



COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

22nd May 2008

**Confidential:
exemption
3.2.1 (a)(xiv)
Child
protection
services:
criminal
investigation.
835/3/4(19)
839/41(9)**

B1. The Council, with reference to its Minute No. A3 of 8th May 2008, discussed the current status of the criminal investigation into the historical delivery of child protection services in Jersey and in particular recent media reporting of the evidential status of certain exhibits identified during the course of excavations and associated searches at Haut de la Garenne, St. Martin. In this regard the Council noted that the Minister for Home Affairs had instructed the Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police to prepare a report clarifying the circumstances surrounding the forensic analysis of, and subsequent reporting on, remains discovered in February 2008.

The Council, having acknowledged fully the requirement for clear separation of powers in respect of political oversight and of operational policing matters arising from the police investigation into historical delivery of child protection services in Jersey, considered that the Chief Minister should seek written confirmation from the Minister for Home Affairs that the Minister –

- (a) accepted her personal political accountability to the States for political oversight of the police investigation;
- (b) was maintaining effective political oversight of the criminal investigation and was satisfied that the investigation was being undertaken in a professional and proper manner and;
- (c) was content that audit mechanisms in place to monitor the progress of the criminal investigation were suitably independent, professional and thorough.

Subject to the foregoing, the Council reaffirmed its full support for the police inquiry.

On Home Affairs Department notepaper

12th June 2008

Dear Chief Minister

I write in response to Minute B5 of the meeting of the Council of Ministers held on 22nd May, 2008. Matters have moved on somewhat since that Minute was taken in that my Assistant Minister has since assumed appropriate political oversight of the Historic Abuse Inquiry on 29th May 2008 following my instruction to the Police Chief to prepare a report consequent upon accusations that the States had been misled in an Answer to a question put to me by Deputy Power in respect of the first find of suspected human remains at Haut de la Garenne.

Nevertheless, I can confirm the following:

a) Yes, I had accepted my personal political accountability to the States for political oversight of the police investigation.

b) i) I am not an expert in criminal investigation and have therefore sought advice from the Association of Chief Police Officers of England and Wales ("ACPO") who have appointed an independent group of experts to audit the investigation against recommended best practice and to prepare reports with comments and recommendations. I have already studied two reports and a third is being studied by my Assistant Minister. On the basis of the reports I have seen so far I am satisfied that best practice is being followed and that recommendations are being acted upon.

The National Policing Improvement Agency has also been overseeing the present phase of the Inquiry at Haut de la Garenne and have stated that they see the operation there as an example of best practice.

b) ii) In respect of value for money and governance, there are strict levels of authority for all expenditure by the Inquiry team. The ACPO expert group have also looked at the question of finance following a criticism of the Senior Investigating Officer early in the Inquiry for quoting financial concerns as one reason for not launching a homicide inquiry. The expert group have concluded that all expenditure has been necessary to further the operational aims of the Inquiry and that the senior Investigating Officer should continue to consider the financial implications, this being a part of his duties.

The Home Affairs accounting officer has also been monitoring significant areas of expenditure during the progress of the Inquiry. For example, an early check was carried out to ensure that rates of accommodation for police officers from outside Jersey assisting the Inquiry were the best that could be achieved given the length of the Inquiry. A cross-check was carried out with the procurement unit to determine that

the rates being paid could not be improved upon. The Accounting Officer regularly meets the Senior Investigating Officer to review levels of expenditure and the ongoing costs of the Inquiry.

I trust this answers the concerns put to me and that the Council of Ministers will confirm its full support for the Police Inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

Senator Wendy Kinnard
Minister of Home Affairs