



Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Budget Review - Public Hearing

Witness: Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Tuesday, 28th October 2025

Panel:

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

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade (Vice Chair)

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. P. Brown, Chief Fire Officer, States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service

[13:30]

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

Welcome to this public hearing of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. Today is the 28th October and this is our public hearing in relation to the panel's review of the proposed Government Plan 2026-2029 with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs. I would like to draw everyone's attention to the following: the hearing will be filmed and streamed live. The recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly Website. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, should be switched to silent. I am Deputy Catherine Curtis, the Chair of the panel.

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade (Vice Chair):

I am Deputy Helen Miles, member of the 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, States of Jersey Police.

Chief Fire Officer, States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service:

Paul Brown, Chief Fire Officer.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thank you, everybody. We only have 45 minutes for this hearing so if I ask some questions first about the revenue heads of expenditure. Minister, we noticed that there is an overall reduction of approximately £5.6 million compared to 2025. Could you say what this is attributable to?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

As you will be aware, the Ambulance Service has moved from J.H.A. (Justice and Home Affairs) back to Health so that is why we have adjusted for that purpose.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, is this completely that?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, I do not think there is anything else.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. We note that the department is due to make savings of £365,000 through roles. Please could you outline how those proposed savings will be made?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Right. Okay, there has been some removal of roles in relation to the senior manager at J.C.I.S. (Jersey Customs and Immigration Service), one manager at the prison, a P.E. (Physical Education) manager, reduction of rent for the Field Squadron residential properties and a reduction in £90,000 investment following the service delivered in 2024.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

That is for 2025 and then for 2026, the amount that J.H.A. will deliver is now £299,000 because the £66,000 moved with Ambulance. It is their savings commitment, so our remaining amount is just slightly shy of £300,000 and we are working on the savings proposals for J.H.A. to put to the Minister but we have not got firm plans yet.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. All right, you have just mentioned about the reduction in some of the particular staff roles and I just was going to ask a bit more about that. We see the full-time roles in Prison Service and Customs and Immigration have both reduced by one full-time employee role, whereas the Fire Service has increased by one and J.H.A. Directorate has increased by 3. Could you outline about why those roles have changed?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Paul can come in on the Fire and Rescue. The J.H.A. Directorate will, I think, be an increase in the Emergency Services Control Centre, which sits under the J.H.A. Directorate for accounting purposes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right, so that is the new 3 full-time employee roles in the Control Centre.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

I think that will be why there is an increase there, if that is on the 2025 figures.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes. Oh, in 2026.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

That will be the increase of ... so there will be an increase through the business case investment in the E.S.C.C. (Emergency Services Control Centre) that will mean the head count under the J.H.A. Directorate for the E.S.C.C. part of it increases. I am sure we will talk about the investment case there. It is going to add 5 posts, but I think it is shown as only 3 because there is probably a netting off somewhere else and those posts do not formally start until the middle of next year, but I can explain that a bit further later on, I suspect.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, and there is an extra one full-time role in the Fire Service.

Chief Fire Officer, States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service:

That is right, so that is part of - and as Kate says, I am sure we will get to it - the investment case and the proposed increase in Fire and Rescue Service Budget through the period starts next year with a single role. There were a number of options to the funded option. For this period coming, it is proposed as being one extra post in 2026. It will be a non-firefighter post. It is sitting centrally within the organisation critical function.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The reduction in the Customs Service and the Prison Service, will that have an impact on the front line roles?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

What that role was basically, as you will be aware, the senior officer retired recently and there was a number of roles underneath that so one of those individuals has been promoted to the senior officer role and basically the workload has been redistributed. It was felt that that made financial sense.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so that was Customs and Prison Service.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No, that was in relation to the Prison Service. They have removed a manager in relation to the ...

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

It had been a vacant post for some time anyway, so we have taken it out of the head count and the budget.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Can you confirm if there were any challenging decisions to be made as part of drafting the proposed Justice and Home Affairs Budget for 2026? If so, what were they and were there any bids for funding that were rejected as well?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

The question you are asking me, sorry, just for me to get this clear in my head, are you asking me about our savings or are you asking me about the actual budget that we have got?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

First of all, I am asking about challenges, which could be about making savings. It could be about things that you want to happen that are not happening. It is quite general really.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Okay. Yes, that is fine. I think in relation to J.H.A. across the piece, there are always going to be challenges to making savings. I think that is always going to be the case regardless because, of course, what you will know is the majority of the funding and the budgets that go to those services is staffing. When you are asked to make savings when you have got very little budget in relation to other things, it is always going to be a challenge but, of course, as one of the departments within the Government, we have to play our part as well. Those challenges have been quite strong, and I think Kate can probably speak a little bit more about the challenges because Kate is the one that has been having to try and find those savings and where the leaner pieces are, I think.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

The department has a number of continuing pressures, not all of which are addressed through this budget, which we think we can balance and continue to mitigate next year. It will always be challenging to deliver front line services where there are increasing pressures. We have talked to the panel before about things like the increase in V.A.W.G. (violence against women and girls) in the prison population et cetera. We could elaborate on that at a future hearing, but those things create cost pressures that we continually have to manage and that would be the key challenge, I would say, for next year.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right, so do you think this is impacting the services at all?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

We always manage it on the basis of risk to make sure - to the best extent we can - we are not having an impact on the front line delivery of services, especially when they directly affect Islanders. That involves making compromises on the lesser things that are slightly one step away from the front line and managing as effectively as we can within the budgets available to us.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, and were there any bids for funding that were rejected?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

No.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No, we did not ... I will talk to you about S.O.J.P. (States of Jersey Police). What we have managed to secure for the States of Jersey Police for next year is the recruitment of 10 officers in January. That is not within the budget; it is a letter of comfort, or whatever they call them. The challenge I think for all of the emergency services is that it is not about recruiting somebody today and they are able to do the job tomorrow. As an example, S.O.J.P. is a 2-year programme. Fire Services ...

Chief Fire Officer, States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service:

Four, typically.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Four-year programme. They are probably able to start and do things prior to the 4 years and it will be the same for Prison, Customs and Immigration as well and all to different extents. I think the challenge with these certain types of services is that you need to recruit before everybody has left. For me, we had just finished the 2-year programme from the most recent recruits in 2023 and so I am aware there will be staff leaving within the coming year. It was important to say that we needed to be able to recruit in order that we do not reduce the staff that we have already got. That is why we are recruiting 10 in January.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Have you already technically recruited those staff? Are they all in a talent pool waiting to go?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

They will receive their letters.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

To say ...

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

That they are appointable in January. They have had their letters to confirm that they will start in January and this occasion, this will be the first time - it is only in my tenure - all of those 10 will be trained in Jersey as opposed to sending them to another force in the U.K. (United Kingdom) for them then to come back, which generates increased cost, as you will understand, to then be given more Jersey-related law. There are many efficiencies. There has been a lot of work for learning and development, over 100 different lesson plans, as we prepare for what is a 20-week training programme, but I can confirm that all of those 10 have received their letters and will start in January.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Over and above that, are you bringing in more transferees as well next year?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Yes, so we currently have 10, now, transferees in our pool. One was only interviewed just last week and, as you will know, we drop those transferees in through the year when we need particular expertise but, as the Minister has mentioned a number of times, we are really keen to recruit from within Jersey. This is the first time we have been able to do it now for about 2 years thanks to the letter of comfort - that I am yet to receive but I am confident I will receive it - so we can recruit those 10 and throughout the year, we will drop in the other 10 to increase our numbers.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That is good.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I will say because from the outset from taking this role, I raised concerns about the level of resources and I think what is critical, what we realise, is that when we bring in legislation, that legislation must - must - show the impact on the resources and it is not only J.H.A.; it is regulations like environment and all of those. These pieces of legislation must include the resources and the cost because we seem to have drifted away from doing that and I think this is what is critical. We have significant pieces of legislation coming through. Those will have an impact on ... and that will include not only S.O.J.P., but the Prison Services, potentially Court Services, J.D.A.S. (Jersey Domestic Abuse Support) and all of those other things. I think it is quite important that the Assembly and the States moving forward identify that when they bring in legislation that they need to look at the impacts on those departments and the costs that that will be and then that needs to come into the future budgets.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Has that letter of comfort then provided top cover for the Chief of Police for the V.A.W.G. pieces that you are bringing forward?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

No.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

No, this is separate of the V.A.W.G. pieces.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Correct, this is separate. Those pieces of legislation that will be brought forward before we go into purdah, we will have the cost of what it is because the ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

They will have to go into next year's budget.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, because that has to be attached to the legislation. That is the process that we were told to go through.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, I will come back to the matter of the full-time roles in Police in a moment. I have just got a few questions here, first about the revenue heads of expenditure for the States of Jersey Police. Minister, the projected revenue heads of expenditure for the Police has increased by approximately £957,000. Could you explain the reasons for that?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

£957,000; has it?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I am not sure ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The heads of expenditure ... I have not got a page note so I cannot give that to you at the moment.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

We will have a look at the page note and get back ...

[13:45]

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

We can get back to you about it. Yes. Okay, so we will get back to you on that question later.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, because I am ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes. Now, just a point about the savings. We note that the States of Jersey Police are due to make savings of £187,000 in 2026, so how will the savings be made?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Basically, it will be reducing F.T.E. (Full-Time Equivalent) by 2.7 police staff. It is important to note that although 344 F.T.E.s are identified within S.O.J.P. Budget, the actual number of staff is around 330, of which we are holding vacancies to remain affordable. I do not know if you have anything that you want to add on that, Robin.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

No, you are absolutely accurate, Minister. 2.7 posts will accommodate the £187,000 savings required for 2026. Those 2.7 posts are already vacant posts. That, of course, does drive a pressure. Our police staff are an invaluable part of our service and what we do not want necessarily is using police officers to do a number of the other functions so that is not without its challenges, but that will not mean that people are being made redundant. It is because they are vacant posts and they are already programmed in for 2026 to deliver the £187,000 savings.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

All right. Thank you for that.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think we have worked it out. We think probably what it is, is pay awards. What will have happened for all States budgets, of course, they will have gone up by the pay increases so that is why budgets will have shown from the previous thing to going up to this. That is why when you said about the £900,000, I was confused, but we think it is the pay awards.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Pay awards because there is a large number of staff. It is a large figure.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, page 113 of the budget.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, so that is the difference between what it is and what our savings are et cetera, et cetera.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I was getting quite euphoric at one stage when you mentioned that.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I was getting quite excited because I was thinking that I had more money.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

How could I have possibly missed £900,000?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, I do not think even I could do that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Now, I have a few questions about the full-time roles in the police but from what we have just discussed, that would probably affect the things I was going to ask. For example, I was going to ask whether the number of front line police officers was sufficient for Jersey's population? The ratio reported in the 2024 Annual Report was 1.9 per 1,000 population, which is lower than comparable jurisdictions which are over 2 generally, but with what you have just described as the extra police officers coming in, how does that affect the numbers?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I can answer that. Thank you, Minister. Certainly, the ratio per 100,000, we have shown that there are fewer police officers when compared to other C.D.s (Crown Dependencies). One of the challenges we have with this is often we find ourselves comparing apples with pears. The number of police officers is a common currency and a currency that is, of course, very important to Government and more important to Islanders. They want to know the number of police officers but also part of that equation is the number of police staff. When we compare ourselves with other C.D.s, which inevitably is best placed to make those comparisons and indeed we also use Gibraltar as well, there is a different ratio in terms of the number of police officers against the number of police staff. I take the view, for example, that I do not need police officers in my Digital Forensics Unit; what I need is technicians, so you do not need to carry a warrant card. What is very important, and we have seen this in our recent history, is getting that balance right because we have seen that our police officers in Jersey, they double, treble and quadruple hat. They do not just have one job and nor can they have one given the complexities of some of the things we have had to deal with over the last 5 or 6 years or so. That is accurate that we have fewer police officers per 100,000 population but it is only a partial because it does not include police staff. As I have often said in these meetings and elsewhere, as Police Chief, would I like to have more police officers? Of course, I would because there are some challenges out there. I think we are at a manageable number but, as the Minister has alluded to and as is referenced in the budget, we are seeing increases in demand, particularly regarding violence against women and girls. Again, as the Minister has mentioned, as soon as we bring in new laws, not only would we want a diversity impact assessment, we should have an organisation impact assessment as to who will investigate those laws and how they will then go through the whole of the judicial process, including at the very end of this maybe even vacancies, or rather occupancy levels, in prison throughout the whole judicial process. We are now

at a number of just over 200. The 10 will help enormously but I will always be striving to get more and as you will have seen in the budget, there is a line in the budget around digital forensics which is a huge growth area. I mean how we investigate these things and how we investigate rape and serious sexual offence is where we have seen over the last 3 years a 27 per cent increase.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. I do not know if you can tell us what you would expect the numbers of police officers and support staff to be next year or send it to us in writing afterwards.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

I can give you an accurate figure in writing and the work is underway to provide the Minister with what our expected or anticipated numbers are going into 2027 because as you will have seen referenced in the budget, there was a specific reference to V.A.W.G. and digital forensics. The work which is now underway is beginning to better anticipate what future demand is going to be. One thing I can be absolutely certain of, that demand will increase; it will not go down.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes. I was going to ask you some questions about digital forensics. Do you think it is sufficiently funded or needs more?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

The simple answer to that, Deputy, is no. We are in no different position to ... and I visited the Chief in Guernsey yesterday. Our Digital Forensics Unit or High-Tech Crime Unit, as it gets often described, is under enormous pressure, both in terms of kit and in terms of people and in terms of software. None of this gets cheaper but I was at National Police Chiefs' Council a while ago and there was a suggestion that 92 per cent of all investigations involve one of those so they have overtaken fingerprints, D.N.A. (deoxyribonucleic acid) and we need to invest in this. We have got investment for 2026, but we will need to have a long, hard look about where it takes us. The U.K. forces are also struggling with trying to just keep up with technology. Ten years ago, you could have a 32 gigabyte and now I am told these are going to be 2 terabytes with thousands and thousands of images. How do you get through those thousands and thousands of images? It is massively a growth area. The final point on it about digital forensics is this: it is good for the delivery of swift justice so if technicians are able to examine information on telephones quickly, that can often generate a quicker judicial process. It can often generate a quicker guilty plea which is good for everybody along the line. In 2026, I would be keen, as referenced in the budget, to explore how we can increase investment into the Digital Forensics Unit.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, and it looks really interesting. Certainly, the phones add another world to everything, do they not? My last question about the policing is: will this budget have any impact on the Community Policing Team?

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

The answer is yes. We are looking at how we may need to move resource within States of Jersey Police to where we have got greater demand. Our Public Protection Unit, given the references I have already made and the 27 per cent increase in V.A.W.G.-related crime or incidents, increases in the number of allegations of rape and serious sexual offences, 40 per cent of those are historic, so over a year. What I think that tells us is the success of highlighting violence against women and girls and working with other agencies and other charities. It is undoubtedly the case that more and more people want to come forward given their confidence in the system but with that, as the Minister has already alluded to, comes demand and cost and effort and investigation. It can take up to a year and sometimes 2 years from the original complaint to then be in this building with an enormous amount of work that goes into it, including digital forensics. There is inevitability that in 2026 we will look to move resources, some of which could include our Community Policing Team and indeed other units, to where we have places of greater demand while recognising in 2027 there is maybe the opportunity to get additional funding. It could be a relatively short-term one-year effect, but I have to do something to deal with that demand.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, to balance things out so there could be a reduction in the Community Policing Team.

Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police:

Could be potentially, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. All right. Thank you.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I just had some questions around the C.O.C.F. (Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund) because the budget does not detail any balance transfers from the C.O.C.F. to the Consolidated Fund but it is clear in the budget that the C.O.C.F. is going to be the source of funding for Dewberry House. We just wanted to clarify whether the C.O.C.F. is still going to be the extra funding for Dewberry House?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

That is as we understand it, yes.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, that is £1.7 million.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

When will there be a balance transfer?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

It would be done at the point where the fact that £1.7 million is the right amount is confirmed. You will have seen that we have gone out for tender on the project. We will not know how much we need until we have got the tenders back.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Do you know how much is in the C.O.C.F. at the moment?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

No.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

The Treasury officers manage it without us having visibility of what the fund balance is.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you. During the last budget, we learned that the major project for building a new Ambulance, Fire and Rescue Headquarters was likely to be changed to provide for separate headquarter facilities for each service. In this budget, it has been changed to Fire and Rescue Headquarters, but the total approved budget remains the same. Can you just tell us really what the updated plan is for those facilities?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Well, Fire and Rescue at the moment, as we have said, is going to be independent and so is the Ambulance, whereas they were going to both be on the same site. They are going to be separate projects. This will be captured within an overarching programme ensuring cohesion across Government so we will be looking at across different areas as to where those are likely to be. The

Programme Team for it will consist of relevant officers from C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills), J.H.A., J.P.H. (Jersey Property Holdings) and the new Hospital Facilities Programme within H.C.J. (Health and Care Jersey) and with an under umbrella of investing in the Jersey Programme so they have basically all split out at the moment.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

All of this will move into the aspirational Investing in Jersey Programme.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

It will be covered as part of the Investing in Jersey Programme, yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Will the budget that was allocated for all of this move into the Investing in Jersey Fund?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

I do not know yet because I do not know exactly how it will be treated in relation to that, but it is in the scope of the discovery phase of Investing in Jersey. There has been a meeting about it today.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That is why the budget remains the same even though the 2 have been separated totally.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, and we have got a revised feasibility study which has a new cost in it for separate Fire and Rescue and Ambulance facilities but it has not yet been presented to the relevant Ministers and so it was not done in time for update in this budget. It is known that the 2 separate costs will be more than £24 million inevitably and that £24m is a 2020 figure so the effect of inflation, even if we were progressing on that basis, would be significant.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Likely to be more. Okay. £53,000 budgeted then for 2026 for Fire and Rescue. What is the plan for the funding? Is that part of the feasibility?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, and have you got a timescale?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

It is currently chalked up for the substantive investment not to start until 2029, which is where you see the £1 million kicking in then and if you carried on your columns, the £24m would be spread out across the subsequent years but, as we know, it will not be £24m.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

As things stand in the wider Capital Plan and therefore the Investing in Jersey Plan, the project is due to start substantively in 2029.

[14:00]

Deputy H.M. Miles:

When you say: “start substantively”, that is when the building will start?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

That would be when you would start the planning process.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Planning, so it will not start building until realistically 2030.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Physically start probably in 2030, yes.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I think what happens with all capital programmes, what happened was that we seemed to have a lot of capital programmes, and we did not seem to be delivering any or none. What was decided was that the ones that were decided or known as to what was going to happen with them and were properly developed were given the funding but of course ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Which arguably the joint Fire and Ambulance Service was.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Except for the fact of the element of the school on that site as well and that is where that all went into a bit of a convoluted area of ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Dare I mention the Army and Sea Cadet Budget has reduced from £4.9 million to £1.6 million?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

It has.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Can you give us an update on that project?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, so that reflects a slight change in approach in conjunction with the cadet leaders and the relevant Ministers where we will be looking to develop something on an already existing site, so perhaps a school. Those discussions are still underway. We are obviously still committed to delivering on the 2019 or 2020 proposition that then Constable Norman brought that they would have a permanent base of operations, which is the phrasing in the proposition, and are confident that one of a number of opportunities that we are currently scoping will deliver for the reduced amount of money, but we are not quite there yet.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Again, when will it be open and operational?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

The money for that is showing next year. That would be a bit quick to spend all of the money, but we are hoping that with some feasibility work on a particular option about to kick off, we could have progress certainly by the middle of next year, if not towards the end.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Keep the panel posted on that.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, and when we have got a solution, we are very happy to come back and present it properly.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. Total expenditure for Dewberry House, as we know, has increased so it has now exceeded the £5 million threshold that designates it as a major project. Have there had to be any additional governance procedures put in place retrospectively as a result of that development surpassing the threshold?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

It is a Robin accountable officer project, but we are both working on it together in some ways. There have not yet been. My understanding is that once the tenders are returned, that would be the go decision for a major project essentially.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

The catalyst for that. Okay. Thank you. £660,000 budgeted in 2026 for the Prison Phase 8 works. Can you just briefly describe what that is going to fund?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, there is a very slight phasing challenge in the budget in that that is not the delivery of what we would know as Phase 8. What it is, is the remainder of some money for what was Phase 6b, which was the demolition of the old gatehouse which is now complete. It all looks very neat and tidy up there at least. Phase 8 in fact would be the new education multipurpose facility, so it is slightly mislabelled in the budget. We do still want that £660,000 though and what that is being used for is meeting an urgent need to replace 2 boilers in the K Wing and L Wing that are in desperate need of replacement. That is the capital investment for next year for the prison.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Sorry, is the suggestion that 2 boilers are going to cost £660,000?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Such is the state of the world.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

What are they fuelled by?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

There is quite a lot of cost of removing the current boilers included in that as well as replacing the old ones with new ones. Happy to brief you on it in more detail. I do not have the detail in front of

me. I suppose while we are on the prison, if I may, the next phases, I really do want to change the phase numbers because we all cannot keep track of them ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes, nobody can remember them.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

... which have been answered in that recent written question, are Phases 7, 8, 9 and 10. Phase 7 is Care and Separation Unit, 8 is new education and workshops, 9 is new healthcare and 10 is replacement security fencing. All of that does not yet show in the capital budget because it would be future years, probably post 2029, so it just did not feature in the 4 years of this budget, but it is very much on the agenda. It is included in the Investing in Jersey scoping work, and I do not think this Minister or any future Minister is going to let their colleagues forget that we need to do that work. It will remain visible; it just does not show financially.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. Moving from Prison to Fire and Rescue workforce, the budget proposes investment over the next 4 years to strengthen capacity and resilience, looking for £413,000 in 2026 but rising to £1.3 million for the following 3 years of the budget. Can you just tell us how the funding will be utilised in 2026 and what it increases from 2027 onwards?

Chief Fire Officer, States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service:

Would you like me to do that?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, thank you.

Chief Fire Officer, States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service:

Yes, sure. The £413,000 is in the funded option. It is probably worth remembering as well, just as a headline, that the Emergency Planning Unit is part of the States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Services, one of the 9 business units in the S.J.F.R.S. (States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service) and it does not do emergency planning for the States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service. It reaches outwards and it works across the whole Jersey Resilience Forum supporting and enabling, so it does not do anything for Fire and Rescue response. That is the job of the planners in Fire and Rescue. £204,000 goes towards the emergency planning function and what that does is it keeps it at 4.5 F.T.E. As a team, they deliver an awful lot of work for 4½ people and like most things in Jersey, they work at a local resilience level, but they also do national resilience things. They are very busy so all it really is doing is keeping the team as it is now. It has got interim funding from

major incident funding and things like that. Various major incidents have happened over the last few years, and it is about keeping the team that size. The rest of it then, as we talked about just earlier on, there is a post going into the Fire and Rescue Service. The intention at the moment is that that is going to be an organisational learning and assurance post. At the moment, the States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service has 3 non-firefighter jobs in it. This would take it to 4. Obviously, the business case requested more in all regards, but this is what the Government are proposing at this stage. Then after that there is specialist software. For example, if I give you one example, there are 2 things that it is going to hopefully help pay for. The first is mobile data system and technology so that is the ability to make sure that firefighters have safety critical information that they need on their appliances available to them when they are responding to incidents. They deal with a vast array of different things. There are so many specialisms that are not specialist in Jersey; they are crucial. Just like Robin says, there are 4, 5 - and more - hats worn and so it is really vital that we make sure that we provide them with as much information as we can. That has been recommended a number of times. It sits in Grenfell recommendation from 2019 that mobile data systems should be upgraded. We just need a mobile data system and so we are working on that. The other one is a community fire risk management information system to manage our protection enforcement work that we do and manage the caseload that goes through that small team there. The amount of money does not go as far as to pay the licences across those 2 things. We are going to need to make some software and licence-based decisions next year so what we cut back on in order to deliver those 2 things. Those 2 things are priorities. Then after that, it is about equipment, training and some firefighters in 2027, so some of it happens in 2026. You will know in 2022 the World Health Organisation confirmed firefighting as an occupation which is carcinogenic to humans. It is a cancer-causing occupation and that is because of the very modern range of things that get liberated in fires these days. The amount of contaminant that comes from fires is absolutely enormous so it is really critical that we do as much as we can, obviously, to protect our people and central to that is P.P.E. (personal protective equipment). We hear a lot about P.P.E. and P.P.E. is a topic that got talked about an awful lot during the pandemic, did it not? P.P.E. in the Fire and Rescue Service is everything that they wear whatever they are doing, but particularly in firefighting and firefighting in structures. It is extremely expensive. It is absolutely vital, and you need more than one piece of kit per person because, of course, as soon as it is contaminated, it needs to go through a decontamination process. The firefighter needs to be decontaminated as well and then they need to go about their business and respond to the next fire and potentially get contaminated again. We are not in that situation at the moment; we do not have enough P.P.E. now to provide 2 sets of P.P.E. that fit properly for all our firefighters. We need to get into that sort of shape and that is what this is an attempt at starting to do and then there are other bits about equipment as well.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Right. Thank you. That is understood.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right, so just to ask a few questions, you have mentioned the Emergency Services Control Centre. Minister, can you describe what changes the revenue expenditure growth funding for the Emergency Services Control Centre will make to operational practice? How will this affect how it works?

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs:

I will ask Paul to do this because I think he has got probably a far better knowledge than I have.

Chief Fire Officer, States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service:

Is it across both aspects that you want me to talk to?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Shall I start and then you can perhaps come in?

Chief Fire Officer, States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service:

Yes, sure.

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

The key thing about the investment in the Emergency Services Control Centre or E.S.C.C. is initially to increase the resourcing of controllers, so there are 4 new posts for controllers. Of course, in reality, that is only one person at a time because there are 4 shifts that cover 24/7 365 days a year, as ever in the shift-based services. There is also one extra management post in there and what that is intended to do is to give us an increase in resourcing next year while we determine what the future model for the E.S.C.C. should in fact be. There has been so much change in the space around both Ambulance and Fire and Rescue control standards and requirements and the need for professionalism in those functions that we have recognised that we need those functions to be more specialist. That may lead to a case for separation. That was set out in the business case that you have seen that that was an option. It was not the option that was pursued for next year but that buys us a bit of time really to do that analysis in more detail. There are obviously pros and cons. If you keep the team together, you have got one team of controllers that look more efficient on the face of it because they are together answering the volume of calls. If you split them, you would have to have 2 teams that cover 24/7 but there could be really significant effectiveness reasons to do that so 2026 will be a bit of an interim year. We have changed the management in there already and, in fact, we have made a decision to recruit those controllers early so if the investment does not go through in the Government Plan, we will cover that as a pressure because we saw it as so important. The other thing we will be doing is they have been sitting slightly below already funded complement. There should be 4 team leaders. In fact, they have been sitting at 3, so we are already recruiting

the fourth. They have been sitting at one team coach, and they should be at 2, so already recruiting the second. By the beginning of the year, they will be at full complement which will give assurance to the Minister that operationally it is fully resourced and working well while there is a small amount of change resource working with the heads of service and their teams on what should the future be. It is about stabilising, increasing specialisation and then deciding whether we should separate.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Yes. Did you want to add anything to it?

Chief Fire Officer, States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service:

Yes, I think that is it. Back several years ago now - quite a number of years ago now - under my legal duties, I committed the organisation to something called fire standards, so there is a Fire Standards Board, and it sets out minimum requirements for being a competent fire and rescue service, if you like. There are loads of things that come off the back of that, some of which have been there for a very long time, some of which are relatively novel and so my mission really is to make sure that we are compliant with those fire standards, not because we have to, but because that is the right thing to do. It means that we are assured that we are doing all of the things that we need to do in all of the right ways. From my perspective - and Kate and I have talked about this a lot of times, as you can imagine - that future separation is not the goal; meeting the fire standards is the goal. If separation is the only way we can do that, then that is where that comes into frame, if you like, so that is from my perspective.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so it will be matter of making sure everything is looked after during these processes where there is an analysis to see what will work best. How will that analysis be done and what sort of metrics will be used? Do you know at the moment?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

I think Paul set the framework for it really. It has got to be measured against what will give us the best chance of achieving the professional standards that we need to achieve in terms of the Minister's - and in relation to Fire and Rescue Paul's - statutory duty, and at the moment in the current construct of what meets the Minister for Health and Social Services' needs and what is most efficient and effective from a financial point of view. I would think we would logically be coming to invite ourselves to give you a private briefing on this within the next 2 to 3 months to talk you through it in more detail, if you would be happy to do so.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, that would be great. We have come to the end of our time, and I know we have still got quite a few questions, if we can send them to you for written answers?

Chief Officer, Justice and Home Affairs:

Yes, of course.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you very much, everyone.

[14:14]