Dear David

Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005

The Justice Committee has agreed to hold an evidence session with the Solicitor General (on behalf of the Lord Advocate) and Police Scotland on Tuesday 7 October in relation to child sexual exploitation. This follows the Public Petitions Committee’s recommendation that post-legislative scrutiny of the Protection of Children and Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005 should be undertaken, specifically in relation to the apparent under-use of the offence of grooming a person under the age of 16 and of Risk of Sexual Harm Orders. As you are aware, there was no space in the Committee’s work programme to look at this issue at an earlier stage.

Given that the PPC reported on this issue in January and took evidence back in June 2013, the Justice Committee is keen to establish the up-to-date position on how these two areas of the 2005 Act are currently being used and to explore any barriers faced in prosecuting this crime. The Committee will then decide whether to undertake any further work in this area.

Any members of your Committee would of course be welcome to attend the evidence session. I will in any case write to you after the meeting once the Committee has taken a decision on whether to take any further action on this issue.

Yours sincerely

Christine Grahame MSP
Convener, Justice Committee