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Justice Sub-Committee on Policing

To consider and report on the operation of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 as it relates to policing.

www.scottish.parliament.uk/justice-sub
justice.committee@scottish.parliament.uk
0131 348 5047
Committee Membership

**Convener**
Christine Grahame
Scottish National Party

**John Finnie**
Independent

**Alison McInnes**
Scottish Liberal Democrats

**Margaret Mitchell**
Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party

**Elaine Murray**
Scottish Labour

**Kevin Stewart**
Scottish National Party
Introduction

Background

1. It has become established practice for Scottish Parliament committees at the end of a session to prepare ‘legacy papers’, reflecting on the work they have undertaken during that session, and highlighting any particular areas of work that are outstanding which a successor committee may wish to pursue.

Police reform

2. The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012\(^1\), which came into effect on 1 April 2013, replaced the eight territorial police forces in Scotland with one national force, Police Scotland, and also replaced the local police authorities and joint police boards with one national oversight body, the Scottish Police Authority (SPA). Also abolished under the Act were the Scottish Police Services Authority\(^2\) and the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency\(^3\).

3. The 2012 Act requires the Parliament to make arrangements for keeping under review the operation of the Act and to publish reports thereon.\(^4\) To fulfil this requirement and, in recognition of the Justice Committee’s heavy legislative workload, the Parliament established the Justice Sub-Committee on Policing on 13 March 2013 with the remit to consider and report on the operation of the Act as it relates to policing.\(^5\) As with other subject committees, the Sub-Committee was set up to last for the duration of the parliamentary session but, unusually, its members were selected from a number of committees with an interest in policing, with the expectation that each member would represent the views of, and feedback relevant issues to, their respective committees.\(^6\)

4. The creation of a policing sub-committee was not intended to preclude the Justice Committee from examining any policing matter and, in practice, it has not done so. The parent committee has continued to examine the policing budget as part of its overall scrutiny of the Scottish Government’s draft budget, and considered subordinate legislation and public petitions on policing issues. It has also taken the lead on examining wider policing issues, such as the interception of communications by Police Scotland, where it considered that the issues strayed outside the Sub-Committee’s narrow remit.

5. In this legacy paper, we make a number of observations arising from our work. Firstly, the paper provides a brief overview of our main scrutiny topics:

   - responsibilities and governance arrangements,
   - local policing,
   - stop and search,
   - armed police officers on routine patrols,
• call-handling,
• the i6 programme,
• complaints and investigations,
• independent custody visiting, and
• realising the benefits of police reform.

6. This paper also suggests areas of work that any successor may wish to take forward.

Approach

7. This is one of only two sub-committees to be established by the Parliament since its inception in 1999. The other, created in 2006, was also a sub-committee of a justice committee (the Justice 2 Committee) and was created for a six-month period for the specific purpose of carrying out an inquiry into the monitoring of convicted child sex offenders.

8. Created for a three-year period until the end of the parliamentary session, and without a specific inquiry to undertake, the Policing Sub-Committee has taken on a different role to that of the previous Sub-Committee. Our approach has been to focus on how particular aspects of policing are working under the new arrangements, effectively carrying out post-legislative scrutiny of the 2012 Act. In the early months (March to December 2013) we met fortnightly while the new policing structures and arrangements were developing, moving to monthly meetings from January 2014. Additional meetings were also arranged within the monthly schedule to allow us to respond quickly to emerging issues, such as inaccuracies in Police Scotland’s stop and search data, and public concern over armed police officers being deployed on routine patrol. In all, we held 38 meetings in the three-year period from March 2013 to March 2016.

9. As the Sub-Committee was established midway through the parliamentary session, the only available committee slot in which we were able to meet was Thursday lunchtimes, allowing time for one panel of witnesses only. In the early months the Standing Order rule preventing committees from meeting at the same time as the Chamber led to a number of our meetings being significantly curtailed. In September 2013, the Parliament agreed to our request to suspend this rule, but piloted the suspension for a fixed three-month period before reviewing the position again in January 2014 and agreeing to extend the suspension until the end of the session. This decision was welcome in providing certainty to members and witnesses regarding the start time of our meetings and the length of time available to undertake our business.

10. The Sub-Committee’s approach has been to gather evidence on how the new policing arrangements are working in practice and to explore some of the emerging issues and challenges that have arisen in the early years of police reform. As the new arrangements developed, a number of significant changes in
approach raised serious concerns amongst the public and, in some cases; were introduced after little or no consultation with local communities. The initial power struggle between the SPA and Police Scotland over their responsibilities, along with the SPA’s recurring failure to properly hold Police Scotland to account, led to the Sub-Committee taking on a much more active role in providing a public forum for debate on the new policing arrangements than had perhaps previously been envisaged. It is essential that such a forum does not disappear, yet it remains to be seen whether the SPA is yet in a position to take on this role. There may therefore be an argument that a future sub-committee on policing is required to fill this vacuum. Our scrutiny has led to real changes in decisions around controversial policies such as stop and search and armed police officers on routine patrol, which we return to later in this report. We also wish to note the role of individual MSPs and the media in also bringing issues to light and questioning the decisions and actions of Police Scotland, in the absence of a robust governance and scrutiny body.

11. Over the last three years, the Sub-Committee has heard from a range of witnesses from Police Scotland, the SPA, the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner (PIRC), the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents (ASPS), the Scottish Police Federation (SPF), and Unison. Due to our narrow remit, we have relied heavily on a small pool of witnesses and we are therefore grateful that they regularly made themselves available to assist us with our scrutiny. We also undertook a number of visits across Scotland to see first-hand how the revised local policing arrangements were working in practice under reform and wish to thank those in Police Scotland including divisional commanders, community officers and police staff, as well as partner organisations, local authority councillors and community councils, who took the time to meet with us, some on more than one occasion.

12. Given the Justice Committee’s workload, it is clear that police reform would not have been subject to the level of scrutiny required in these early years had the Sub-Committee on Policing not been created. The approach of creating a sub-committee with a particular remit of post-legislative scrutiny of the 2012 Act has worked well in ensuring that the many issues of concern which have arisen relating to policing have been examined in depth. In particular, the Sub-Committee has effectively filled a void where the Scottish Police Authority has failed to provide the public forum for debate of Police Scotland’s decisions which has been required in these formative years. It is essential that such a public forum for debate remains, yet it is unclear whether the SPA is yet ready to take on this role.
13. It is also not yet clear how committees will be configured in session 5. However, Sub-Committee members are agreed that its work on scrutiny of Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority has been of great value and that this scrutiny should continue in the next parliamentary session, whether that is through a sub-committee or a standalone committee of the Parliament, for example, having a wider community safety remit.

14. We therefore strongly recommend that, whatever the configuration of committees, sufficient time is set aside to properly scrutinise how the policing arrangements are working in practice in this early stage of reform, in line with the requirements of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. The remaining recommendations in this report are directed to a successor, whatever form that takes in the new session.

Scrutiny topics

Responsibilities and governance arrangements

Early tensions

15. Early in the process of reform, tensions emerged between the then Chief Constable (Sir Stephen House) and the SPA regarding the interpretation of their respective responsibilities under the 2012 Act. Our parent committee, the Justice Committee, followed this very public power struggle as it unfolded in late 2012, taking evidence from the then SPA Chair (Vic Emery) and the then Chief Constable on two occasions.

16. The Scottish Government intervened in the dispute in January 2013 asking that a number of responsibilities be transferred from the SPA to Police Scotland and both bodies later confirmed that they were content with this transfer of functions. However, the Scottish Government announced further changes to their working arrangements in June 2013. Concerned that the two organisations were still in a state of flux some months into police reform, the Sub-Committee called the Chief Constable and SPA Chair (Vic Emery) to give evidence on the issue on 27 June 2013. At that meeting, Mr Emery stated that the SPA had made a conscious decision, in consultation with others, “to concentrate on governance, policy and scrutiny instead of providing some of the services that we provided from the beginning”; while Sir Stephen said that he viewed this as “a wholly positive development”.

17. The Sub-Committee notes that there does not appear to have been any further transfer of responsibilities since 2013. We also note that, as recently as 10 February 2016, the Public Audit Committee sought assurances from the new Chief Constable (Philip Gormley) and the new SPA Chair (Andrew Flanagan) that there
would be no repeat of the earlier disputes over responsibilities. In response, Mr Flanagan said he was confident there would be “good relations”, while Mr Gormley told the Committee that “my approach going forward will be to work in an entirely collaborative manner with the Authority recognising that we have different responsibilities”.

Governance, policy and scrutiny

18. The transfer of responsibilities that took place in June 2013 was intended to allow the SPA to “concentrate on governance, policy and scrutiny”. However, time and again over the last three years, the SPA has failed to fulfil this role in relation to significant policy decisions and practices adopted by Police Scotland, only acting after overwhelming public concern, or attention from politicians or the media. High-profile examples include concerns over the practice of stop and search, armed police on routine patrols, the closure of police counters and control rooms, and call handling.

19. In September 2015, the Cabinet Secretary for Justice asked the incoming SPA Chair, Mr Flanagan, to undertake an immediate review of governance in policing with the aim of ensuring that “accountability arrangements for policing can build on the lessons learned during the operation of the single force to date and ensure robust arrangements are in place for the future”. A final report of the review is expected by the end of March 2016. Unfortunately the report was not published in time for the Sub-Committee to examine it before the end of the parliamentary session.

20. The Sub-Committee recommends that the SPA Chair’s report of his review of governance in policing, due to be published at the end of March 2016, is examined early in the new session and that, more generally, the SPA’s future performance in holding Police Scotland to account is monitored closely.

Local policing

21. Two of the three main policy objectives of the 2012 Act relate to local policing—

- to protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting front line services, and

- to strengthen the connection between services and communities, by creating a new formal relationship with each of the 32 local authorities, involving many more local councillors and better integrating with community planning partnerships.

22. The impact of police reform on local policing was therefore identified by the Sub-Committee as one of our early areas of interest and indeed was the focus of our
first evidence session with Police Scotland on 18 April 2013.\textsuperscript{12} We have taken evidence on local policing on three more occasions over the last three years.\textsuperscript{13} Keen to also gather views from local communities on how the new policing arrangements were working in practice in local areas, we issued a call for views\textsuperscript{14} in November 2013 and visited Dumfries, Elgin and Glenrothes in January 2014.\textsuperscript{15} Follow-up visits took place in June and September 2015\textsuperscript{16} to enable members to see how matters had progressed since their first visits and to establish whether the same issues of concern remained.

23. Key concerns regarding local policing across the three years have included: standardisation of policing practices, lack of local discretion, targets, lack of local scrutiny, loss of police staff, the practice of stop and search, closure of police counters and control rooms, and police officer visibility.

24. The Sub-Committee notes the announcement by the Cabinet Secretary for Justice on 3 September 2015 that the Chief Constable will undertake a new programme of scrutiny sessions to provide more direct local accountability for the performance of policing in local areas. This was one of the issues to be explored at the Scottish Government’s local scrutiny summit on 23 September 2015.

25. In some cases, changes to local policing practices have been introduced with little or no consultation with local communities and public confidence in local policing has been damaged as a result. The Sub-Committee therefore recommends that the impact of police reform on local policing should continue to be monitored. We found our local visits invaluable in capturing the voices of local community officers, often very different from those of the senior officers we hear from during formal evidence sessions. We therefore recommend that this approach continues into the next session.

Stop and search

26. Following concerns raised in evidence on local policing, the Sub-Committee was keen to examine more closely Police Scotland’s policy and practice of stop and search. It therefore invited Police Scotland and the SPA to give evidence on the issue on 19 June 2014.\textsuperscript{17} In response to members’ concerns, Assistant Chief Constable Wayne Mawson of Police Scotland announced at that session that children under the age of 12 would no longer be searched “because the current position is fairly indefensible”.\textsuperscript{18} The Sub-Committee agreed to return to the issue after reports of ongoing reviews of the practice by HM Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland and the Scottish Institute of Policing Research were available. However, we called ACC Mawson, the Chief Constable, and the SPA Chair to return to give evidence earlier than planned, on 19 February 2015, after it was reported that the practice of searching children under 12 was continuing. Police Scotland told the SPA Board on 13 February that problems with IT systems and inaccurate recording had led to release of the figure of 356 under 12s having been searched, when in fact further analysis had arrived at a figure of 18. At our meeting on 19
February, members raised a number of concerns regarding Police Scotland’s handling of the situation, including the credibility and interpretation of the data.19

27. In response to ongoing concerns regarding the practice of consensual stop and search in particular, the Scottish Government created an independent advisory group on stop and search policy on 31 March 2015, chaired by John Scott QC.20 Its recommendations,21 that the practice of consensual or non-statutory stop and search should end when a statutory code of practice comes into effect were accepted by the Government and effected by amendments to the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill. The advisory group, unable to form a concluded view on whether a gap in powers exists and whether a power to search children for alcohol would be desirable, recommended that there should be early consultation on whether the police should have a power to search children under 18 for alcohol. Amendments to enable powers to be conferred on the police to search for alcohol, following consultation and by regulation, were agreed to by the Committee, but members, along with Scotland’s Commissioner for Children and Young People, expressed concern that the provision could lead to unintended consequences for children, such as criminalisation and a higher rate of statutory stop and search on young people.

28. The Sub-Committee explored in more depth the group’s recommendations at an evidence session with Mr Scott on 8 October 2015.22

29. The Sub-Committee is grateful to the advisory group for its work to improve the policy and practice of stop and search and we welcome the Parliament’s subsequent decision to end the practice of consensual or non-statutory stop and search once the statutory code of practice comes into effect. We note that the advisory group was unable to reach a “concluded view” on whether a power to search children under 18 for alcohol is needed and that there are concerns that such a power could lead to the criminalisation of children and a higher rate of stop and search for young people. We agree with the advisory group that a wide-ranging consultation involving children and young people is needed on this issue.

30. The Sub-Committee considers that developments relating to stop and search, including the new code and outcomes of the consultation on alcohol, should continue to be examined, given that concerns regarding the practice overall have yet to be resolved.

Armed police officers on routine patrols

31. At the inception of Police Scotland on 1 April 2013, the then Chief Constable took the decision to give a small number of authorised firearms officers standing authority23 to carry a sidearm on patrol. The decision was taken without consultation with local communities and it only came to public attention in May 2014 when concerns emerged about the practice in the Highlands and Islands.
area. Responding to these concerns, the Sub-Committee wrote to Police Scotland and the SPA seeking clarification on a number of issues surrounding the decision. We considered the responses received on 16 June 2014 and agreed to seek an update on the SPA’s position following the Chief Constable’s briefing to the SPA Board later that month. We subsequently held a formal evidence session on the issue on 21 August 2015.

32. Immediately before that session, the SPA and HMICS each wrote to the Sub-Committee with details of two parallel pieces of work being undertaken on this issue. Around that time, the Cabinet Secretary for Justice announced to Parliament that the Chief Constable would take on board views and representations as part of his next standing firearms authority review. Following that firearms review, the Chief Constable announced, in October 2014, that firearms officers attached to armed response vehicles (ARVs) would, from then on, only be deployed to firearms incidents or where there was a threat to life. He also announced a review of the types of carriage for both side arms and Tasers and the deployment of ARV officers when not deployed to firearm incidents.

33. The Sub-Committee recommends scrutiny of the outcomes of Police Scotland’s review of the types of carriage for both side arms and Tasers and the deployment of ARV officers when not deployed to firearm incidents. It also suggests that future quarterly statistics on the number of ARV officers in Scotland are monitored to ensure that levels remain appropriate.

Call handling

34. Police Scotland announced a phased closure of a number of police control rooms in January 2014 but, after closures of sites at Dumfries, Stirling, Glenrothes and Glasgow Pitt Street, this process was halted following an HMICS review. HMICS was directed to undertake this assurance review of the operation, systems and processes in place within police contact, command and control centres across Scotland following the deaths of two people in a car accident on the M9 in July 2015, which Police Scotland did not appear to investigate until three days after it was reported.

35. An interim report of HMICS review published on 3 September recommended that the control room reform programme is completed as planned, but that centres in Dundee, Aberdeen and Inverness should remain open until a detailed transition plan is developed, the necessary staff, systems and processes are in place, and the new Dundee control room is fully operational. On 3 December 2015, the Sub-Committee took evidence from HMICS on his final report published in November, which found weaknesses in the change approach and highlighted wider concerns around governance of Police Scotland’s large-scale projects.
36. The Sub-Committee considers it essential that all HMICS recommendations from his call handling assurance review are fully implemented before consideration is given to closing any further police control rooms. We also recommend continued scrutiny of the resilience of call handling arrangements into the new session.

The i6 programme

37. The i6 programme is Police Scotland’s main ICT project, bringing together more than 100 legacy force systems to deliver efficiencies and free up time for front-line policing. The programme was originally intended to support six business areas: crime, vulnerable persons, criminal justice, custody, missing persons, and productions and property. Two additional areas (vehicle collision management and ewarrants) were added to the scope of the programme when the initial contract was being developed.

38. The Sub-Committee has taken a particular interest in monitoring developments with the i6 programme, recognising it to be a key enabler of police reform and crucial to achieving efficiencies, while also being aware of the failure of a number of public sector ICT projects in recent years at significant cost.32

39. In July 2013, differences emerged between Police Scotland and the supplier, Accenture, on exactly what the i6 contract required the supplier to deliver and, after lengthy negotiations, a contract variation agreement was signed in April 2014 protecting the delivery of the original requirements at no additional cost to Police Scotland. The national rollout of i6 was however delayed by nine months to September 2016.33 Between the period November 2013 and March 2014, the Sub-Committee requested updates from Police Scotland on progress with the i6 programme and, in particular, sought to establish whether the project was still on time and within budget. It was not until March 2014 that Police Scotland finally admitted to us that difficulties with the contract had emerged which had contributed to delays. We found this level of obfuscation unsatisfactory.

40. It would however be fair to say that, over the past eighteen months, Police Scotland has responded in full to all our requests for information on the project and it appeared that, after the initial difficulties, the project was on track. However, by December 2015, Police Scotland had reported further difficulties with the programme to the SPA Board.34 A higher than expected number of defects was identified during testing which had led to the delivery date becoming untenable. Police Scotland last gave evidence to the Sub-Committee on this issue on 25 February 201635 when it advised that commercial negotiations on re-planning the project were underway. It also reported that contingency plans were being developed in the event that the negotiations were unsuccessful.
41. The Sub-Committee recommends continued scrutiny of progress with the i6 programme and, given the current status of the project, that this is carried out at the earliest stage in session 5.

Complaints and investigations

42. Under the 2012 Act, Police Scotland, the SPA, the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner, and COPFS, each have a role in investigating complaints against and relating to the police. The Sub-Committee, keen to ensure that the public and individual officers have confidence in the complaints handling arrangements, has held regular evidence sessions on the topic. It last took evidence on the issue on 14 January 2016 and invited Police Scotland, the SPA and the PIRC to attend the session and to provide written views in advance, along with the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents, the Scottish Police Federation and HMICS.

43. At that session, Police Scotland told the Sub-Committee that it had provided force-wide training on compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 in response to issues raised at previous Sub-Committee sessions. However, the SPF had argued in its written submission that little had changed in the approach taken by Police Scotland to the 1998 Act and also suggested that officers were being interviewed for “hours on end”. At the meeting, Police Scotland and the PIRC asked the SPF to provide them with details of the claims, which had not previously been brought to their attention directly, to enable them to investigate. The SPF also made reference in its submission to concerns regarding the activities and conduct of Police Scotland’s Counter Corruption Unit. HMICS is, at the time of writing, currently conducting an assurance review of the CCU.

44. The Sub-Committee considers it essential that members of the public, as well as individual police officers and staff, have confidence in the complaints process and we therefore suggest that our successor continues to keep the complaints and investigations arrangements under review.

Independent custody visiting

45. The 2012 Act placed independent custody visiting on a statutory footing and gave responsibility to the SPA for making arrangements so that independent custody visitors may visit detainees, access information related to their treatment and conditions in which they are detained, and monitor this treatment and conditions. The SPA formally approved its custody visiting scheme on 8 March 2013. In August 2014, HMICS published a report of its thematic inspection of police custody arrangements in Scotland which found that custody conditions across Scotland vary widely, with many custody centres requiring significant investment.
46. The Sub-Committee took evidence from HMICS, the SPA, Unison, and Paul Laidlaw, an independent custody visitor from Inverness, on 9 October 2014. At that session, concerns were expressed by Unison that custody was “severely understaffed” and was being backfilled by police officers, and by the independent custody visitor that there were often delays in accessing the custody area.

47. The Sub-Committee only had time to take evidence on independent custody visiting on one occasion back in 2014. We therefore suggest that the arrangements are scrutinised early in the new session to establish how they are working in practice now they have had several years to bed in.

Realising the benefits of police reform

48. The Sub-Committee took evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Justice on 4 June 2015 to establish progress with realising the benefits of police reform, focusing on the original objectives for police reform of: protecting and improving financial services despite financial cuts, creating more equal access to specialist support and national capacity, and strengthening the connection between services and communities. A number of issues were raised including: weaknesses in the SPA’s governance and oversight role, national resources, the workforce balance, i6 programme, 101 service, and local policing.

49. The Sub-Committee recommends that progress with realisation of the benefits of police reform should continue to be monitored.
1 Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012
2 The Scottish Police Services Authority had responsibility for certain central police functions, including the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency, the Scottish Police College, the Scottish Criminal Record Office, the Scottish Police Information Strategy and the police forensic science services.
3 The Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency was responsible for preventing and detecting serious organised crime, to contribute to the reduction of such crime and to the mitigation of its consequence and to gather, store and analyse related information.
4 Section 124 of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.
5 The 2012 Act makes similar arrangements in relation to fire and rescue reform. In practice, the Justice Committee fulfils the requirement to review and report on the operation of the Act as it affects fire and rescue reform and holds evidence sessions on the topic every six months.
6 Sub-Committee members were chosen from the Justice Committee, Local Government and Regeneration Committee, and Equal Opportunities Committee.
7 The Scottish Government requested that some staff within the human resource and finance functions should be appointed as police staff under the direction and control of the Chief Constable, while others should be SPA staff.
8 In June 2013 the Chief Constable was given responsibility for ICT, procurement, estates and fleet, allowing the SPA to take on more of an ‘organisational role’.
9 Justice Sub-Committee on Policing, Official Report, 27 June 2013
10 Public Audit Committee, Official Report, 10 February 2016
11 The other policy objective of police reform is: to create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity – like murder investigation teams, firearms teams or flood rescue – where and when they are needed.
12 Justice Sub-Committee on Policing, Official Report, 18 April 2013
13 Official reports of meetings on 31 October 2013, 20 March 2014, and 5 November 2015
14 Written submissions received
15 The Sub-Committee selected these areas as they cover a mix of geographical areas and models of local scrutiny. Note of local policing visits in January 2014
16 Note of local policing visits in June and September 2015
17 Justice Sub-Committee on Policing, Official Report, 19 June 2014
18 Justice Sub-Committee on Policing, Official Report, 19 June 2014, Col 468.
19 Justice Sub-Committee on Policing, Official Report, 19 February 2015
21 Justice Sub-Committee on Policing, Official Report, 19 February 2015
22 Justice Sub-Committee on Policing, Official Report, 8 October 2015
23 A ‘standing authority allows trained firearms to carry a side arm on patrol, and is typically given for armed officers working on prolonged operations where the issue and carriage of firearms is a key part of those duties.
24 Correspondence between Sub-Committee and Police Scotland and the SPA on armed policing.
25 Justice Sub-Committee on Policing, Official Report, 21 August 2015.
26 The SPA published the report of its scrutiny inquiry into the public impact of Police Scotland’s firearms standing authority in January 2015. HMICS published a report on his review of the standing firearms authority for ARV crews in October 2014.
28 Chief Constable’s announcement on armed police (1 October 2014)
29 At the same time, the PIRC launched an independent investigation into the circumstances around their deaths. The PIRC will report its findings to the COPFS; a timescale has not been announced for the investigation.
30 Independent Assurance Review Police Scotland – Call Handling Interim Report
32 The Sub-Committee has to date held seven evidence sessions on ICT, with a number focusing on i6. Police Scotland advised the Sub-Committee of this position at its meeting on 24 April 2014.
33 Stream of SPA Board meeting 16 December 2015 (at 2hrs 52 min)
34 Justice Sub-Committee on Policing, Official Report, 25 February 2016
35 The Sub-Committee held three evidence sessions on complaints handling in September and October 2013, one in April 2014, one in February 2015, and its latest session in January 2016.
36 Justice Sub-Committee on Policing, Official Report, 14 January 2016
Prior to 1 April 2013, visits were undertaken by volunteers through eight separate independent custody visiting schemes co-ordinated by local police boards.

HMICS report of its thematic inspection of police custody arrangements in Scotland (August 2014)

Justice Sub-Committee on Policing. Official Report, 9 October 2014

Justice Sub-Committee on Policing. Official Report, 4 June 2015