

Justice Sub-Committee on Policing

Police Scotland's Custody Provision

Written submission from the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents

Thank you for your letter dated 20 February regarding the above subject seeking the views of Association of Scottish Police Superintendents on aspects of the review.

Firstly, with regard to the recruitment of 18 PCSOs to fill the FTE vacancies, the Association does not have the necessary detailed information to provide informed opinion on whether this measure will be sufficient to stabilise the operational resources and reduce the requirement for backfilling by police officers. The Association welcomes the move to recruit PCSOs into the vacant posts but recognises that it will take some time to recruit, select, appoint and train new members of staff to these specialist roles. In the interim the only option will be to continue back fill using police officers.

Secondly, with regard to the future operating model for Criminal Justice Division (CJSD) and final numbers of PCSOs, the Association does not have any data or information that would enable it to have an informed view on what a sustainable operating model might be. The Association has been engaged with the Force Executive for some time now seeking an evidence-based approach to establishing an accurate assessment of demand right across the service, including real demand, perceived demand and failure demand. Allied to such an accurate and fulsome assessment of demand is the need to determine a sustainable operating model which will then inform the resources that are required by the service. The Association has been informed by the Force Executive that this work has been commissioned but is still at an early stage. Obviously, the operating model and resources for CJSD is a sub-set of this work and until such time as the demand assessment is progressed and available the Association cannot provide informed opinion.

Thirdly, with regard to the move to a hub based approach with increases within CJSD of 45 posts, as per the comments at point 2 above, the Association does not hold information on a sustainable operating model for CJSD or the service as whole and therefore cannot offer a view at this point in time.

Fourthly, with regard to the move to pilot Criminal Justice Hubs in the three named locations, the Association is aware that this work is ongoing with allied recruitment of police staff posts. The Association is represented on Criminal Justice Services Division Programme Board but is not directly involved in implementation, training or the communication plans to deliver Phase 1.

Finally, with regard to the new national custody model, the Association has no information on the business case as this is clearly still under development. The view of the Association remains that there needs to be an evidence-based approach to the future operating model in Criminal Justice and custody provision. Evidently there are numerous ongoing changes to operational and business practices following implementation of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 which may alter the current and future demands within CJSD and custody. The Association continues to

support our members in specialist Divisions and local policing Divisions who manage and oversee the day to day delivery of policing services in an evolving and challenging environment in the short term. The Association believes that in the medium to long term there is scope for a more inclusive and collaborative approach to Criminal Justice and particularly custody provision. As has been widely evidenced for many years now, it is known that many people who are brought into police custody have complex social, medical and/or mental health issues. Often it is the case that people who find themselves in police custody are really in need of health and social care support as opposed to criminal justice sanction. The Association would welcome a more holistic and preventative approach to how individuals are cared for and managed after police contact with a meaningful exploration of which agencies or providers (public and/or private) are best placed to take control of and have ownership of individuals' needs in line with the principles identified by the Christie Commission in 2010 and in keeping with the objective of 'Getting it Right'.

I trust you find these brief comments of assistance as you pursue your work in the Sub Committee. Should you wish any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ivor Marshall
Chief Superintendent
President
7 March 2018