Dear Cabinet Secretary

AUDITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (AGS) REPORT “POLICE REFORM: PROGRESS UPDATE 2013”

At its meeting on 20 November, the Committee considered evidence on the AGS report Police reform: progress update 2013.

The AGS report notes at paragraph 82 that from 2013/14 Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority will be liable for VAT of approximately £22 million per year whereas the previous eight police forces were exempt. The Committee notes that during the Stage 1 debate on the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Bill you confirmed that the Scottish Government was actively exploring with HM Treasury the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland’s VAT status. You explained that these discussions were at an early stage but both the Scottish Government and HM Treasury were working together on a solution.

The Committee would therefore welcome further information from you on the progress made with these discussions.

The Committee will be taking evidence from the Scottish Government Accountable Officer on Police reform at its meeting on 18 December. I would therefore be grateful for a response from you by Monday 9 December.

Should you have any questions, please contact the Clerk, Jane Williams, on the contact details provided above.

Yours sincerely

Hugh Henry MSP
Convener