



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Justice Sub-Committee on Policing

Calum Steele
General Secretary
Scottish Police Federation

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Dear Calum

Police Scotland review of custody provision

During the evidence session on [7 December 2017](#) Chief Superintendent Garry McEwan informed the Justice Sub-Committee on Policing that Police Scotland's custody provision was currently under review. Further to the evidence session CS McEwan 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 has written to Police Scotland to request further details of the custody provision review and a progress update. The Sub-Committee would appreciate your views on whether the changes being proposed will improve custody provision in Scotland and details of your input to the review 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 the written evidence CS McEwan confirmed 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.

CS McEwan 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 PCSOs 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?

CS McEwan confirmed that 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. What is your view of the proposed increase in police staff posts and are you aware of a current recruitment exercise?

Phase 1 of the Custody Remodelling project is expected to be completed by November 2018. It has identified three locations to pilot as 'Criminal Justice Hubs' - Falkirk, Inverness and Kittybrewster (Aberdeen). Do you have a view on this approach and the proposed timescale? Could you please provide details of your involvement in developing the implementation, training or communication plans to deliver phase 1?

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. Do you have a view on this timescale and whether there are any changes that can be made in 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', is written over a faint circular stamp.

John Finnie MSP
Convener, Justice Sub-Committee on Policing