adopts the Child First approach. How is the philosophy being translated into positive changes across Jersey's youth justice system? That is what we wanted to find out.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The youth justice partnership was established in 2025 as a result of the youth justice roadmap. Clearly when I was Minister between 2022 and 2024, my youth justice focus was very much around a strategy. Nonetheless, the partnership was established in early 2025 and it has brought together the key stakeholders across government for justice agencies and partner organisations. There has been a series of workshops to map the current youth justice system to identify the gaps and agree priority areas for improvement. Children First is a philosophy that is very valid. Children should be at the centre of all of this and that philosophy has to feed through every element of the strategy. So I am keen to ensure that the youth justice roadmap reflects the full breadth of the youth justice system, so it is not just about when children get into the youth justice system. It is about the prevention, the community-based intervention. It is about the diversion, parish hall inquiries, victim considerations partnership, working in a very timely manner when issues first emerge. The idea is that you do not require the justice system, you do not require the criminal justice system to deal with

youth offending. We have identified issues early. What I have done, again just for my own understanding of where we are now compared to where my understanding was in 2022, I have commissioned a review of progress against the youth justice roadmap to identify where further focus, leadership and resources are required and I will be meeting the partnership myself next month to discuss the priorities for the next phase of delivery.

Deputy V. Li:

Are you satisfied with the progress so far?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I do not know. I am sure I will be but I just want to speak to the partnership next time. The partnership itself has identified some recurring barriers that they consider to impact on the effectiveness of the youth justice response. We know that there are delays between the offending behaviour and getting to parish hall. I think that needs to be solved by a partnership approach. We need to prioritise the needs in the system, make sure the paperwork is fast tracked, et cetera. The other thing that has come up, and again it has been around for quite a while, is the impact of the written caution. The impact of parish hall sanctions appearing on D.B.S. (Disclosure and Barring Service) enhanced checks later in life is something that we do need to have a look at. There are, of course, resource limitations across the service. If we had an unlimited resource pot we could probably do more. I think it is fair to say that there are some inconsistent experiences for children and young people entering the system. Having said that, there is some really good stuff that has gone on. If we think about the B.A.S.C. school programme, that is the successor to Prison! Me! No Way!!!, that has accessed 1,000 students across 12 schools. It has become very popular, a really good example of partnership working.

Deputy V. Li:

For all the panel, Minister, B.A.S.C. ...

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The Building a Safer Community framework. We used to have a programme called Prison! Me! No Way!!! that went into all the schools. In fact I am looking at Deputy Rebindaine who might have even experienced it. You are a bit older than that, are you?

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

What, going to jail? No, my schooling was prior to that era.

The Connétable of Grouville:

It had a very good actor in it, if you remember the video, Senator.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

That stopped in 2018, so we have resurrected that and what we have done is obviously measured the outcomes using O.B.A. (outcomes based accountability) and we have demonstrated that the programme has increased the students' confidence in accessing support. Almost all the students leave the programme knowing who to contact for help and where to go. That really establishes a substantial safeguarding outcome and it also directly contributes to B.A.S.C.'s prevention and early intervention objectives.

Deputy V. Li:

The prevention and early intervention is the approach that I hope the States Assembly will adopt because I think that is much kinder to our society. I am really glad that you are focusing on that part. Back to the regulation side of it, in January 2026 the Assembly adopted Amendment No. 2 Law 2026 and that followed a Ministerial decision authorising the drafting of regulations to introduce additional supervision conditions for young offenders in secure accommodation. What progress has been made on that regulation and are you expecting to lodge it soon?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I am looking at Nathan for that.

Head of Justice Policy, Cabinet Office:

That was the subject of the office briefing in respect of the ... that is the second part of the youth release regulations. I think they are lodging it imminently. It is one of my policy officers doing it and I think currently we are going through a final check. The young offenders regulations to allow the release under supervision is operating. This will be the final component to deal with some of the trickier children who might not be releasable unless we have some more controls over that.

Deputy V. Li:

While we are talking about the regulation and we know that the partnership is really important and engagement is really important, have you engaged with the Children's Commissioner and Probation Service?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, absolutely. The responsibility has now changed from the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs signing off the early release to the Minister for Children and Families, but there was a quite clear process about how that works and obviously Probation were involved as the social work service for the court with a young person who is in a custodial setting.

Deputy V. Li:

We will get back to the reforms that we were talking about that you wish to deliver. How do those reforms fit with the wider vision of the youth justice on reducing reoffending in Jersey?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Rehabilitation takes many forms but the most important thing is that you reduce the criminogenic need of the young children. One of the things that the early release helps is almost with a positive reward system. We have got some successes with some of the young people who are in custody at the moment being able to, for example, leave and access education, renew ties with families and community. All of the things that we know are important for adults in terms of rehabilitation are equally important, if not more important, for children. It was very important to implement that change in the law to make sure that we had equity between children and adults. We met with the Children's Commissioner 2 weeks ago, I think it was, and we had a very good discussion around children's rights, about where we are with the U.N.C.R.C. (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child). We are obviously on the same page. We all want the same thing. We want to put children first and we need to make sure that everybody is protected in the system appropriately.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Moving on to another topic, which is police capacity and roads policing. Minister in your nomination speech you said that the aim should be to release better neighbours beyond post-release supervision. What further measures will you pursue to strengthen rehabilitation and reintegration? We have touched on quite a few of these.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I am just a bit confused there because did you say it was going to be about roads policing?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

It goes on to that, I beg your pardon. That is the heading.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Sorry, can you just repeat the question?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Yes, sorry. I should not have read the heading out. In your nomination speech you said that the aim should be to release better neighbours post-release supervision. What further measures will you pursue to strengthen rehabilitation and reintegration?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think I have probably already referred to that with the introduction of the post-custodial supervision legislation, but I think the other thing that I want to do is really commend the work that is going on at the prison for making those partnerships with the community. There is a lot of work going on there and also the Probation Service community service scheme as well. Although those people are in custody, community service is a direct alternative to custody and it is about providing unpaid work for the community, which all contributes to rehabilitative outcomes.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

You described the Building a Safety Community programme is central to your approach. How are you measuring the success and what evidence can you provide that is improving safety and outcomes for Islanders?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The Building a Safer Community strategy, as I said before, is based on an outcomes-based accountability framework and it basically asks 3 questions: how much did we do, how well did we do it, and the third question is, is anybody better off, what are the impacts and whether it was worth doing? If I talk about, for example, the B.A.S.C. education programme ... we are going to have find a better word for it, are we not, than the B.A.S.C. education programme? Prison! Me! No Way!!! was better. How much did we do? As I have said, we have delivered it to 1,000 children across 12 schools. It is delivered in every secondary school on the Island. How well did we do? We have got a very high level of satisfaction from both students and teachers. They like the programme, they look forward to the programme. Is anyone better off? Well, that is the key bit. We have got measurable improvements in understanding child exploitation, drugs and arson support pathways, as I mentioned before. Using that framework is a really useful way of being able to demonstrate the impact.

Deputy V. Li:

I think adding to that, this is really important. That is where by implementing those education programmes within our schools you are empowering children to be able to use their words, to use their literacy to describe what is going on.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Again, one of our partners we have got, Every Child Our Future, is going into schools. There are lots and lots of volunteers, again just increasing confidence, increasing people's education ability. Every single one of those is a part of rehabilitation. Every single person that has any intervention is part of our Building a Safer Community framework.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Minister, it is my turn. The Comité des Connétables was given a presentation going back quite a long time ago now about the introduction, or rather the proposed introduction, of a mobile speed camera. My Connétable colleagues will all know how many times we have phone calls at the parish hall about speeding, and especially in the run-up, dare I say it, to the Jersey Rally. Anyway, enough said about that. A report of Jersey's mobile speed camera has not resulted in any prosecutions since it was deployed. Can the Minister explain why, specifically how many speeding detections has the camera recorded, how many were referred to a parish call inquiry or resulted in prosecution based on the camera's evidence?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I am going to hand that one over to the Chief Police Officer.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Thank you, Minister, and thank you particularly, Connétable, for your interest in what we call the speed safety camera. As you will know, back in October, November of last year, we publicised the fact of ourselves working with I. and E. (Infrastructure and Environment) who have been very good partners in this, about the introduction of the speed camera, recognising as we do that speeding and antisocial driving, as we have described it before, is really something that is very, very important to Islanders. I would say it is easily top 5 of my inbox and most of those come from the Connétables. The serious point is that once we got the camera we needed to be absolutely satisfied that it was recording accurately and as the Connétables here in particular, I have written to you to update you on where we are.

[10:00]

We simply could not be confident at that stage, or we wanted to be confident, that the camera's technology would be accurate. You may have seen, as I referenced in my letter to you, that there have been some issues in the U.K. (United Kingdom) with faulty or inaccurate cameras and we were not prepared to allow for that to happen. So there have been some delays in that. As I also said in my letter, and as I say to the Scrutiny Panel, we now have deployed that camera and we have deployed that in a number of locations over the last 4 to 6 weeks. We have had a number of noticeable recordings. All I can say is it is now going through the criminal court process, but some very, very high speeds and seizures of vehicles as a result of that. So, as I say, that is now going through the criminal justice process, so it is probably not the appropriate thing to go into too much detail on that but all I can say is ask me the question at the next panel meeting and I think I could provide you with more information. There have been delays for reasons that I have explained, but I am now pleased to report to you that the camera is now being deployed and is being deployed covertly.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Good. Just a quick supplementary to the Chief Officer. You said that I. and E. has been a partner in this. I believe I. and E. just for the public's benefit, actually owns this particular piece of equipment.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Yes, I think it is one of the best partnerships we have had during my tenure, frankly. Working with I. and E, it is well over a year now, probably closer to 2. Of course, we have spent no money. No public money has been spent currently on this camera because we needed to make sure it was right, working with the company, which is a U.K.-based company. The amount of money it has cost thus far is around £900 and that is really travelling expenses, et cetera, for people to be appropriately trained. It is a sophisticated bit of kit. As of now, we have not spent, other than that, public money. I. and E. have been very supportive and they deserve enormous credit for getting us this far, and they share the same enthusiasm that we have to make this right, but make this camera right for Islanders. We are deploying and calibrating it very high, so it is not just 5 miles over the limit. We are saying 20 per cent or 20 miles an hour over the limit, and we are still detecting people doing that. So we can recalibrate it in time, but the most important thing for me is it acts as a deterrent, particularly when we use it covertly, but also it is there, it has the support of Islanders and, thus far, the support of Islanders for that camera has been good, but we must maintain the trust and confidence in it.

The Connétable of Grouville:

The one thing that we were quite concerned about was the initial cost and that might come towards the parishes as well to be involved in this, so we are very grateful for I. and E. for taking on that, and thank you for declaring that publicly. A judge in a 2026 court case stated that excessive speeding remains an ongoing problem which blights the Island. It is a culture, we believe. A camera deployed in Grouville recently to record the safer transport to schools policy recorded a vehicle travelling over 90 miles an hour at 9 o'clock in the evening. What evidence does the Minister have that the current approach, including the mobile speed camera, is changing driving behaviour, that culture? If it is not sufficient, what additional measures are being considered?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Well, we have got the evidence that the Chief Officer has alluded to. It is always going to be difficult, is it not, because people are not slowing down. Where I live in St. Brelade, we quite often can hear the motorbikes or the vehicles going at a very significant speed. I think we need to wait and see what happens with the covert camera. I also potentially think seizing the vehicle is a good thing, in the same way that Customs and Immigration seize vehicles that have been used for smuggling purposes. Perhaps we seize the vehicles and perhaps the vehicles are not returned to the owners,

and perhaps for some of them, that may have a deterrent effect. Every community is blighted by speed. People think they will get away with it, and hopefully the new technology that we have got helps people not to get away with it.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Would perhaps the Minister commit to going one step further and allowing one of these vehicles to be crushed?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think it is very interesting. I think it is a salutary experience if your vehicle is turned into a biscuit tin. The other thing is as well, at the moment when vehicles and other paraphernalia are seized, they are put up to auction. Perhaps somebody would have to buy their vehicle back. But speeding is a serious offence. Speeding kills, we know that, and our roads are not built for speed, quite the opposite. So I think let us see how we get on with the covert and also fines, significant fines, can be quite salutary as well.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Can I just add to that, Minister, if that is okay? I may not seek the Minister's permission if I want to crush a car, but the serious point there is acting as something that is preventing future excessive speeds. We have antisocial driving, and we will hear that at nighttime where people are, frankly, tearing around the streets. That is a different sort of speeding, of course, that is antisocial driving. Speeding in Jersey has been stubborn, it has been stubborn to shift. It is part of the culture. So I have had conversations with our companies about how do you change, if you like, behaviours, because it seems socially unacceptable. Enforcement will not be the fix. One safety camera will not fix it. In fact, 12 safety cameras located in each of the 12 parishes will not fix this. I think it is a cultural thing. Building on the Minister's answer, it is also concerning the number of people we have that are still drinking and driving. That is on our roads. This week, the panel may be interested to know, there are 8 people in court this week having been charged for being drunk in charge of a car, a very large number, and there were 3 over the weekend. So we have a concern about the amount of drink-driving, and particularly the amount of drink-driving that occurs in the summer months. As part of the ... and building on the Minister's answer she just gave, how do you stop that? So this has not been agreed yet, but we were, as a team, looking about how do we prevent this, including naming people's employers overtly when they are found to be drinking and driving. Now, we have not decided on that yet. We do not even know if the laws allow us to do that, and we do not know whether we will do it, but what we want to do is think more creatively about what prevents someone getting in the car, having had too much to drink and the jeopardy that that might have, not just in terms of we have had probably the most awful case here over the last few years, have we not, with a drink driver? It really does not get worse than that, and that still is not acting as a deterrent. So I

think we need to think a bit wider than what we currently do and think a bit more provocatively, if you like.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

It is very interesting what the Chief Officer says about the acceptability of drink-driving. We do not have drink-driving education programmes here. In the U.K. you have them for speeding and for drink-driving. In Australia they have got some interesting models in some of the states whereby you go for your drink-driving course, but you have to take a member of your family and your employer with you. So what that does is it kind of increases the shame, I suppose you would say, and they have been shown to have some quite good outcomes with that.

The Connétable of Grouville:

One other question, if I may, a supplementary. The Chief Officer has mentioned before in a Scrutiny Panel hearing that he is genuinely concerned about the drug-driving that he has perceived within the Island. Is that still the case?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

In many ways, we can be more concerned about drug-driving than drink-driving because we know less about the drug-driving than we do about the drink-driving, and we do not yet have the laws that we need to deal with those. We can still arrest for people being on suspicion of having drugs in their system, and of course we do and I can give some of the numbers that I have already got here. So, for example, these are not drug-driving, these are all D.I.C. (drunk in charge), which can sometimes be drug because we will not know that at that stage. So far this year, just for the panel's interest, we have had 89 D.I.C., drunk in charge offences so far; 116 for the whole of 2025. Now, they do not always necessarily lead to a charge because we do a roadside test, which is the arrest, and then we bring them back for a more sophisticated bit of equipment. But I do think as we have seen in other jurisdictions, most notably in the U.K., the concern around drug-driving is becoming greater than drink-driving. So members of my team have looked at how we can better do a roadside test using mouth swabs and that sort of thing. I think this is another one of those areas that we need to look at more carefully given the propensity for people to probably take drugs which may be becoming cheaper than alcohol.

Deputy V. Li:

If we can understand a little bit more, do we have the age demographics that you just mentioned about?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Yes, we will have.

Deputy V. Li:

Are you able to share that with us?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Yes, if you want to write to me or I will take that away, we can do some work and look at age demographics.

The Connétable of Grouville:

My final question relates to the parish speed reviews we currently are working within a 6-year rotation. Each parish gets reviewed every 2 years. Grouville is currently going through that rotation, and we are very pleased and proud even about the way that has been taken so seriously. The question is, it is about consistency, Minister, because these reviews take place so invariably long term. How do you maintain consistency across the parishes in that system?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think that is really down to the Infrastructure Department. It is the Infrastructure Department that work to do the speed reviews with the parishes and then the police enforce whatever the law is. So although it touches obliquely on Justice and Home Affairs, I think that is more of a question for the Minister for Infrastructure.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

I am about to move on, but without wishing to over-egg this whole topic, can you help me on the philosophy of Jersey not having fixed speed cameras? If Deputy Stephenson and I told the Parish of St. Peter we were going to put in 3 fixed cameras through the north-south artery, plus one by St. Peter's Primary School, they would probably give us the keys to the parish. I know people say it dislocates the speeding somewhere else, but the people who live in St. Peter's Village would probably be quite happy about that. So is there not an argument for putting those in?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

We have talked about fixed speed cameras before. A lot of it comes from the administration of the fixed speed camera. We have got some unusual Articles in the Road Traffic (Jersey) Law here. It depends how fast you are going over the speed limit. You have to make sure that you get the person driving the vehicle, not the owner of the vehicle. The administration becomes very, very complex. So that is one of the reasons that we did not go down the fixed speed camera. The other issue as well is about - and you did not mention it with the fixed penalties - there is a difference between having a fixed speed camera and a fixed penalty. We have got the smileys which seem to work. If

a parish wants to have a fixed speed camera and maintain their own administration, I am sure that would be fine, but there are big costs associated with that.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

The previous panel lodged an amendment to the 2026-2029 Government Plan securing additional funding for community police officers and digital forensics capabilities. Can you give an update on the delivery of these commitments?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I am just going to pass that over to the Chief Officer.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Yes, those police officers are still in place. I am still enormously grateful to the panel for the £240,000 which assisted us not having to move very important, particularly from a parish point of view, community officers. We still do not have the full complement of community officers, but I have explained that to the panel before, but I am hopeful, subject to any decisions that may be made in the States over the next few days, maybe a month or so. I am more confident than I have ever been in my tenure that we will be able to better protect those numbers, subject to not revealing any secrets, some of which I do not know in the future budget that is about to be discussed in the States. You have also mentioned digital forensics and I have mentioned here before a number of times the importance of digital forensics.

[10:15]

It is an expensive unit, and for those that do not know, and those that are watching and listening of course, it is how we examine people's telephones and mobile phones and laptops and that sort of thing. There has been an enormous increase in the amount of phones that we seize. We are not the only jurisdiction. You could have delays in the U.K. of over a year now to get a telephone examined that has been triaged. It is not one if we think we have got indecent images or that sort of thing, that gets triaged very quickly, but it is a challenge to be able to keep pace with the amount of digital information; 92 per cent of all investigations include some sort of digital analysis, a mobile phone. Sometimes those are locked and sometimes we have the technology to deal with those. One of the other challenges of course is the amount of data that we now store. It is enormous amounts and that is a problem that not just we are being challenged with but others. The additional money helps us provide or get additional storage, so that when we copy those images and those sorts of things we have got them. We will need to find - and that is not just Jersey, the world is going to need to find - a better way to deal with that because it is still a challenge. That money was very

gratefully received and I am more confident than I have ever been in my tenure that I think we will be able to improve that situation in the next few years.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

In terms of the community officers, you are saying they have not all been recruited. Is that budget-led or is that finding the right people?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

It is entirely budget-led and that is the reason why a larger proportion of the 240 result in us not having to move valuable community officers into other areas where we have more pressure. The more pressure, as I have described previously to the previous panel, of which some members are here, is we have pressure in our public protection, which is related to violence against women and girls. That is why we have requested over a number of months additional resource to go into those areas because it means that we do not necessarily have to rob Peter to pay Paul. I took the decision last January that we would move resource from community policing into public protection because the threat and risk was too great. The funding that you were able to give us allowed me not to move 2 officers essentially, for which we were grateful and, therefore, we could recruit into that number. It is very small officer numbers but you get a sense of the pressure that is currently within public protection. The Minister has already mentioned about the prison. With further upstream policing, detecting more crime, dealing with more violence against women and girls, people are more keen to report to us, which is a great thing. I invite you to look at the *J.E.P.* just last week; people are more and more willing to report and that is a great thing but it means more and more pressure down the system, including pressure down the system in prisons and then the resources that are needed after that. That is the reason why the Minister has referenced that earlier.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Are there measurable improvements that can be seen as a result of this investment in the community policing for Islanders?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Would you like me to answer that? We have seen a reduction in antisocial behaviour. I always use that as a proxy measure, although the last few weeks it has been very busy from an antisocial behaviour point of view. In the back end of the school term we have had a number of issues with antisocial behaviour in a number of parishes. The Constables here may already know that. We have seen a reduction in antisocial behaviour, which is one of the areas that I look at as a proxy measure. Often with community policing you can say what is crime down is crime up. It is a different measurement for community policing. One of the best measures that I have about the effectiveness of our community policing is you, particularly the Connétables who have a relationship with the

community officers and how effective are they with engaging. I would readily admit, Deputy, that is not necessarily a scientific analysis. But when, as I often do, I get good feedback from Constables and Deputies, et cetera, that is one area. Are they engaging? Are they around? Are they visible? That is one of the measures I use.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Okay, thank you. On the digital forensics capabilities, you have mentioned about storage but is it reducing examination times and improving backlogs, times to deal with these things?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

We are not improving backlogs, although that is an aspiration. Just to stand still is success right now, such is the amount of digital information that comes into the police station. Yes, it is not just about storage, it is also about skills. It is also about having the right people with the right technical skills and also the right hardware, software that can speed up time and we have that sort of software that can analyse thousands of photographs without necessarily needing a human being to look at them. Clearly they have to be looked at afterwards before we go to court. This is the reason why if we can stand still that might be seen as a success. Indecent images being reported to us now are up 200 per cent compared to last year, around about one or 2 a week. That is largely because the social media companies are far more engaged in identifying and that is not just Jersey, that is across the United Kingdom. The surveillance is far, far better, which is a good thing, right, but of course it means it makes us busier. The final point I will say, Deputy, around digital forensics is digital forensics saves money; it will save money. It will provide speedier justice. It provides more guilty pleas at the first opportunity because the evidence is there. The Law Officers acknowledge that too and I continue to have enormous support from the Attorney General and his predecessor because it will speed up the court process. Investment going into that will save money down the line.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Minister, are you satisfied this funding that the Assembly approved is being delivered upon in getting you the outcomes that we need?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, I think it is contributing to that. Clearly, the next budget as well takes into account ... digital forensics is never going to go away, it is always going to grow and grow and grow, is it not? It is all the better to make sure that it is funded appropriately and proportionately.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Minister, bearing in mind we live in a sophisticated financial sector, the absence of the equivalent of seize and sift legislation in Jersey seems to be an anomaly. What plans do we have to remedy to

do this, given in the U.K. it is a default approach for accessing electronic media, as the Chief Officer was saying, computers, hard drives, phones, when you cannot immediately isolate data in a search?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Seize and sift has not hit my agenda. I have got a meeting with the Attorney General coming up in the next couple of weeks to talk about his priorities, so that is something I can certainly talk to him about.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Thank you.

The Connétable of Grouville:

During your nomination speech, Minister, you stated that as much of our resource as possible should be directed towards the front line. In the last iteration, and we have had many conversations with the Chief Officer about efficiency savings, et cetera, can you outline the current balance between front line operational officers and management or supervisory roles within the States of Jersey Police? Are you satisfied with this balance?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

What I have always said is that we need to focus our resources on the front line but, as you will know, the front line does not work unless the back office is resourced appropriately. That has always been my stance to, for example, the recruitment freeze. What I do know is States of Jersey Police are holding police staff vacancies in order to balance their budgets; that is not a satisfactory situation. Having worked for the police myself, when you have got a shortage in the back office you really have to take somebody off the front line to perform that back-office function and that defeats the object of the growth. It is something that I will be keeping a very careful eye on. We have talked about police capacity. The Chief Officer has identified the difficulty in managing day to day, let alone before we layer out the violence against women and girls on that. It is something that has to be kept under a very strict review but I have every confidence in the Chief Officer that he will manage that appropriately and that he will bring that to my attention should there be any difficulties. It is also something, having been a previous member of the Police Authority, that I know the Police Authority are keeping a careful eye on.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Do you think there has been a change over the past 5 years in that balance? Would you like to see that change over the course of time?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think it is important that front line staff are doing things that require powers. If you have functions in any of the agencies that do not require policing powers or J.C.I.S. (Jersey Customs and Immigration Services) powers, you should have a member of staff doing that. I think that is what we have to look at, a balance of. I know over the years States of Jersey Police have done quite a lot of work around that. If you do not need police powers, that job should be done by a civil servant.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Again, on officer numbers, is the Minister satisfied that the States of Jersey Police has sufficient officer numbers currently and specialist capacity to respond to current and emerging demands? We have spoken about cybercrime, for example, safeguarding and digital investigations. Are we there? You have mentioned vacancies.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The police establishment is the police establishment. One of the issues that we have is people leaving, people going off to get different jobs. You cannot just recruit a police officer and then the following week they are up and running as a police officer. There is a significant lead-in time. In order to bring the numbers, I think we are recruiting another 8 in 2027.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

That is right, Minister.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

There is an ongoing programme of recruitment and there is an ongoing programme of bringing people in, transferees from the U.K., which is proving very helpful because I think you get that cross-fertilisation of ideas and also people who have got significant experience of, for example, public order policing that you would never get here, counterterrorism, for example. Those people are chosen fairly carefully for their skills. I think it is very clear that the police establishment has to do this and that is something that I am conscious of, working very closely with the Chief Officer to make sure that we have the appropriate level to deal with what we need to deal with in Jersey.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Do you think that is attributable to financial crimes, fraud and related offences? Do you think that is the reason for the pressure?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think the violence against women and girls and our significant important focus on that, but also we live in very different times, do we not? We have to make sure from a resilience perspective, from

every perspective, that we maintain sufficient numbers of police. We do not have a next-door county to rely on.

The Connétable of Grouville:

No.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

In terms of emergency planning, we need to make sure that we have a cohort of appropriately trained officers to do what needs to be done.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Have you a comment about what was reported in July this year that the number of police officers investigating financial crime has been reduced? How does the Minister intend to ensure that the States of Jersey Police maintains the capacity and expertise required to investigate these crimes?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think by working with the Chief Officer. Do you want to come in there?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Yes. You have twice now alluded to a very important point. Capacity is one thing, numbers of both police officers and police staff, and the Minister has very eloquently described the importance of what some people call the back office. I am never always sure what the front line is because I think that front line goes quite a way back, if you know what I mean, including people who are responding to the calls, taking the telephone calls. Are they front line? I say they are front line. Capacity is one thing, numbers, capability is another. As the Minister has already referenced, being such a small jurisdiction that is in ways isolated, we have to ensure within States of Jersey Police that we have also got the capability, that we have got people with different skills because we cannot rely on someone, unless of course we have a major incident, of which, regrettably, we have had a few, where we do have very good relationships with the U.K. One of the challenges that we have is we have police officers and police staff not double-hatting, probably even quadruple hatting.

[10:30]

They have a number of skills and a number of those skills are being deployed this week, people who are not doing their day jobs are doing other things because we have a need for them to do that. I am very proud of my staff for that because they willingly do that for which they get no additional money. They do that because they want those additional skills. Bringing in transferees ... and I think the latest number is we have 9 that have been interviewed over the last few months, including

8 new recruits that will start in around January of next year, but really it takes a year. It takes a year from filling in an application form to having feet on the street. That is because they receive very thorough training, as you could imagine. As you know, this panel and the previous panel know, we train in-Island now.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, we do.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

We are very proud of that but that is also quite a significant drain on resource because it is our staff and our police officers who are doing that. Finally, going back to the financial crime discussion, of course what we do in States of Jersey Police is we investigate the local frauds and financial crime. Yes, over the last couple of years that has reduced by, I think, 2 officers and members of police staff. That is because those resources have had to go into other places where we think the demand has been greater. My hope is next year, as I have already alluded to ... and I appreciate we box around this because decisions have to be made in States Assembly and we should not interrupt that discussion. I have never been more confident that we probably adjust that next year, depending on getting the right resources, and that is the key thing. I think capacity is one thing, capability is another.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I attended recently - and thanks, everyone, for the invitation - a falling-out parade at the T.A. (Territorial Army) Centre of 10 officers. I saw in real time the recruitment actively being supported with, so thank you very much. This panel has always been historically very keen to see knife crime in the Island reduced; 42 crimes committed that involved a knife in 2025. Can the Minister provide her assessment of the current level of trend of knife-related crime and advise whether she considers any further action is required?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I do not have the current figures for 2026. Do you have ...

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

No, I do not have the current figures but of course I can get them to the panel.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

In terms of knife crime though in general, of course we had that one very serious case in school and, as you know, that young person was arrested and has since been sentenced. I think the reason we still talk about that is because of how rare it is. It is phenomenally rare to have that. This is not London and the fact that we can say that because it was so unusual. Also, in a letter I will return in response to this question is what does knife crime mean in that context? That could be a person found with a knife. Hardly any of those will involve any form of injury but it is a knife crime. I can help with providing the panel with some more information on that, which will illustrate what I see as the threat, which I see the threat very low. But absolutely, given the experiences in London for which I have some experience, complacency is the only thing that will spoil this; there will be no complacency.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you. Again, important for the public to know the generalities but what are the current vacancy rates across the States of Jersey Police. Are there any particular areas where recruitment or retention challenges persist?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I can talk about some of the numbers. We have 194 police officers - again, I can provide more information in a letter - and approximately 128 police staff, which, as the Minister has described, are very important. The actual churn rate, retention, is very low, certainly in comparison to other jurisdictions might be more. Of course a number of those staff also retire and it probably would not be appropriate for me to say please do not retire, although we do have those discussions of course; they are normally quite quick. We talk a lot about retention and, as the panel is alluding to, what we should do, not just States of Jersey Police but all organisations, is work just as hard on retention. What do we do to make people ensure they want to stay with our organisation? I am pleased to say that our retention is very good. I think the police service has that sort of culture where people want to stay, but also we eject people that do not share our same values and standards and, regrettably, we have a very small number of those and I can provide more information about. The largest number of course is retirements, but I can provide more information on that, if the panel sees fit.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you very much, Chief Officer, thank you. Thank you, Chair.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Thank you. Minister, Customs and Immigration. It was refreshing to hear that number 1 is Jersey residents being denied access. Could you just give the panel an update on the scale of the issue and what progress has been made trying to resolve it?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. It has become very difficult. With the introduction of the carrier liability law earlier this year, a lot of our residents have suffered significant problems travelling back to the Island from abroad. What appears to be happening is when people check in online and then they go to the gate and they present their passport and it says do not board. Then what happens is obviously the gate staff are very keen to get people on to the flights, so they are less likely to be able to phone the number, et cetera. The advice that we have been giving is that people should go to the check-in desk, they should check in early and then ensure that any difficulties regarding boarding cards can be sorted out by the check-in desk because they have the specific number for calling the Home Office. The longer-term solution to this ties into what is called F.B.I.S. (Future Border and Immigration System), which will allow every person to be able to manage their own immigration permissions. We are hopeful that our residents will have access to that in the fullness of time but that is not going to happen quickly. It is probably not going to happen before the end of next year. There is another couple of issues. What happened when people were given settled status, in the small print on the back of the letter it said if you change your passport number you need to let Customs and Immigration know. Then Customs and Immigration will go through the process here of updating your passport number on to the Home Office system. That has been happening but it appears to be rather a manual system, not as a fault of Jersey. I am not saying it is a fault, it is the way the Home Office are doing it. I think we have a backlog of about 4,000 records currently, which are being updated as quickly as possible. I have written to all the Honorary Consuls. I have written to the airlines. I specifically write to the individual airlines where we know that there has been a problem, but it is a really tricky nut to crack. If we bear in mind that we have 22,000 people in Jersey who have some form of immigration permission, it affects nearly a fifth of our population. Literally, I know, Rhiannon, as head of service has been liaising almost daily with the Home Office. This has been escalated as high up as we can possibly make it in the Home Office. It is something we are taking very seriously but it is something that is still causing a problem. If you think about how many airlines, how many airports there are. We have had people in Georgia, people in China but we have also had people in Charles de Gaulle. These things should not be happening. What I would say is that as soon as it comes to the attention of Immigration here, they are swinging into action, speaking to handling agents, speaking to passengers, trying to make things work in order that people could board straightaway.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Thank you, Minister. It is apparently clear that you have done a lot of work on it and the panel is very grateful for that.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

It is a real worry.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

With no assurances from Home Office or airlines, I suppose the only advice we can give is to check in manually.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. Make sure that your new passport details have been given to Customs and Immigration locally, so they can upgrade the system. Go to the check-in desk, get a paper boarding card because once you have that paper boarding card issued by the check-in desk that will just scan through at the gate.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Thank you.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Rhiannon, did you want to add anything to that?

Head of Jersey Customs and Immigration Service:

I think I can say that, as the Minister has said, we are liaising with the Home Office. It is absolutely our top priority as a service to get this sorted. It is unacceptable. We are fully aware of how frustrating it is for people. We are liaising both at a strategic level but also at an operational level to try and get the short-term solutions implemented. The liaison we have had is productive. I am hopeful that in the coming weeks and months we should see quicker resolutions to these issues as they arise, but my staff are working on it full time.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Okay. As a supplementary question, it came to our attention over the weekend that perhaps some of the French students coming in from France are also getting turned back. I am not sure what the numbers are or anything but is that something you are aware of at this moment in time?

Head of Jersey Customs and Immigration Service:

Sorry, what was that, the students ...

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

French students at the harbour were getting turned back because of some, I think, discrepancy with their passport.

Head of Jersey Customs and Immigration Service:

That is not something I am aware of but I can certainly take that away and look, to speak to DFDS and our French colleagues and find out what is happening there.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Thank you. What progress has been made before the introduction of digital immigration permission in Jersey and when will residents be able to fully rely on the digital system to evidence their status?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

As I mentioned before, again, we are working on that as quickly as possible. There is capacity for the Home Office to extend the system to the Crown Dependencies. All the Crown Dependencies need to agree to that. I believe they have all agreed and that work will continue, but realistically I do not think we are going to have the full system up and running here until the end of 2027.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Thank you, Minister. What recent investments have been made in certain technologies, screening equipment, intelligence, border-led operations, and what impact has this had on the importation of drug seizures?

Head of Jersey Customs and Immigration Service:

As for investment, I would say obviously our biggest asset is our staff. We continuously train our staff. We work very closely with our partner law enforcement agency on the Island, States of Jersey Police. While we are always looking at where we can be digitally innovative and better, at the border our best detection method is our staff and our dogs.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Do you think you have enough? Are there any gaps in your border control that you can improve? Would that mean more dogs, more staff, more screening equipment?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think I will answer that. I think what has become clear is that Customs and Immigration have managed with not much growth at all over the past 20 years. Many things have happened, not least Brexit. We have an increase in people applying for naturalisation as British citizens; that has work. Clearly, with the number of work permits that we have had go from a couple of hundred to nearly 3,000, all of that work has been absorbed within existing resources. The Chief Officer has a very difficult job in prioritising all of that, the frontier work, the anti-smuggling, the goods control. We have seen a significant complexity I suppose in the type of goods that are being imported into Jersey, whether they are being imported for sale or transshipment. We have also had sanctions regimes which requires greater focus by our Customs colleagues. Certainly we are in a no-growth

environment and a no-growth budget at the moment. But certainly it is something that I have already discussed with the Chief Officer, that we do need to start having a proper review of capacity to make sure that the breadth of service that Customs and Immigration now need to provide, which is broader than ever before, is being met in the most appropriate and proportionate way.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Thank you, Minister. I have full appreciation for Customs officers and how they perform but it is apparently clear that drugs importation is quite high, if you are coming from an airport or even ports. Are Customs and Excise going to get more funding to help them combat drugs importation?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

As I have said, most certainly we are in a no-growth environment for this budget. We will be moving to a 3-year budget and mid-2027 will give us the time to look strategically and operationally at the needs Island-wide.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

I will hand back to the Chair.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Can I ask a supplementary to Rhiannon, if I may? I was also very proud to see you getting your medal recently at Government House with your fellow officers. It was lovely to be there to witness that, so congratulations.

Head of Jersey Customs and Immigration Service:

Thank you very much, Connétable.

The Connétable of Grouville:

It is public now.

Head of Jersey Customs and Immigration Service:

Much appreciated, thank you.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I am aware and I have been made aware that our passports have an expiry date on them, but within 6 months of that expiry date people are finding out that those passports are almost invalid in some cases. Why is that and is it a technology issue?

[10:45]

Head of Jersey Customs and Immigration Service:

No. Sorry, Minister, I do not want to step ...

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No, go ahead, go ahead.

Head of Jersey Customs and Immigration Service:

No, it has come about, so I think what Jersey residents are seeing more is travel to Europe where it is now being advised that you need to have 6 months' validity on your passport before you travel. The reason for that is post-Brexit. While we enjoyed free movement with the European Union pre-Brexit, so there was no restriction on the number of days a British person could spend in the E.U. (European Union), post-Brexit that has changed and there is now a strict number of days that a British person can spend in the E.U. For the border controls it is to ensure that person's returnability to Britain. It is no different to America, Africa, Asia, other places like that.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you. I just thought it would be worth mentioning that publicly.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Clearly.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you, Chair.

Deputy V. Li:

Thank you. Our final area this morning is the work on violence against women and girls and the Family Court. I will hand that to you.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Can I go off-piste again then?

Deputy V. Li:

Yes, please.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Do not worry about violence against women and girls just yet. To stick with the thing, we have had a discussion about drinking and driving is coming back. We lived through an era when lots of people

used to do it. Society said it is no longer acceptable; it is not. People smoked; society said you should not do it; it is stopping. But the drugs one, we do not seem to have had that societal change to say do not take them. We can spend all the time trying to stop it coming in but is there anything that we can do to try and tell everyone out there you really should not be doing this?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think that is where the Building a Safer Community framework comes in, which is entirely focused on community safety and reducing crime and using that as a co-ordinating framework to deliver education. I think Public Health have a significant role to play in that; they are very well funded. We do have a substance use ... it is not a substance misuse strategy, it is a substance use strategy, which is developed from Health. We are having significant resources put in to educating the public, helping the public understand the negative impacts of substance use.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Do you think it is having an impact?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

If you look at the evidence, we definitely know that young people's alcohol consumption has reduced. They used to call it something different but the young people now in Jersey fill in a questionnaire every year over certain years. We have seen a significant reduction in smoking, in drinking and drug use among the young. Anecdotally, it is the middle-aged where alcohol is becoming a problem. I think that is manifesting itself in health issues, rise in liver disease, rise in mental health conditions, but I really think those sorts of things are for the Minister for Health and Social Services and his officers to be discussing. For us it is about enforcement. If something is illegal we will enforce the law.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Right, back to my patch.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Did that answer your question, Deputy?

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Thank you. Minister, when the last Government accepted the V.A.W.G. Taskforce's recommendations, they said implementation would be funded from existing departmental budgets. The latest progress report shows that of 109 actions, 67 are complete, 37 are still in progress and 4 have not been started. The States of Jersey Police has also said its current officer numbers are insufficient for what is required, particularly given this new initiative. The new legislation is expected

to generate maybe 275 or 300 additional crimes a year. Has dedicated violence against women and girls funding been allocated and, if so, how much?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Certainly a proposal for funding for the implementation of the violence against women and girls recommendations has gone into the budget. You will probably find out at 12 o'clock how much. I am not going to reveal that now. Certainly when the 5 pieces of legislation were going through the Assembly, I, as Deputy at that point, did stand up and say that I was very concerned about the funding of this because what you do not want to do is offer for sale what you have not got in stock. It is all very well having 5 laws but if we are not going to be able to fund them ... what is clear though is that certainly the former Minister had thought very carefully about that and she basically laid out what these laws would cost. The Assembly were very well aware before they passed the laws what that financial commitment would be. I am very happy to say that the new Council of Ministers have carried forward that commitment in order that the recommendations of the violence against women and girls will be properly funded.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Of the 41 actions that are still outstanding, are they constrained by funding, staffing, resources?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I would say it is not going to be funding. I think some of it is going to be sequencing. You cannot do everything all at once, so we need to sequence the funding. A few things need to be in place, things like court rules. For example, court rules need to be in place before you can implement some of the orders, et cetera. But there is a plan, there is a detailed plan. We have dedicated staff working on this. I am very confident that we are moving forward at the right pace. It is important that you do not rush this; we need to get it right. I am confident that we are moving forward at the right pace.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Thank you. As the work moves towards Building a Safer Community Framework, how will the V.A.W.G. spending be identified and reported separately so the panel and public can see what is being spent and what is being delivered?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The taskforce was always going to be a time-limited piece of work. When I set it up in 2022 it had very specific terms of reference and it reported and gave the recommendations. The taskforce was always going to transition into something different. What it has transitioned into is the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harms Partnership, which of course is broader and it sits within the Building a Safer Community Framework. But of course the D.A.S.H. (Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harms)

Partnership is broader than the taskforce, we have many more members, which is entirely appropriate because as we implement recommendations and bring the laws forward, we need the whole community to be involved in doing that. In terms of reporting, as I have said, we have got dedicated resource to V.A.W.G., so it will not be all mixed together. It will be very specific and of course we are taking an outcomes-based accountability approach to the implementation of all the V.A.W.G. work.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

How are you going to ensure that the momentum created by this taskforce is maintained once responsibility sits within the broader community?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

That is why we have set up the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harms Partnership, so that that momentum is maintained. I have taken on the chair of that group because this is a particular priority for me. I want to make sure that the enthusiasm, if you like, and the focus ... we all have a relentless focus on violence against women and girls. That is entirely appropriate and that is the way that this D.A.S.H. Partnership will work. We have already had our first meeting. We had our first meeting a couple of weeks ago, to which you were invited as observers.

Deputy V. Li:

We appeared very briefly.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, you did. That was a very positive meeting and what we were saying is we wanted to test the ideas that we had and test the initiatives that we had with the members of that partnership. It is a partnership, so we expect other agencies, other partners to be bringing things to the partnership to discuss and deliver together.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

The taskforce recommended a review of the Family Court system, which I believe you referenced right at the beginning. The Government report in April 2026 that review of the Family Court in relation to domestic abuse cases was underway. Can you provide an update on the review and have you received it? What action is being taken to ensure any recommendations are translated into tangible improvements for victims and families using the Family Court system?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes. The review is being conducted by Eleanor Markham KC. Hannah, sorry, I got mixed up, sorry, the other one is Eleanor. Hannah Markham KC, I think, who has done a very comprehensive piece

of work. I have seen the first draft. I have had discussions with her. We are going to be publishing that report in October.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

It is December now, I think.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

It is December now, is it? I am so sorry, it was going to be October, it is going to be December. The recommendations from that report ... it will be the responsibility of the Family Justice Council to make sure that those recommendations are delivered.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Okay.

Deputy V. Li:

Okay. Do any other panel members have any more questions?

The Connétable of Grouville:

I would just like to make a point that I have had 2 of my ex-colleagues from this panel sitting on the other side, having changed from poacher to gamekeeper. I am through that cycle now, so I do not have to put up with it again.

Deputy V. Li:

Minister and Assistant Minister and officers, I really appreciate your time this morning, the whole openness of the conversation where it is answering all of our questions. I would like to also thank our panel colleagues and then the Scrutiny Officers for their work preparing for today. This concludes this hearing and thank you very much for your time.

[10:56]