Justice Sub-Committee on Policing

Impact of police reform on local policing

Written submission from Councillor Len Scoullar

I write to express my very deep and real concerns about proposals which have emerged concerning Rothesay Police Office and the removal of our post of inspector.

There are many reasons for my worrying about this reduction not the least of which is ending the operation of Rothesay Sheriff Court with the likelihood of officers having to spend much more time travelling to and from Greenock Sheriff Court and thus reducing police numbers and supervision on our Island.

I would ask in regard to the Island problem about supervisory resilience and mutual aid outwith the ferry sailing times and in the event of a serious complaint, is it not normally Inspector which is the rank for investigation. How will this fit?

The most serious problem for me is to understand how the Resource Allocation Model will be able to balance the needs of Mutual Aid and Supervisory Resilience when the geographic and logistical challenges of our Island Police Service are considered.

All of these problems manifested themselves in January 2012 when we had a complete loss of electricity, fixed and mobile phones and ferry connections. At the time Inspector Anderson assumed organisational control and without doubt his contribution was, in my view, invaluable. This was due to his ability to direct and allocate responsibility locally.

Under the proposed change this could turn out to be impossible due to our island status and isolation.

Please, give this proposal your further consideration and leave unchanged the inspector post at Rothesay. The people of Bute will be very grateful and appreciative I know.

I am aware that Bute Community Council share my views on this and that they are horrified by the implications of removing this inspector post.

Councillor Len Scoullar
3 October 2013

c.c. Kenny MacAskill, Justice Minister MSP
Michael Russell, Education Minister MSP
Chief Superintendent Barry McEwan
Chief Inspector Gary Stitt
Councillor Dick Walsh, Leader Argyll and Bute Council
Peter Wallace, Secretary, Bute Community Council
Craig Borland, Editor, Buteman
Councillor Isobel Strong
Councillor Robert Macintyre