

## **Justice Sub-Committee on Policing**

### **Independent custody visiting, complaints, scheme of arrangements, ICT, contracts**

#### **Letter from the Convener to the Scottish Police Authority**

Thank you for giving evidence to the Justice Sub-Committee on Policing at our meeting last week. I would also be grateful if you could pass on our thanks to your colleagues, Andrea Quinn and Martin Leven, for their valuable contribution on ICT issues. We were disappointed that an extension to parliamentary business prevented us from considering the other issues on the agenda and from hearing from Alistair Crerar. We plan to discuss our meeting times as part of our work programme discussion on 16 May 2013; I will update you of any developments after this meeting.

In the time available it was not possible for Members to ask all of the questions that they would have liked to at the meeting and it was therefore agreed to write to you with any remaining questions. These questions are set out below:

#### *Independent custody visiting*

- The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 specifies that the arrangements put in place by the SPA in relation to independent custody visiting must provide for reporting on each visit. The Sub-Committee would welcome clarification on (1) who the report goes to; (2) whether each report will be a public document, and (3) how authorised visitors operating under the scheme will be chosen.

#### *Complaints*

- The paper on complaints considered by the SPA Board at its meeting on 22 March states that the SPA has responsibility for “handling complaints relating to the business of the SPA as a public body, including complaints about individual members and staff”. The Sub-Committee seeks clarification as to (1) how transparency will be delivered in terms of process and outcome; (2) whether complaints will always be made public, and if not, what criteria will be applied; and (3) whether, on completion of a complaint, the outcome will be published.

#### *Scheme of Arrangement*

- The Sub-Committee would welcome an indication of (1) why the term ‘scheme of arrangement’ has been used rather than ‘scheme of delegation’; (2) whether the agreed scheme of arrangement has now been published; and (3) why there was a reluctance amongst SPA Board members to agree to the Scottish Government’s proposal of 17 January 2013 that the chief constable be given access to police staff to assist him in the areas of HR and finance, when the issue had been on-going since autumn 2012.

#### *ICT*

- During evidence on 2 May, the panel spoke of an ICT Blueprint that was to be discussed by the SPA Board that day. The Sub-Committee asks (1) whether it

is now possible to have sight of this document, and (2) what discussions were held and decisions taken during this meeting. The Sub-Committee would also welcome an update on the trial of hand-held 'notebook' devices.

#### *Contracts*

- Thank you for your response of 29 April in relation to contracts on the provision of goods and services. The Sub-Committee seeks clarification as to (1) the number of contracts that have been terminated by each of the constituent parts of Police Scotland; (2) the basis of these terminations; (3) the total value of these contracts; (4) whether any terminated contracts are subject legal action; (5) the number of contracts that relate to the former Northern Constabulary area; (6) the procurement process used and whether it allows for small local contracts; and (7) whether a community impact assessment has been conducted in respect of contracts held, due for renewal, or entirely new.

The Sub-Committee would welcome a response to these issues by 24 May, if possible.

Christine Grahame  
Convener, Justice Sub-Committee on Policing  
10 May 2013