

Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs
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Dùthcha
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Public Audit Committee
The Scottish Parliament
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By Email to: publicaudit.committee@parliament.scot

27 January 2026

Dear Convener

I write today to inform you of the outcome of a regulated procurement exercise to establish Mitie Care and Custody Limited as the new provider of the Justice Partners Escorting and Court Custody Scotland (JPECCS) contract, which is due to commence on 23 January 2027.

Current Contract

As you may be aware, the Scottish Court Custody and Prisoner Escort Service (SCCPES) contract – currently held by GEOAmey – is due to conclude in January 2027.

Court custody and prisoner escorting are integral to the effective and efficient operation of the whole justice system in Scotland. The current provider employs over 800 staff, of which over 650 are employed as Prisoner Custody Officers. The service provider facilitates over 7,500 monthly prisoner movements across Scotland including, the Highlands and Islands as well as some cross border transportation to and from England and Wales.

Delivery of these services has been managed by the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) through a series of successive contracts, and as the current contract approaches its conclusion, the SPS have conducted a comprehensive regulated procurement exercise to establish a service provider for the next iteration.

Procurement Exercise

Today marks the conclusion of a robust and competitive procurement exercise which delivers a new and improved contract and a new supplier of these services in Scotland from January 2027 to March 2035. I would like to record my gratitude to the Scottish Prison

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Service for their rigour and diligence in this process – something which was highlighted by independent external reviewers as part of the project gateway review process.

Bids were assessed against 9 key principles, comprising: prisoner care and welfare; leadership, culture and people management; data integrity and IT; security and good order; logistics planning and process management, effective and efficient running of services; continuous improvement; mobilisation and readiness; and social value.

Value for public money was at the core of this exercise, with the evaluation placing equal weight on commercial elements (cost) and service requirements (quality). I am pleased to say that Mitie Care and Custody Limited scored highest evaluation scores on both aspects, and was formally awarded the JPECCS contract today.

Outline of JPECCS Service

The full cost of the JPECCS contract over its 8 year, 2 months and 8 days term is projected to be £415.4m, with a first full-year cost of £43.4m in financial year 2027/28. This investment delivers a range of contract and service improvements – taking into account recommendations from a number of Parliamentary and public sector scrutiny bodies, including your Committee. Some of those improvements include:

- A new technology and logistics model, offering real time tracking of vehicles and people in custody, and the use of digital prisoner escort records (providing a single point of truth);
- A new and improved fleet with a design focus on those individuals with physical and other health issues;
- The use of body-worn cameras for all officers;
- An increased cap on hospital ‘bedwatches’ and flexibility to increase and decrease as necessary;
- A material change clause with a multi-agency governance structure, that enables negotiation of contract to support any changes to the provision of the service to account for future justice reform; and
- A pricing model which is designed to achieve exceptional performance driving a culture of continuous improvement through the life of the contract, including protection for staff pay with minimum levels of pay in line with legislation and performance related payments for staff if performance continues to improve.

I am also pleased to inform you of the wide ranging economic and community benefits which are to be delivered by Mitie Care and Custody Limited in provision of this service, including:

- Significant economic spend in Scotland, at 72% of annual contract cost.
- A projected supply chain spend of £5.8m per annum;
- The creation of new jobs – including 52 new Prisoner Custody Officer staff and ongoing recruitment of staff at c.132 per annum;
- Targeted provision of sustained employment for 5 disadvantaged young people per year;
- Provision of 15 work placements per year; and

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- Provision of 2780 hours of volunteering hours per year.

I hope the Committee finds this update helpful. I am confident that with the committed support of all criminal justice partners this new contract will deliver a quality service for the people of Scotland.

Yours sincerely,



ANGELA CONSTANCE

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