



Environment Housing and Infrastructure Panel

Animal Welfare and Control Review

Witness: States of Jersey Police and Comité des Chef de Police

Wednesday, 29th January 2026

Panel:

Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity (Chair)

Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement

Connétable D. Johnson of St. Mary

Deputy D.J. Warr of St. Helier South

Witnesses:

Chief Inspector Craig Jackson, States of Jersey Police

Centenier Camara, Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police

Centenier Bougeard, Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police

[16:13]

Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity (Chair):

Welcome to this public hearing of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel. Today is 29th January 2026, and today's hearing forms part of the panel's ongoing review of the animal welfare and control. The purpose of this session is to examine how Jersey's statutory framework governing animal welfare, behaviour and control functions and practice, and to understand how the relevant laws are being implemented and enforced on the ground. In particular, we will be focussing on enforcement arrangements under the Dogs Law 1961, both the current and proposed Animal Welfare Law and the Policing of Beaches, Parks and Roads Regulations. This hearing will help the panel build a clearer picture of how the framework operates in practice, the

challenges faced by those enforcing it, and whether improvements may be needed to support consistent and effective enforcement across the Island. I would like to draw attention to the following, that the hearing will be filmed and streamed live, and the recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website.

[16:15]

We start with introductions, my name is Deputy Hilary Jeune, I am the Chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:

I am Deputy Alex Curtis, a panel member.

Deputy D.J. Warr of St. Helier South:

I am Deputy David Warr, panel member.

Connétable D. Johnson of St. Mary:

Constable David Johnson, panel member.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Joao Camara, Chef de Police, Parish of St. Peter, and Chairman of the Comité des Chefs.

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

Hi, good afternoon, Craig Jackson, Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police.

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Good afternoon, Michel Bougeard, I am Chef de Police of St Brelade, and also Vice-Chair of the Comité des Chefs.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you, and many of the questions we have today, I know we can address both roles in the sense because we have both roles here today, so thank you very much for coming. So C.I. (Chief Inspector) and Chairmen, in relation to the control of animals in public spaces, please can you briefly set out your respective statutory roles in enforcing the Dogs Law and the Policing of Beaches, Parks, and Roads Regulations? Who would like to start?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Obviously beaches, I will start off with that, because there are, as you know, between certain times that members of the public who do have dogs are allowed to walk their dogs on the beach without a lead. The parks, again, they have to be on the lead, and the main issues we have there is obviously dog fouling, and the others on roads, again, it is the same as parks, on the lead, and they do not necessarily have to be on the lead as long as they are not out of control.

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

Thank you, Chair. So I think the main responsibility and statutory responsibility of the States Jersey Police is to investigate crime, and as we know from the beginning of 2025, dogs that are dangerously out of control effectively is a criminal offence. Fortunately, the numbers of dogs that are dangerously out of control are low. Approximately, we had about, last year, 124 incidents relating to dogs that are dangerously out of control, and effectively 44 of those became a criminal investigation. That is really our statutory responsibility to investigate that criminal activity.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Okay, so because of the Policing of Beaches, Parks and Roads Regulations, there is not so much that criminal aspect within that, that does not necessarily fall under what you were saying about that involving crime.

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

Correct. We still have an investigatory power if it is reported to the States Jersey Police, but generally those incidents under the roads, parks and beaches, I think are generally reported at first port of call to the parish, to the Centeniers or the Chefs of that parish, and they effectively deal with those incidents effectively and efficiently.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

And now, of course, this review is not only looking at that, but also the new Animal Welfare Law, the draft that is there. We talked with the Minister and the States Vet this morning about a number of offences that is put under the draft, and that offences have become stronger than that is currently. So could you, again, kind of briefly set out your respective statutory roles in this draft Animal Welfare Law that you see that is the change, maybe, from the current law, and where you see your roles in this potential draft Law?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

As Chief Inspector Jackson stated, we do get a lot of calls in relation to dogs and livestock. When it comes to welfare, we normally send it to the States Vet, because unless it is something quite obvious, we are not really conscious of what the States Vet would decide is good or bad husbandry. So, again, when it comes to offences, again, Chief Inspector Jackson is correct, we get the call, but

as we are Honorary Police, we are not an investigative service. So we would then forward on any complaints or get the members of the public to contact States of Jersey Police so an interview can be done at the place.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you.

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

Thank you, Chair. So, fortunately, the numbers currently are relatively low with regards to animal welfare, and they are vast ranging, you know, the classification of animal welfare could be a loose horse, loose cattle. Like I say, we had just shy of 300 animal welfare logs, for incidents last year, and effectively 46 per cent of those related to dogs that are dangerously out of control. So when you remove that criminal sort of investigation effort, the numbers are low. However, as we have alluded in the submission, it is not necessarily the demand on our services, the capability and capacity with other laws and regulation changes that is causing an increased demand on the States of Jersey Police and resourcing. But saying that, the change in the welfare animal legislation, we think will be low impact and low demand.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

That is it and I suppose that leads on to my next question about your general views of the animal welfare and control in Jersey. You are saying that you feel that there will still be a low impact. Do you want to add anything before we move on in that aspect on your overall looking at, not only the current laws around control especially and the ones that we have talked about already, but also the new Animal Welfare Law and if there is anything extra to put in apart from your submission?

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

Thank you, Chair. I think the main important priority is the increased powers for inspectors with regard to animal inspectors, which gives them the increased power for potentially dogs in hot cars, albeit low demand in the summer. Fortunately, for the police service, it would be an extra pressure, but it gives them the extra role and responsibility. So, as I have already alluded to in the submission, I think it is important for the public to know the right agency to call at the right time, that the States of Jersey Police and the Honorary Police may not be the right agency to call for animal welfare. It could be the J.S.P.C.A. (Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) or the States Vet. So I think there does need to be clear, concise guidance for the members of public should this go ahead so that they are aware who to call at the first port of call.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Just a quick question. A trend. We were sort of told this morning there are over 10,000 dog owners in the Island. Are you seeing a trend, an increasing trend over the last, say, 3 years because of greater dog ownership? I do not know who would like to answer that question.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

The only thing I would say is dog ownership and control of dogs is not really the remit of the Honorary Police. There is obviously Poodle, which is the system that the parishes use to note who the registered keepers are. The only time we would get involved with Poodle is if, as Chief Inspector Jackson said, if a dog was potentially out of control, then we would have the powers to then look into Poodle. But apart from that, as I say, it is not the remit of the Honorary Police to look into owners of dogs.

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

I think you are right, Deputy, there has been seen a natural steady increase in dog-related incidents. I think probably, interesting to say, since COVID, since the lockdown effect here. Interestingly enough, last year was the highest demand with regards to 124 incidents, which jumped up about 20 incidents from the previous year, with regards to members of the public reporting dog incidents. But like I said, about a third of those convert into a criminal investigation and then approximately a third of that third are generally prosecuted, whether it is by a Parish Hall Inquiry or the Magistrates Court, and they can obviously invoke some powers of extra control measures with regards to that dog.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

To clarify on the numbers you gave earlier, are those the incidents which come to your attention as States police officer? I am just wondering, do they therefore include matters which dealt with at parish level? Probably not.

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

No, I think you are correct, Constable. It is with regards to the numbers that come through a report incident through the emergency service combined control room. If we allocate an Honorary officer who is out on patrol, they would be incorporated in those numbers, but a direct contact to the centre near or the parish may not be incorporated in those numbers.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

So leading on from that, is there a collation of parish incidents so we know the full picture?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

No. I mean, we did get a lot of calls in relation to neighbours calling about a dog continually barking being left in the house, but that is not an offence. So as such, there is no real need to take note of it unless it is a continuous problem.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

I do appreciate that. But if he goes to a Parish Hall Inquiry, for instance, is there a collation of incidents which go to Parish Hall Inquiry in each parish so you have an overall total?

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

If it goes to a Parish Hall Inquiry, it would have gone first of all through C.J.D. (Criminal Justice Department), which is the states Police, so they will have a log of it.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

If they have come to a Parish Hall Inquiry, then as Centenier Bougeard said, the paperwork comes to us via C.J.D. and then once the Parish Hall Inquiry is concluded, we then send it back to C.J.D. and they collate all the evidence and all the numbers.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

So just to clarify, you do not see a gap in the reporting to ensure that we are collecting that right data. We know that what you are saying is the kind of collective picture of what is happening, so we know, kind of, we can really see whether the laws are the right laws kind of thing.

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

I think we have to just, Chair, if I may sort of section out reporting versus prosecution. So any incidents that come through the combined control room will be logged under the States of Jersey Police data. If an individual directly calls a Centenier in a parish, they may be out of that data. But as Centenier Camara alluded to, any prosecutions will come to the central repository of the Criminal Justice Department and then necessary people go out for the prosecution. We have got the central repository for convictions or any no further actions as well. So I am comfortable in the prosecutions. We will have an aligned approach. But the incidents, there might be a gap in the data reporting.

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I think certainly for my parish, anything that would come via a Centenier, we do log it anyway. But if it is a very minor thing like a horse loose or something like that, that would not be taken up by the States Police. We deal with it ourselves. Dogs left in cars. Sometimes on a sunny day, sometimes we would deal with it without mentioning it. But otherwise, if it is anything of any seriousness, we would log it with the States Police.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

But of course, we have got the extra now of the new draft animal welfare, which kind of puts more meat into those areas that you have talked about, where it becomes something that is more than maybe in the past it was seen as, as important extra, it is, you know, there are offences around those areas now that you have mentioned. So it was just trying to just to see if those reporting how it all centralises and whether it flows through to that prosecution.

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I think realistically, though, things like animals loose and the like, if it is a one off, it probably does not get passed on. But when a farmer or something is doing it on a regular basis, yes, it does need to be addressed.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you. You talked to mainly that the incidences that you see, 46 per cent is really dog related. What is the other kind of common animal-related incidences? Is it mainly straying of livestock is kind of like the next one?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

It is. I mean, as you are aware, farmers with livestock will not necessarily have that livestock in their parish or in their fields. Because farmers do lease out their fields to other farmers. So in our case, it will be loose horses, loose cows. They are not a major inconvenience, but obviously there is potential danger to the public if a car hits the cow. But I would say one thing that farmers are very, very good, they normally come out almost immediately and corral their livestock back into the fields.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

We were talking this morning with the States Vet about in the draft Law about the different kinds of inspectors. You have got the veterinary inspectors, but you have also got inspectors, which involves yourselves. How is the kind of the incidences where they overlap? Do you see that working well at the moment where maybe you will attend something and then we will phone the States Vet to take over or the other way around? Is that done in a natural fashion already or do you see that being increased maybe in working together?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I would say in 10 years, 11 years I have been an Honorary, I do not think I have had occasion to call the States Vet once. What I have found is normally a lot of people in the parish who are farmers or whatever know if they have a worry about an animal that does not belong to them, they normally call the States Vet direct. So we hardly ever get called ourselves because they know which agency to call.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Were there any instances where you felt that you could not act due to the limitations of powers of jurisdiction in the kind of laws that we have been talking about? Is there anywhere you felt that you could not act?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

To my knowledge, no.

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

No, I do not think there is any gaps in the current legislation. Just previously going back, Chair, if I may, I think it is important that the police, let us say as an investigative body, may not necessarily be the right body to investigate animal welfare incidents. I think with the new powers and legislations that States Vets and inspectors there may need to take on the investigation with advice. Like I said, I think it works really well in partnership. We communicate with the States Vets on numerous occasions. They are the professionals with regard to animal welfare, and we will take advice and guidance on them. Certainly if it is a different sort of animal welfare case.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you. I think that is that connection. As the laws change and adapt, that working together in partnership is something key. Definitely the States Vet mentioned that this morning.

[16:30]

What role does public education and awareness play in preventing these animal control concerns or behavioural offences and do you believe that we would need more public education and communication?

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

I think this is key because we do get a wide and varied number of incidents, weird and wonderful incidents, called into the combined control room. It does not necessarily require a police deployment, but it may require another agency being deployed. Just an incident, we may have a deceased animal on the beach, et cetera. No role for the police investigation there. But however, it may be J.S.P.C.A. or the States Vet, et cetera, to go on to ascertain the cause of death. So I think it is key for education for the public to know who the right agency is to call, because it does put an increased demand on the States of Jersey Police, even taking that call and signposting it to the right agency. So I think there will need to be some education and clarity for the public.

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I think the other side of that is that the agencies should be available, not Monday to Friday, 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., they should be contactable at all times.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Do you feel that they are at the moment?

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I think most of the agencies that I have come across, it is not States agencies, should we say, it is not necessarily States Vets or anything like that, because I cannot say I have had the occasion to call them. But I think the problem that you have got is like Environmental Health, for instance, people have issues with parties and the like. Environmental Health Department works 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., Monday to Friday. So our powers are pretty limited as to what we can do without Environmental Health. It is just my concern would be that we would be in the same boat again.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

It is a good point and something that we have talked as a panel about, this public education and awareness, and especially when we have been looking in the Policing of Parks and Beaches Regulations, that whether you believe that, not only that, but that signage could be improved or there is enough signage but people just do not read the signage. Do you feel that that would help people to comply with what is currently in the law so it would not end up they make offences where they did not know that they were?

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I think signage could definitely be improved. I think that there should also be consideration given on the parks, because some parks you can have a dog off its lead and others you have got to have it on a lead. A classic example is the railway walk. You do not need to have a dog on a lead and yet the sports centre, you do. You cannot be policing too much because if you see somebody's dog on the sports centre, 9 times out of 10 they will say: "Sorry, we were on the railway walk and he ran off". So I think that needs to be focused on a little bit better than that.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you. I suppose my last question is, and we have talked a little bit about it already, but do you believe there is clear protocol who takes the lead in enforcement when those reports are received? So I know, Chief Inspector, you talked about that often it comes into the control room. But of course, if we increase public awareness and people are more aware, do we feel that there is that who knows who should take the lead?

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

I do not think it is that clear and concise. I think that there does need to be some protocols and clear and concise messaging for the public. That said, we cannot put a memorandum of understanding in for everything. It is the art of communication and talking to key partners. If we get a control room call, we will allocate it to the right agency to deal with, it is about talking. As the Centeniers have alluded to, that agency may not be on 24-7 call out and we will have to deal with the immediacy and making sure that the welfare of the animal and safeguards are in place and then deal with the right agency when they are next on duty. But I do think there does need to be clear protocols and guidelines on who to call. I think the default setting, public may think it is the police. But as I have already alluded to, the police are not necessarily the right agency and the changes in regulations across the Island have increased demand on the services.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Taking that to the next step, is it clear the protocols on who is the lead organisations in the different aspects of the regulation? Once it has been reported, do you feel that the protocols are there, the organisations and different elements of the institutions feel that they are taking that responsibility?

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

Chair, I do not think they are. I think there would be a natural expectation that the police, and when I say police, across the board with Honoraries as well, to deal with the investigation. That is probably one of the risks with the change in the law, that police with capacity and demand may not have the capacity to deal with those or will not have the capacity and other agencies will have to step into that space. I do not think the investigation should naturally fall to police to investigate.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I agree with that. I would say that if there is an instance of an animal, the first point of call from a parishioner would be to call the Honorary Police. It is just a standard thing. And as Chief Inspector Jackson said, we might not necessarily be the right person, but we are more than happy to pass it on to J.S.P.C.A. or whoever. But invariably we are the first point of call.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Yes, of course. Do you feel that at the moment, when you are passing it on, you feel that the people you are passing it on, the organisation you are passing it on to, understands their responsibilities within that?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Absolutely.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Okay, thank you very much. Deputy Curtis.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Okay, just a couple of questions now on the clarity of the legislation and regulations that yourself and officers follow. As on enforcement bodies for the Dogs Law, the Policing of Beaches, the Parks and Roads Regulations, and the last and now new Animal Welfare Laws, how clear is the breadth of legislation for yourselves and officers in interpreting kind of what you are responsible for and then applying it in practice? Maybe Chair first and then Chief Inspector.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I still think there is work to be done. I think it is a good starting point. But I think the definition of who is in charge or not does need to be, people are not cognisant complete of who is the lead, I do not think. It just needs a little bit of tweaking.

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

I think the legislation is there, Deputy, and I think it is well regulated, as you have already called out there in the question. We have got Roads, Parks and Beaches, the animal welfare legislation, the Dogs Law as well. So encompassing all the laws together, I think we have a wide-ranging number of incidents and legislation, and depending on where they happen in the incidents, we will pick out which piece of legislation best fits that incident to be investigated. So I think the legislation is there. But again, as the Chair alluded to, it depends on who is the right agency or the lead agency to pick that investigation up. Fortunately, as I have already said, the number of incidents within the Island are relatively low. I think the public do a very good job in looking after their animals. When an incident does occur, the agencies get together in a partnership, a collaborative approach to deal with that incident.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Ownership, whether organisational, which even group of police officers kind of might then triage it is part of it. But are there any other sections, because, as you say, it is well regulated in the sense that there is a lot of regulation and a lot of law, but is it kind of clear for those who execute against it, not just who owns it, but then how to follow it, I guess? Or do you think they are all pretty well bedded in, the previous laws, and they are all pretty well understood?

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

I think they are very well bedded in. Certainly, from the States of Jersey Police perspective, any new law legislation that comes through, it is a role or responsibility for our Learning and Development Department to embed that organisationally with the officers, certainly the frontline response officers, to make sure (1) they are aware of the change in legislation, and (2) how to deal with it. Investigations generally follow the same process. You collate the evidence, see what evidence you have got, and you see if you have got to the evidential threshold for prosecution. But understanding the new legislation, that is the role and responsibility of our Learning and Development Department.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

One area the Vice-Chair of the Comité just mentioned that is somewhat unclear is, or perhaps is something struggling to implement, is that of kind of understanding designation of parks under the policing of parks legislation. To what extent do you see that confusion play out genuinely with members of the public, and how does that affect your ability to then enforce the various parts of legislation around zoning? You gave the example of the railway walk and Le Quennevais.

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I think in most cases, I think it is just words of advice that you have to give people. We are not talking about major incidents usually on dogs being in the wrong place. So you can give words of advice and just leave it at that. I do tend to take details of the people and have it noted so that they, if they do get words of advice every week, for instance, it would be clear. But other than that, I do not think it is too major.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Is it clear to be able to communicate which parks have what, you know, under the law if somebody's walking without a dog in Le Quennevais, is it clear that you can point them to basically educate them from your side before it escalates?

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I think signage throughout the Island is very poor. I say it is poor. We have signs. However, usually if you have a sign which says no dogs allowed, it is also included among another 15 different things that are not allowed. So people do not see it. They do not bother reading it. The Quennevais Sports Centre, to their credit, recently put in a load of signs up there, very big ones, saying no dogs unless on leads. I have noticed that has had a bit of an impact.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Can I just maybe come back to the point you were talking about, about the training and needing to embed that? I was just wondering from an Honorary perspective, do you do that same, do you take that as well, that you have a training to embed new law within the Honoraries as well?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Yes. So when it is implemented, the Law Officer Department send out or post it on the Government web page, and then the Secretary, Jane Bertram of the Comité des Chefs, will then send it to all the Centeniers. So we do get the laws and then hopefully then the Centeniers, it goes down, disseminate it to their officers. So yes, but in reality we do not, as was alluded to, we do not have that many. If we have 10,000 dogs, we only have 100 incidents. That is only 1 per cent. So it is a very, very low number. So we do not have that many instances, but it is disseminated from the Comité des Chefs de Police.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Is that the law itself, or does the Comité des Chefs de Police prepare any kind of guidance as to how to interpret that for those who are more at the coalface, shall I say?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Well, there is a meeting once a month for the Comité des Chefs, and we discuss any new laws that are implemented. In those meetings, it is all the different Chefs that have an input. From that, we sort of look to learn from each other, and they then, again, spread it down the line.

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

If it is something that is overly complicated, or we think it is going to be overly complicated, we would ask our States colleagues whether they could provide us with a ...

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Is that, I presume, from a learning hub side within the States of Jersey Police, you are preparing some kind of working practices codes for officers to follow on the ground. Do you ever share anything kind of procedurally on laws, or is it very much ad hoc when there is a request for clarification as to how you would implement something that you can then share the knowledge that perhaps your teams have then kind of pre-prepared?

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

I think it depends on the law and how complex the change in law is. If it is a minor amendment to a law, then that will be circulated force wide. Myself and members of the Community Policing Team meet Centeniers on a monthly basis where we discuss any operational issues, and that could be law change and adoption of law change to make sure we are consistent in the approach. So I am comfortable with any adoption in law, and certainly minor amendments with animal welfare, they will be dealt with appropriately and circulated. I think the key, like the Centeniers say, is that members

of the public are very law-abiding, and the vast majority of incidents are dealt with, with an education piece, rather than an enforcement angle.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

If we do have any questions, then refer it to the Law Officers Department, and they are very good at replying back to us and saying: "This is correct, or this is incorrect, and this is the process you should follow". So again, they are very, very helpful.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Before I go on to the question of livestock worrying, which I have a few points on, just following up on the dogs and one aspect. I am in a parish where there is a large tract of land on the north coast, good for dog walkers, and they like to set them and go free. I have had a number of complaints from people who no longer take their dogs up there because they are frightened by a posse of dogs held by a professional dog walker. Now, there is a Code of Conduct, or Code of Practice issued by the Environment Department, which you will know, which is very good, and they talk about walkers should only walk dogs they are capable of managing.

[16:45]

Walkers must not walk dogs individually as part of a group that could overpower them, a maximum of 5 dogs, and a few things like that. Now, the question I am asking really is that, on the basis that the Honorary Police want to nip problems in the bud, do the Honorary Police feel comfortable in pulling someone up for breach of a Code of Conduct, having regard to the strict provisions of the regulations, which refer only to a person assaulting behaviour, unreasonable interference, et cetera? I mean, what I am saying is, are the present rules for policing adequate for you to take up a case where professional dog walkers are not acting in accordance with the conduct?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I do not think that the Honorary Police have any issues in going up to a member of the public and having a word, and we are not talking of enforcement, we are talking of education, and as long as you go up to them in a professional manner and talk to them and tell them what the process or what the rules should be, I do not think we have had any problem in the past. Now, I am quite lucky in St. Peter, we do not have that many parks, we do not have that many people walking dogs. But when we have an occasion to speak to people, and if they do not take note of us, as Inspector Jackson said, we have a community officer who is very good at going out and talking to them. Sometimes they feel that an Honorary Officer does not have sufficient power as a States of Jersey Police Officer, and so they dismiss us, which is okay, that is just the nature of the beast. But when they get then a call from the States of Jersey Police Officer, I think that makes it a lot more gravitas.

But I do not think an officer from the Honorary Police has any issues in just talking to a member of the public and letting them know.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

So, one particular lady who has approached me, I think she has not complained enough really. I mean, if she complains to the Parish Hall, we would obviously notify the Centenier, and I would like to think that they would speak to the professional dog owner concerned, and a tap on the nose, metaphorically, might do the trick. I am just trying to get assurance that the Honoraries generally would take the code of conduct as giving them power to do that.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I would say it is 100 per cent, without a doubt. We have quite a few professional dog walkers in the parish, and we have had occasion to speak to them a few times, and they do take it on board, because they know that, if they do not, we will then go to the States of Jersey Police.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

That is what I am getting at. I am trying to solve the problem at a lower level, if I can call it that.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Absolutely, absolutely.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Thanks. On to livestock worrying and straying. First question, general one. How often do the police and Centeniers encounter instances of livestock straying, and how are these typically reported or identified?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

We do have goats, or long-haired sheep in St. Peter's Valley. We have cows all over the place. I would say recently it has been a lot quieter than it has been. Of course livestock are going to get out, that is not a problem. I do not know about the parish, but in our parish, every single officer has a list of the owners, and their phone numbers and their contacts, and in some cases they have got farm managers. So we would call the manager or the owner, and invariably they are there within half an hour. They are very, very good at picking up their livestock around the roads.

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

In fairness, even if it is not theirs, very often they will say: "Leave it with me, I will sort it for you", and they will do that.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

So if I have no idea who owns it, I just call Darren Kennow, and he knows everyone, and he will just let me know who owns the livestock in the field.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Just to clarify for the benefit of the public, if there are some movable flocks, we can call them that, so each parish will be told the flock was on its premises, will it?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Absolutely, and our parish, they send out a list of the owners with their contact details, I would say once every 3 months, and so we are all aware of numbers and contact numbers.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Okay, and area as well, because on large tracts, are they ...

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Unfortunately, because as I said earlier, because farmers do lease out their land to other farmers, we will not necessarily know who the owners are, but as I stated, if I call Darren or Blanc Pignon, they will always let us know who the owners are, so it is quite simple, quite easy to get hold of the owners. Invariably, you know the farmers yourself, so you can contact them direct.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Okay, and I think you have answered my next question.

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

It is like everything, it is not what you know, it is who you know.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Yes, I have been phoned on a Saturday morning for that reason, yes. So the typical response is, well, just go out and face the owner and get him to put it back?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Well, it depends where they are, but if they are on the road, the Honorary Officers go out, try and corral them away from the road if we can, and either with a couple of cars to prevent them going anywhere, and then call the farmer.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

I mean, again, are there cases where a Centenier Officer will feel unable to do it himself and have to call for assistance from professional people, shall I say?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I was called out once when there was a bull. That was interesting. Luckily, they came out quite quickly. I mean, it is just part and parcel of what we have to do, so I do not think it is anything, I know it is easy to say, it is water off a duck's back, but it is because it is quite an often occurrence.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Okay, and you are talking about what has happened now. Do you see any change in the new Animal Welfare Law as you see it? I am basically concerned about sort of large animals, which are too difficult for the Honoraries to handle themselves. Is the training available or required for them, or would you just not go there? Would you leave it to trained personnel?

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I think we would assess. We would probably go there and assess, and if we do not think we are capable of doing it, we would find a man who can.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Or if we had a case when 200 of Blanc Pignon's cattle just went walkabout, we would have to have every single officer in the Island to try to help. We just, as Michel says, we would assess, and then we would call out help as and when needed.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Following on from that, the law provides removal of animals to a safe place. In your experience, are you content there are enough safe places around to accommodate them, whatever it might be?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I think so. I have not had an instance where I have not been able to either call them or put the livestock in a safe place.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Livestock worrying.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Sorry, yes, I am sorry. Yes. How often do you come out, or do we know how often there are incidents covering the parishes?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I do not. The only issue with livestock worrying is the fact that you get called by either the farmer or member of the public. They do not know who owned the dog. They do not know who the owner is. By the time you get down there, they may have gone, and then how are you supposed to find out who is the owner? They may not even live in the parish. They may just be walking their dog. So it is quite hard and because you do not know if a law has been broken, you cannot look under the Poodle because of G.D.P.R. (General Data Protection Regulations). So you need to find out who the person is and that is quite hard.

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

I think also the numbers over the last 5 years are relatively low as well. I think over the last 5 years, 17 reported incidents of worrying of livestock have been reported to the Honorary Police or the States of Jersey Police. As the Centenier has alluded to, it is quite a hard investigation, but very low prosecution rates on the back of it. So again, over the 5 years, 17 is an extremely low number and we do not envisage that increasing with new legislation.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

On the evidential front, I mean is that difficult, if someone alleges that a dog attacked, it might be a one-off incident. You say the dog owner might say it was not his or someone else's. Are they difficult to substantiate?

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

They can be. It depends on the set of circumstances. The owner of the dog may be there, and then they are quite easy to deal with. Albeit it may happen overnight and some animals have been killed by a dog, and you come to the scene afterwards, so very limited evidence on the back of that. Each case is dealt with. Relatively, we are fortunate with the Island that we have law-abiding citizens and the incident numbers are extremely low.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Again on that, if it is a one-off incident, I can understand that the normal procedure might be to warning or something like that. I mean, do you take a different view if it is a repeat offence?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

It depends. I mean, if it is just worrying, obviously under the law, if a sheep has an abortion or damage to the sheep, that is a different matter. We may just come to the point of giving a word of advice. But if there is physical damage, I think that takes it over the prosecution threshold, and we would look to then send it to the court to deal with it in that instance. In relation to dogs, on the same principle, although every single dog attack where there is a member of the public injured or livestock

injured or another dog injured, should by law go to court. In reality, Centeniers will take a pragmatic view if it is just a one-off, a very slight incident, and in some cases the complainant does not want it to go to court. So we would then, on a few occasions, we would deal with it by way of words of advice at the Parish Hall. Not every case necessitates it going to court. If it is a one-off, it is a very, very low bite, and the complainant may not want to go to court.

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

But if it has been dealt with at Parish Hall, it is then registered effectively, so if it happens again the ...

The Connétable of St. Mary:

And to turn to a point already raised on the parks, and Parts 3 and 4 of the Police Regulations enable dogs to be there other than on the lead. So do you see there is a conflict there, or could that be tightened up in the interests of protecting sheep or livestock?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Every law could always be tightened up, but is it warranted, is the question? There has got to be a degree of proportionality. If it is not happening, why would you need to reinforce it? I mean, if we had loads of instances of it happening, then yes, but since the paucity of evidence to show that it is happening, I do not think we need to tighten it up.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

So any thought about amending the regulations so that all dogs were kept on a lead where there were livestock, does that sound good?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

So, if you have got a dog walker walking, let us say, for instance, in St. Peter's Valley on the cycle track, well that goes past all those longhorn sheep that are right by the Vic in the valley. So I think it is a hard one because I would say in most cases the owner of the dogs will have the dog under control.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

If he has, yes, but if he does not, if the dog goes off and chases, he obviously has not got it under control.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Sure. But as we have said, the incidence of that happening is very low, so I do not think we need to reinforce it. If it continues and there is more preponderance of it happening, then potentially yes, we can then have secondary legislation, but I think in the current situation it does not warrant it.

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

You do not want to find yourself using a sledgehammer to crack a nut.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

I am not advocating it. It is just finding where you are in the scheme of things. The final question I have got, which you already referred to, are some of the instances we do have as a result of lack of education or lack of knowledge on behalf of the public? I mean, if you have been here for many years, you might be forgiven for not thinking there would be sheep on a particular area of land that there are. Is it a question of educating the public through signage or otherwise that there might be and their responsibilities are greater than they used to be?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Education is always, to me, the first point of call. So make sure the public are aware before you start doing anything drastic or more draconian. So yes, if we can get out there in the social media, in the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Press)*, in the *Bailiwick Express* to let people know, I think that should be the first instance, use the velvet glove first before we start putting on the gauntlets.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Perhaps more signage?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Absolutely. So, yes, signage. But do you really need to be told: "do not let your dog loose around sheep"?.

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I think the main problem that you have got with dogs is the owners. They get a dog and they do not train the dog. So, you know, when something does kick off, they shout at the dog who does not pay the blindest bit of notice to him. I think that is where the problem starts, but how you solve that.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

We have raised elsewhere the prospect of having, dare I say, an idiot's guide to dog ownership. But I will say that. But some sort of guide which should be almost issued at the same time as a licence and they should be following it.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Like a highway code for dog owners, I think that makes sense.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

That is a better way of putting it. Thank you. Thank you, Connétable.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Offences, prosecutions and penalties. Sorry, just something just crossed my mind just thinking about this. In terms of St. Helier, obviously the density of population, small, you know, lots of one and 2 bed flats. Is there an issue around St. Helier in particular as opposed to other parishes?

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

I have not got the exact data on the splits of the parishes. But anecdotally, I do not believe there is, albeit negating from proportionality of crime, where we know St. Helier is the vast majority of us because it is the densest populated parish.

[17:00]

I do not think from me personally experiencing that there is one parish that is densely populated for the dog activity or animal welfare.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

That is fine. Thank you. Okay. So, Chairman, please, could you set out how offences under the Policing Regulations are taken from reporting through to a fine being levied? What is the process?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Well, as I said before, Honorary Police do not investigate. If a report of an incident has happened, we will then signpost the complainant to States of Jersey Police and then I will pass on to Chief Inspector Jackson.

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

I think it is easier to explain that sort of dangerous and out of control dog legislation and the process there because we follow suit and that is the crime investigation. So first port of call would be an incident that comes in reported to the police. We would take a witness statement from the injured party. We would collate the evidence. That may be photographs depending on what has happened. There may be independent witnesses. There may be C.C.T.V. (closed-circuit television). We collate that all together. The individual who is in charge of the dog will be interviewed and they would get an opportunity to put across what has happened. Again, the review of the evidence will take place.

If we believe that the evidential threshold has been met, then we will make a decision whether it has hit the evidential threshold. Then it will go to our Criminal Justice Department and the recommendation could be that it goes to Parish Hall because it is a first-time offence, relatively low. Then the parish where the offence has taken place would deal with it. Centenier may deem that it is not appropriate or it is too serious to be dealt with at the Parish Hall. Obviously we want to deal with everything at the lowest level opportunity. Then if Centenier cannot deal with it in the Parish Hall, then it will be sent to the Magistrates Court. It is important to know that the evidential threshold has to be met for the Parish Hall, irrespective if it is going to Parish Hall or Court, that is the same evidential threshold.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

Thank you. In the last 12 months, are you aware of any fines being levied under the Policing Regulations in regard to animal control and fouling?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I have never dealt with animal fouling. Again, that is not a hard one because how do you prove that that dog has fouled? They will say it was that dog and the owner will say: "No, it is not mine", as far as I am aware.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

I mean, we are hearing about D.N.A. (deoxyribonucleic acid) testing.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I would say D.N.A. testing is quite expensive. Is it worth doing D.N.A. for a £60 fine? The answer is going to be no.

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Unless you have just stood in it.

Deputy D.J. Warr:

I am just looking down here because I think this next question is a similar one, similar style. I am just repeating some of the questions. I think you have already given some good answers here already. Okay. So recommendations for strengthening enforcement. Do you want to step into that one?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Yes. It has been very useful because we are hearing from you that there are some elements that seem to be the right level on the law and in the implementation and being able to do that

enforcement. Then there are some elements that we have just heard that that is really difficult. Even though they are in law, like fouling, it is really difficult to do. Other elements, like we talked about livestock worrying, we hear about that there are big concerns, but we do not see the numbers reported, but whether that happens or not, we do not know. They are usually in areas where you do not have witnesses, unfortunately, because that is the nature of where those livestock are. The last question really from our side is do you have any recommendations for strengthening enforcement? Do you feel that what is there is suitable to be able to, do we need more? We have talked about public awareness as being one of the biggest, that education will help that ensure that there is not having offences in the first place, but do you see that there is something that can be done further under that strengthening of enforcement?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

The only thing I would say is at Parish Hall we cannot compel a defendant to pay compensation. So, if a dog has killed 30 chickens and we make a decision, Parish Hall is called deferred decision, so you put it off for a month, 3 months, 6 months. In that time, as long as they have paid the compensation, then that is the end of the matter and they get a written caution. But if they do not, it goes to court. Now, as Michel said, that is quite a hammer and a nut. I would like the Parish Hall to compel a defendant to pay compensation, a reasonable compensation to a defendant if livestock, not livestock, but if fowl have been killed, because otherwise it would be a normal case of just dealing with it at Parish Hall. But if they do not pay, we would have to send it straight to court. There is no middle ground.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

There is no middle ground and that is, as you say, a big jump.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

It is a big step. So that is the only thing I would say.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Okay. Thank you. That is interesting.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Do you have something, Michel?

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

No, I cannot think of anything else.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

And yourself?

Chief Inspector, States of Jersey Police:

No, thank you.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Are we happy with the beach situation?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

You can ask a question about that. I mean, for us, that is obviously, of course, something that keeps coming up as well. The Minister for Economic Development wrote to the panel to say that he had presented to the Connétables some suggestions, and we are obviously going to investigate further around that. But really at the moment in the current law we are hearing that there are concerns about that there is not the necessary enforcement when beaches are not closed to dogs, but when they have to be on leads, and that this does not necessarily happen. Of course, that impacts other people that are concerned about that.

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I can understand that. But then you are then asking Honorary Police be deployed to beaches when nothing may be happening for hours on end, when they could be better deployed on speed checks or something else. Again, as I said before, you get a call, you get down there, and they have gone. There is no way of identifying who that person is, unless the complainant knows that party. So once again, it is evidential, and if we do not get the evidence, there is nothing we can do.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

Yes. Apart from the policing, are you generally happy with the regulations about in the summer, dogs have to be off?

Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

Yes. Potentially, maybe, so I think at the moment, is it from May to September? So maybe just during the summer holidays when the children are out of school. But apart from that, I do not really have any issues. I know there has been talk about maybe having dog friendly beaches. So a year-round where dogs can go without leads. I am not a dog owner, so I do not have an opinion, but it is something that may be explored. Because what I think is if the public have a beach or beaches where dogs are able to go without a lead, they are less likely to go to beaches where you need a lead. So you will be able to contain all those instances in certain beaches. That may be better. That could be potentially better policed.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

It is an annual question, more than an annual question to Constables. We have so far said we are happy with the status quo, or the status quo is a reasonable compromise. But people have different views, I know.

Vice-Chairman, Comité des Chefs de Police:

I personally have a totally different view. I would like to see certain beaches with no dogs at all. I am terribly selfish here. St. Brelade Bay, for instance, I think it is the jewel in the Island's crown. You do get problems through dogs howling and the like. I think you could do with having beaches, as my colleague alluded to, where dogs can go off the lead and all that, and other beaches where dogs are not allowed.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

I can see the point about dog exclusion zones, but there again you might put the onus on other beaches, which are overused and people complain then, anyway.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

We can see that that is always, it is definitely one area that will continue, and I am sure the Connétables will continue to discuss it year on year, until there is a compromise found. But I am conscious of your time. Thank you so much for coming to see us and talking through these things. Of course, we are still in the middle of our review, so if there is anything you think of after this time, please do contact us so that we can put that within our evidence. But I would like to thank you all for coming. Thank you.

[17:09]