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David Linden MSP
Deputy Convener
Criminal Justice Committee

9 September 2026

Award of a new national Electronic Monitoring Service Contract

Dear Deputy Convener,

I am writing to inform the Criminal Justice Committee that the Scottish Government has awarded a new national Electronic Monitoring Service contract to G4S CARE AND JUSTICE SERVICES (UK) LTD (G4S). This follows a regulated and competitive procurement exercise which assessed potential providers on service and price. G4S are the incumbent provider of the service under the existing contract, which expires at the end of March 2027.

The new contract will commence on 1 April 2027, when the current arrangements end and will run for five years, with the option to extend for a further two years. The central financial estimate is £42 million over the initial term, rising to £65.5 million if both extension years are exercised. The maximum contract notice value is £65.5 million excluding VAT, providing capacity to respond to future demand and policy developments. These costs are projections, based on modelling of continued and expanded use of electronic monitoring in the justice system, and as electronic monitoring is demand-led, actual expenditure will depend on service use.

Role and benefits of electronic monitoring

Electronic monitoring is a well-established part of Scotland's justice system and the Management of Offenders (Scotland) Act 2019 places a duty on Scottish Ministers to make arrangements for its provision. Electronic monitoring is available for use in connection with a range of court orders, bail conditions, release licenses and measures involving children and young people, and the service currently manages approximately 2,500 monitored individuals each day, and the caseload continues to grow as the use and uses of electronic monitoring expand.

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Electronic monitoring supports public protection by providing reliable evidence of compliance with curfews, exclusion requirements and licence conditions, allowing relevant authorities to respond appropriately when non-compliance is identified. It can also provide a proportionate alternative to custody, enabling individuals to maintain access to housing, employment, education, healthcare, family support and rehabilitative services while remaining subject to clear restrictions.

This supports the Vision for Justice by helping to reduce pressure on the prison estate, promoting rehabilitation and reintegration, and ensuring that custody is used where there is no appropriate alternative.

Continuity and national service delivery

At the conclusion of the regulated and competitive procurement exercise, it was established that G4S presented the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT); ranking highest of three bidders on *both* quality/technical and cost/commercial elements. This significantly reduces risks associated with changing supplier – which might have included: equipment replacement, system migration, workforce transition and loss of operational knowledge. Mobilisation of the new contract can therefore focus on implementing enhanced technology, improved reporting, and new governance and service requirements rather than undertaking a large-scale transfer, with the aim of ensuring that the national service delivery can continue without interruption. For the avoidance of doubt, this was not a factor in the procurement process, it is as a consequence of the result.

The service will continue to operate across the whole of Scotland, including rural, remote and island communities. The provider has committed to increasing its local staffing and engagement presence in Shetland, Orkney and Stornoway, strengthening resilience and local representation in island communities.

Improved technology and service capability

The new contract will continue to support use of well-established radio-frequency monitoring technology, while providing greater capacity for the controlled and proportionate use of newer technologies where appropriate.

The contract will require the provider to supply the technology and service for GPS monitoring, allowing continued progress of the pilot underway for Home Detention Curfew (HDC) and in support of the proposed pilot of GPS with bail, which was announced prior to the summer. The contractual arrangements will also support technology and service to underpin future developments, which could include remote alcohol monitoring, subject to the necessary legal, policy and operational decisions. Importantly, where required, all monitoring functions will be capable of being combined within a single device, reducing the need for individuals to wear multiple units.

Victim safety, rehabilitation and accessibility

GPS capability can provide a different capability in terms of how we monitor exclusion zones and support the management of risk in the community. However, it is important we allow learning from the initial pilots to feed through into further expansion, to ensure public protection benefits are realised and false comfort is not given. Future developments of the service will be introduced following appropriate consideration of the legal basis, proportionality, privacy, data protection and safeguarding implications. We will continue to engage with victims' groups and other key stakeholders in development of policy around electronic monitoring.

Under the new contract, the service provider will also have a clearer role in identifying welfare concerns and signposting monitored individuals to appropriate services relating to housing, health, mental health, addiction, financial hardship and family support. This will complement, rather than replace, the professional responsibilities of Justice Social Work and other specialist services. It will help individuals maintain the stability and community connections that can support rehabilitation and reduce the risk of further offending.

Communications will be designed to be accessible to people with lower literacy levels or additional communication needs. The service will also be expected to continue to take proper account of disability, vulnerability and individual circumstances.

Community benefits

The successful provider has committed to a substantial package of community benefits, which will be incorporated into the contract and monitored throughout its duration.

These include:

- creating a dedicated Welfare Officer role to coordinate community-benefit and referral activity;
- recruiting up to five young people into trainee Customer Service Adviser roles with structured development pathways;
- actively recruiting military veterans;
- increasing staffing and engagement in island communities;
- delivering six collaborative training sessions each year with third-sector organisations;
- continuing work supporting child impact assessment and family-aware practice;
- developing its partnership with Families Outside to support families affected by the justice system;
- undertaking regular accessibility workshops and communication reviews with The SOLD Network; and
- working with the Good Things Foundation to donate surplus laptops and support digital inclusion.

A Community Benefits Steering Group will be established and the provider will produce an annual Community Benefit Impact Report. These arrangements will enable the Scottish Government to assess progress and ensure that the commitments deliver tangible benefits for individuals, families and communities.

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All staff delivering the service must be paid at least the real Living Wage. The contract also includes commitments covering fair work, environmental sustainability, transport and logistics, energy use, electronic equipment and waste management.

Value for money and oversight

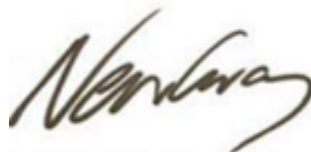
The contract introduces a simpler and more transparent charging structure, supporting improved financial forecasting and audit. It also includes a profit-sharing arrangement under which the provider's annual net profit is capped at 10%, with any profit above that level shared equally between the provider and the Scottish Government. This will help ensure that any exceptional increases in demand do not produce disproportionate supplier returns.

Performance will be overseen through regular monitoring of service levels and key performance indicators, supplier self-audit, targeted Scottish Government audit, improved management information and formal review of risks and improvement actions. Baseline measures will be established during mobilisation, followed by a post-implementation review approximately 12 months after commencement.

The award of this contract, therefore, secures continuity of an essential statutory service while providing a platform for improved public protection, stronger support for victims, better technology and reporting, rehabilitation, community benefit and greater financial accountability.

I hope the Committee finds this update helpful.

Yours sincerely,



NEIL GRAY

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