Justice Committee

Scottish Government’s Draft Budget 2013

Supplementary written submission from Police Scotland

In relation to the questions posed in your email of 31 October regarding the additional information I agreed to provide for the Justice Committee, I can confirm the following to the two questions you posed:

Q1. How many police officers are engaged in policing reform?

Establishing Police Scotland on 1 April 2013 was a significant milestone in the journey to create a national police service for Scotland. Much of the preparatory work was undertaken by the National Police Reform Team, which was formed from police officers and police staff being drawn from across the 8 legacy Scottish Police Forces, these staff undertaking project work across 15 distinct areas of business. This work was successful in preparing the legacy Service for transition on Day 1 and at the time the majority of the projects either concluded or the remaining work of the National Police Reform Team transferred into business as usual activity.

However, there is still some way to go before the service is fully transformed and there is an ongoing programme of organisational change that covers everything from joining up ICT systems to establishing new departmental structures. We are also looking at every area of our business and service delivery to ensure we are doing things in the most efficient and effective way so we can be confident we are delivering the best possible service for our communities within the available budget.

All of the foregoing requires a personnel resource to ensure that the Service delivers value for money and as such, there are currently 51 police officers of varying ranks involved in major pieces of work, including the review of the Area Control Rooms across Scotland, the review of Traffic Wardens and Front Counters and the implications for Police Scotland that fall from the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill. These are significant work streams that require due consideration and assessment of how we deliver our service going forward. A number of staff come from posts released through management de-layering and are either short or medium term secondments, which remain under constant review.

Q2. The cost implications of the Criminal Justice and Victims and Witnesses Bills and whether financial memoranda for these Bills covers all of the costs that Police Scotland have identified?

The financial memorandum accompanying the Bill has been correctly attributed to the Scottish Police Authority, recognising their statutory role in financial governance. The costs provided represent our estimate of the probable costs from introducing new business practices as a direct consequence of the Bill.

Whilst we have been robust in the process used to estimate the financial costs of the Bill, it is not possible to precisely predict all the consequences of the Bill. Therefore, we expect that the actual costs of the Bill will differ.
Police Scotland participated in a consultation exercise which preceded the Bill and offered comment on the assumptions made.

As regards the costs associated with the Victims and Witnesses Bill, it is at this time estimated that the introduction of this Bill will be cost neutral for the Police Service. Costs which may well be incurred, and which at this time are not known, would be relating to an IT solution for the easy identification of victims and the possible need to provide dedicated contact points within the police service to respond to enquiries from victims and witnesses.

Sir Stephen House
Chief Constable
Police Scotland
12 November