



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Justice Sub-Committee on Policing

Mr Tyson Hepple
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By e-mail

13 December, 2018

Dear Mr Hepple,

Police Scotland's role in the UK immigration process

I am writing to inform you about the recent Justice Sub-Committee on Policing's evidence session on Police Scotland's role in the UK immigration process.

Prior to the Sub-Committee's evidence session of 6 December last, it requested written evidence from the Home Office to inform the evidence session. A specific request was made for information on Police Scotland's role in assisting the Home Office compliance and enforcement teams in the enforced removal of people from residential properties in Scotland, and the relationship between Police Scotland and the Home Office in this regard. It is disappointing that this information was not provided prior to the evidence session, or since.

The Sub-Committee agreed at the meeting of 6 December to request some further information from the Home Office.

Home Office policy dictates that there is a presumption in favour of temporary admission or release rather than detention. It also emphasises that wherever possible, alternatives to detention (such as temporary admission with reporting restrictions, electronic monitoring, or release on bail) should be used. Detention is to be used sparingly, and for the shortest period necessary.

Could you please provide information on the community-based alternatives to immigration detention that are considered by the Home Office along with the statistics on how often these have been used. Information for the last five years would be appreciated.

The Sub-Committee also heard about a pilot programme starting at Yarl's Wood Detention Centre in relation to women who would have been detained there. It would be appreciated if you could provide some details on this pilot.

The Sub-Committee heard that it is the Home Office's role to carry out a risk assessment prior to any immigration operation in Scotland. Could you please provide details of what that assessment entails, in particular the risk assessment and the assessment of vulnerable people, for example those with mental health issues or assessing the impact on children, when considering whether to detain their parents.

Police Scotland provided details to the Sub-Committee of the community impact assessments that it undertakes, when appropriate, ahead of an enforced removal. Could you please provide details of the community impact assessments that the Home Office undertakes prior to a removal request, the circumstances that dictate that such an assessment is necessary, and details of those assessments.

It would also be appreciated if you could provide clarification on whether the Home Office adopts a multi-agency approach prior to a proposed arrest or detention in Scotland. For example, details of the type of information that is shared on a confidential basis with Police Scotland, social work services, or relevant third sector organisations prior to an individual being arrested and detained. Could you please provide this information by Friday 18 January 2019?

Please see the [Official Report](#) of the Justice Sub-Committee on Policing's meeting of 6 December for information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Finnie', written in a cursive style.

John Finnie MSP
Convener, Justice Sub-Committee on Policing