



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Criminal Justice Committee

Martyn Evans  
Chair  
Scottish Police Authority

All correspondence c/o:  
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27 February, 2023

Dear Mr Evans,

### **Polcing and mental health**

Thank you for your letter of 3 February 2023, which the Criminal Justice Committee considered at its meeting of 22 February. The Committee welcomes the urgent review undertaken by the SPA into the number of cases where officers and staff retired due to mental ill health and where the administration of their retirement remains incomplete. The reduction in the number of officers awaiting approval of retirement on ill health grounds and decisions on injury on duty awards is a welcome development. The Committee looks forward to a further update on the outcomes of the review after the SPA's People Committee meeting of 28 February.

As you state in your letter, "The experiences described to the Committee fall short of the standards of support the Authority would expect for any officer or member of staff to access". The Committee is keen to understand why the officers were not offered the expected standards of advice and support, and whether or not these are isolated examples.

The Committee would appreciate it if the SPA would undertake a piece of work to understand the nature and scale of the concerns police officers and staff have about the advice and support provided to them when they experience mental health and wellbeing issues. This may include taking evidence from officers, staff and union representatives as appropriate, with options given to provide evidence confidentially and/or anonymously.

The Committee understands that there is a lack of data collected and evidence about whether the measures in place are effective and being implemented consistently and, in a trauma-informed way. The Committee asks that the SPA introduces processes for the collection and analysis of relevant data to determine whether Police Scotland's

policies and practices are effective. This should include an analysis of what further measures are required to improve the advice and support provided to officers and staff.

A report on your findings and recommendations by the end of this year, would be appreciated.

At its meeting, the Committee also considered correspondence from the Scottish Police Federation (SPF) and the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents. Could you please address the issues raised by them in your response to the Committee? In particular, the SPF's assertion that staff associations are invited as observers only to the SPA's People Committee.

A response by Friday, 17 March, would be appreciated.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Audrey N: AN". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Audrey Nicoll MSP  
Convener, Criminal Justice Committee