



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Justice Sub-Committee on Policing

Chief Superintendent Garry McEwan  
Police Scotland  
Criminal Justice Services Division

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By e-mail

20 February 2018

Dear CS McEwan

### Police Scotland review of custody provision

During the evidence session on [7 December 2017](#) you informed the Justice Sub-Committee on Policing that Police Scotland's custody provision was currently under review. Further to that evidence session you provided [supplementary written evidence](#) which included details of the review and an update on the current police custody and security officer (PCSO) vacancies.

The Sub-Committee would appreciate it if you could provide further details of the custody provision review and a progress update. Could you also include details of the input that has been sought from the relevant unions, staff associations and any other stakeholders to the process.

During the recent evidence session a number of issues were raised, in particular the number of PCSO vacancies and the use of police officers to temporarily back-fill those vacancies. In your supplementary written evidence you confirm that there are currently 18 PCSO FTE (Full Time Equivalent) vacancies in various locations throughout the country and that recruitment to these vacancies is on-going. The Sub-Committee would appreciate your view on whether filling these 18 vacancies will resolve the issue of police officers temporarily back-filling PCSO posts and ensure that the level of continuity that is required for these posts is achieved. Could you also please provide a timescale for completing this recruitment exercise and the new PCSOs being in place?

In your written evidence you also indicated that as the work to determine the future operating model for Criminal Justice Services Division (CJSD) is on-going that it was not yet possible to determine what the final number of PCSO's is expected to be. Do you have a view on how many PCSOs' and police staff will be required to achieve a sustainable custody operating model going forward?

As part of phase 1 of the remodelling programme, which includes the move towards Criminal Justice Hubs, the Force Executive agreed to increase the number of police staff posts within the CJSD by 45, and it is anticipated that recruitment will commence in the coming weeks. Could you please confirm the timescale for completing this recruitment exercise and the posts being filled?

Phase 1 of the Custody Remodelling project is expected to be completed by November 2018. Could you please provide details of the input from staff associations, unions or other stakeholders in developing the implementation, training or communication plans to deliver phase 1?

In your written submission you explain that the second phase of the project is to expand on the initial three hubs and deliver a new national custody operating model. A full business case outlining the options available to deliver the Hubs and a long term vision for custody is to be delivered to the Police Scotland executive in 2018/2019. Are you able to provide any further confirmation of the expected completion date of phase 2 and also of any changes planned for the short to mid-term to address the current human rights and operational issues which have been identified, such as transporting people over long distances and the reduction in the number of custody centres available?

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Finnie', with a small blue dot to the right of the signature.

John Finnie MSP  
Convener, Justice Sub-Committee on Policing