

Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service

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Justice Sub-Committee Clerks
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By email

Date: 09 November 2018

Dear Convener

Thank you for your letter of 1 November 2018 in which you ask for an update on work by COPFS to support migrant communities in collaboration with justice partners and stakeholder groups.

I can confirm that COPFS and Police Scotland have engaged with the Scottish Refugee Council (SRC) in relation to the issues which were raised by the SRC in their submission of October 2017.

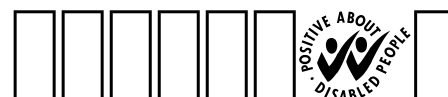
During follow up discussions with the SRC, it became clear that their concerns for migrant communities were primarily focused on the operation of the Home Office's Immigration function in Scotland, rather than on the provision of services to migrant communities by COPFS. As such, whilst we continue to work with the SRC and Police Scotland and will address any concerns they raise about the work of COPFS, we have no plans to conduct a wider review of COPFS services at this time. COPFS, Police Scotland and the SRC are due to meet on 21 November 2018.

COPFS does and will continue to work collaboratively with justice partners, and in consultation with stakeholders groups, to ensure that the services we provide to migrant communities are effective and tailored to their needs.

COPFS has a number of policies and processes in place to ensure that people from migrant communities can access our services. For example guidance on the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and the Human Trafficking and Exploitation Act 2016 is available on our web site, as well as translated versions of "A Guide to Scot's Law."

In addition, our equality Ambassadors for both race and religious belief are fostering good links with ethnic minority communities and faith groups across Scotland.

Our Equality Champion, Ruth McQuaid, sits on the Scottish Government's Tackling Prejudice and Building Connected Communities Action Group, which is chaired by Aileen Campbell, Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government.



As part of the work of this group, COPFS was involved in the recent Scottish Government led media campaign "There's no Place for Hate in Scotland" and was also a panel member in the recent BEMIS / Police Scotland conference focusing on race and religious hatred on 31 October 2018.

Across the country, COPFS staff regularly attend and give presentations to local community groups to raise awareness of the prosecution service and to listen to concerns directly from members of the public.

I hope this information is helpful to the Sub-Committee.

Yours sincerely



DAVID HARVIE
Crown Agent